



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

July 29, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Madam Speaker,

I am writing to request that you immediately relieve House Chief Administrative Officer Dan Beard of his duties and begin a bipartisan process to find a suitable replacement. Mr. Beard's complete disregard for the interests of American taxpayers and the recklessly partisan manner in which he has carried out his duties make him unfit for this office.

Mr. Beard's mismanagement not only has cost the American taxpayers money, it has deprived our institution of valuable experience possessed by senior staff members who have left during his tumultuous tenure. He has dismissed or reassigned many of these critical staff members causing serious morale problems in the CAO office among those who remain. Those he fired or who left in frustration took with them a wealth of knowledge that was important to the proper administration of the House and cannot be quantified.

Mr. Beard has also conducted a highly unusual and unprecedented personal image promotion campaign on the taxpayers' dime. He now has a communications director on staff, a position previously unheard of in the CAO office. Mr. Beard has helped promote himself with frequent travel, flying across the country to give speeches and appear at other public engagements, at taxpayer expense. His travel also supports the Majority's partisan objectives. According to his own Web site, he has traveled to the districts of at least nine Democratic members in their company.

The bipartisanship, or better yet nonpartisanship, expected of the CAO has been absent under Mr. Beard's tenure. He has on many occasions exceeded his authority by involving himself and his staff in supporting and advocating the partisan policy objectives of the Majority. He is often seen on the House floor and in committee meetings, particularly those of the Committee on Natural Resources. Mr. Beard even detailed a member of his staff to work with the Majority staff of a subcommittee on the Committee on Natural Resources. He has also used his position to advocate for the passage of a policy initiative of the Majority, the extension of Family and Medical Leave Act benefits to federal employees, by testifying before the Joint Economic Committee.

Mr. Beard has even taken to using the taxpayer-funded resources at his disposal to promote political attacks on individual Members of Congress. Posted on Mr. Beard's "nonpartisan" Web site is a *Roll Call* article about House Administration Committee Ranking Member Vernon Ehlers (R-MI) entitled "Ehlers' Green Credentials in Dispute." It is well known that Mr. Beard is a member of the board of directors of the organization International Rivers. The founder of that group, Brent Blackwelder, is the current president of another organization Friends of the Earth. The *Roll Call* article promoted on Mr. Beard's Web site reported that Mr. Blackwelder wrote a letter to the League of Conservation Voters requesting that it withdraw its endorsement of Representative Ehlers. Mr. Beard's ties to the groups involved in this incident raise serious concerns, as does his highly inappropriate promotion of this article on his official Web site. It is outrageous that Mr. Beard would

use his official resources to level attacks on any member of Congress, especially the ranking member of the committee which has jurisdiction over his office.

I believe that in addition to being responsible for the day-to-day administration of the House of Representatives, the CAO has a duty to American taxpayers to ensure that the money they provide to run this institution is spent in a fiscally responsible manner. However, time and again Mr. Beard has shown reckless disregard for this charge and instead has sought endless opportunities to throw money in a bottomless pit of wasteful projects.

For example, Mr. Beard spent \$90,000 to purchase carbon credits on the Chicago Climate Exchange, ignoring a reasonable and sensible request by a member of the House Committee on House Administration to wait for a Government Accountability Office study of carbon credits to determine if they were worthwhile and effective. A report in the *Washington Post* showed the supposed benefits of Chicago Climate Exchange's carbon credits system to be bogus stating "[t]o environmentalists, the House's experience is a powerful lesson about a market where pure intentions can produce murky results."

Mr. Beard is currently spending \$700,000 to design a new lighting system to illuminate the Capitol dome at night, despite objections from the Architect of the Capitol and the committees of jurisdiction in the Senate. Mr. Beard claims that this effort will save money on lighting costs, but in reality it will take the House more than 50 years to generate enough energy savings to finally recoup the cost of Mr. Beard's misguided design effort. When multimillion dollar construction and installation costs are factored in, the payback period grows to well over a century.

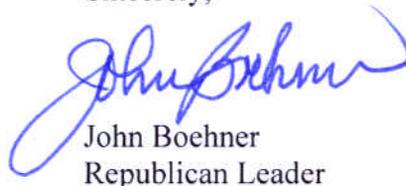
When Mr. Beard hasn't spent money on carbon credits or lighting, he has seen fit to forfeit millions of dollars owed to the taxpayers. Mr. Beard exceeded his authority by making significant changes to the House food service contract, after it was approved by the Committee on House Administration, which will result in the loss of more than \$5 million dollars in commission revenue that could be used to make up for some of Mr. Beard's reckless spending. His revisions to the contract also enable him to circumvent oversight by the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Appropriations during the term of the contract.

From the mismanagement of his office, to his penchant for partisan attacks and waste of taxpayer-funded resources, the case for dismissing Mr. Beard is clear. I encourage you to do this immediately, and to assemble a bipartisan taskforce charged with finding a suitable replacement similar to the process used in 1997 to find Mr. Beard's predecessor Jay Eagen. At that time, a group of members from both sides of the aisle was assembled and sought the services of an executive recruiting firm to conduct a nationwide search. The process was an open one and both parties were able to find a consensus candidate.

I think our colleague, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), then a member of the Committee on House Oversight, described the benefits of such a process best when he said at the time "I think that was appropriate because what this House needs, in a bipartisan and effectively nonpartisan way, [is] to assure ourselves and the American public that the business of the House, the paying of our bills, the managing of our information system, all of that which has nothing to do with the formulation of policy but everything to do with the effective management of the people's House is being done in a proper fashion."

Madam Speaker, let's put partisanship aside and find a House administrator who puts responsibility to the taxpayers and proper management of the people's House above all.

Sincerely,



John Boehner  
Republican Leader