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**Washington, D.C.** - The U.S. House of Representative has passed lobbying reform legislation based on a comprehensive ethics and lobbying reform bill (H. Res. 659) introduced by Democratic Representatives David Price (NC), David Obey (WI), Barney Frank (MA), and Tom Allen (ME). H. Res. 659 has attracted the support of 132 cosponsors.

"I want to commend my colleagues for passing this first, small step toward reining in the culture of corruption that's been laid bare by the various scandals currently surrounding this institution," said Price. "But we should be clear that lobbying abuses are only a part of a much bigger problem."

Price told the House that a genuine reform plan must more comprehensively address the abuses of power by the House Republican leadership that have become common in recent years and have contributed to an atmosphere in which rules are disregarded.

"Among other things, our plan would reform the earmarking process (congressional spending on member-supported projects), end protracted roll call votes, require House-Senate conference committees to actually meet and vote, and ensure that members have time to read and understand what they're voting on."

Price cited comments by noted congressional scholars Norman Orenstein and Tom Mann on this issue in a recent newspaper article:

"This is not simply a problem of a rogue lobbyist, or a pack of them. Nor is it a matter of a handful of disconnected, corrupt lawmakers taking favors in return for official actions. The problem starts, not with lobbyists, but inside Congress. Over the past five years, the rules and norms that govern Congressional debate and voting have routinely been violated, especially in the House of Representatives, in ways that mark a dramatic break from custom."

## House passes first steps of Price - Obey Ethics Reform

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This week's lobbying reform measure was limited, barring former House Members who are registered lobbyists from access to the House floor and the House gym.

"I'll gladly support this first step . . . But unless we enact meaningful and comprehensive reforms of the way this chamber conducts its business," Price warned his colleagues, "Jack Abramoff will be the least of our concerns."

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