

August 6, 2018

Doc Hastings, Chairman
David Skaggs, Co-Chairman
Office of Congressional Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
425 3rd Street, S.W.
Suite 1110
Washington, DC 20024

Re: Request for preliminary ethics inquiry regarding Rep. Jim Jordan

Dear OCE Chairman Hastings and OCE Co-Chairman Skaggs:

We are writing to supplement our letters of [July 9](#) and [July 11, 2018](#) requesting that the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) undertake a preliminary ethics inquiry regarding Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH).

In our prior letters, we urged OCE to investigate whether Rep. Jordan is violating clause 1 of Rule XXIII by currently making false statements denying he had any knowledge that members of the Ohio State University wrestling team under his care and supervision were being sexually abused by Dr. Richard Strauss, the team doctor, while Rep. Jordan was an assistant coach of the team.

Our letters cited published reports stating that eight former student wrestlers under Rep. Jordan's supervision have recently said that Jordan knew about allegations that Strauss was sexually abusing team members, and that Jordan failed to take action to stop the abuse. Jordan has publicly denied that he had any such knowledge of the sexual abuse at the time it was taking place.

Our July 9, 2018 [letter](#) stated, "According to a [story](#) in *Politico*, Jordan 'said his accusers are lying. Jordan said he would have not have hesitated to come forward to report sexual abuse. 'It's not true,' Jordan said. 'I never knew about any type of abuse. If I did, I would have done something about it.'"

A recent [report](#) by *NBC News* supports our request for a preliminary inquiry by stating that Jordan has engaged in efforts to suppress the allegations made by the former student wrestlers. According to the *NBC News* report (emphasis added):

Retired Ohio State wrestling coach Russ Hellickson reached out to two ex-team members and asked them to support their former assistant coach, Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, a day after they accused the powerful congressman of turning a blind eye to alleged sexual abuse by the team doctor, according to the wrestlers and text messages they shared with NBC News.

The former wrestlers said their ex-coach made it clear to them he was under pressure from Jordan to get statements of support from members of the team.

According to this report, one of the former student wrestlers, Dunyasha Yetts, said of former head coach Hellickson that:

. . . Hellickson also called him later on July 4 and said he was under pressure from Jordan, who was an assistant wrestling coach at the university from 1986 to 1994, and from Jordan's supporters to make “a bold statement to defend Jimmy.”

“He [Hellickson] said, ‘I will defend Jimmy until I have to put my hand on a Bible and be asked to tell the truth, then Jimmy will be on his own,’” Yetts said in an interview this week, recalling his conversation with Hellickson.

Another former student wrestler, Mike DiSabato, is quoted in the *NBC News* report as similarly recounting that Hellickson said that he was under pressure from Jordan to support Jordan’s denial of any knowledge of the abuse. According to the report:

“He called me after the story broke too,” DiSabato said of Hellickson. “He said Jimmy was telling him he had to make a statement supporting him and he called to tell me why he was going to make it.”

The *NBC News* report further supports our request for a preliminary inquiry because it asserts that Jordan is attempting, through Hellickson, to apply behind-the-scenes pressure on the former student wrestlers to change their public statements that Jordan knew of the sexual abuse that had taken place but failed to act on that knowledge to protect students under his care and supervision.

Any such attempt by a Member of Congress to pressure a witness to recant statements that contradict current statements by the Member about his potentially improper past behavior would itself be an action that fails to “reflect creditably” on the House and thus itself be a violation of clause 1 of Rule XXIII.

Further, the publicly reported effort by Jordan to have former coach Hellickson act as an intermediary in an effort to pressure the former student wrestlers to change their statements, suggests that Jordan may be seeking to improperly cover up his allegedly false current statements about his past knowledge of sexual abuse and his past failure to act to prevent it.

We renew our request to OCE to conduct a preliminary inquiry into this matter and to take the recent *NBC News* report into consideration as part of that inquiry.

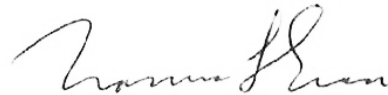
Verification

The individuals submitting this information are listed below and acknowledge that section 1001 of title 18 United States Code applies to the information being provided.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Wertheimer".

Fred Wertheimer
President, Democracy 21

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norman L. Eisen".

Norman L. Eisen
Ambassador (Ret.) and former chief White
House ethics lawyer, 2009-2011