

July 11, 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 letter of July 9, 2018 requesting that the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) undertake a preliminary ethics inquiry regarding Rep. Jim Jordan.

In our letter, 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 letter cited news reports stating that seven former student wrestlers under Rep. Jordan's supervision recently have said that Jordan knew about allegations that Strauss was sexually abusing team members, and that Jordan failed to take action to stop the abuse.

Since we sent our letter, according to news reports, an eighth former wrestling team member has now also stated that Jordan knew about the sexual abuse of team members that was occurring while he was a coach of the team. According to this report:

Another former OSU wrestler has told CNN that Jim Jordan knew about the actions of Dr. Richard Strauss, the former Ohio State University medical doctor who treated athletes, and called Jordan, who is now a U.S. Congressman, a "phony" for saying he was not aware of any sexual abuse allegations.

"Jordan is denying this because obviously it would be political suicide for him," the former wrestler said. "He's still denying it. Jim Jordan knew. He didn't do anything about it."¹

According to the CNN report, the former wrestler stated that he "remembers directly telling Jordan about Strauss' behavior." With regard to Jordan's denials that he had knowledge of the abuse, the wrestler is quoted as saying, "He's sitting here and directly lying."

¹ M. Thompson, "Another former OSU wrestler says Jim Jordan knew about alleged abuse," *CNN* (July 10, 2018).

According to published reports, eight former student wrestlers have now claimed that Rep. Jordan knew that team members were being sexually abused while Jordan was a team coach. Rep. Jordan himself has repeatedly denied that he had any such knowledge.

OCE should investigate this direct conflict between the current statements made by Rep. Jordan and the statements by eight former student wrestlers to determine if Jordan is now making false public statements to conceal his past knowledge of the sexual abuse of students under his supervision, and to conceal his past failure to protect those students.

If OCE determines that there is substantial reason to believe that Rep. Jordan is currently making false public statements about the matter, OCE should recommend that the House Ethics Committee further review this matter to determine whether Rep. Jordan is publicly lying about this matter in violation of clause 1 of Rule XXIII.

House Speaker Paul Ryan today dismissed the idea that the House Ethics Committee should investigate this matter, saying that “the panel isn’t supposed to investigate incidents from ‘a couple of decades ago when they weren’t in Congress.’”²

House Speaker Ryan is wrong.

Our OCE request is about investigating alleged false statements that are currently being made by a sitting Member of Congress.

We have asked OCE to look at whether Rep. Jordan is currently using his congressional pulpit to mislead the public about his past behavior. In short, our request for an investigation relates to whether Rep. Jordan is now lying about his past knowledge of the sexual abuse that allegedly occurred when he was a wrestling coach.

Whether or not the House Ethics Committee has jurisdiction to sanction behavior of a Member that occurred prior to the Member’s service in the House, the Committee does have jurisdiction to determine whether Members are currently engaged in conduct that fails to “reflect creditably” on the House in violation of clause 1 of Rule XXIII of the House Rules.

If Rep. Jordan is currently lying to the public about his previous knowledge of the sexual abuse of wrestling team members, his lies on such a serious matter, and his attempt to cover-up a past failure to act to protect students under his care and supervision, would raise a very serious question about whether Rep. Jordan’s current behavior is in violation of clause 1 of House Rule XXIII, and thus is a matter plainly within the jurisdiction of the House Ethics Committee.

² Associated Press, “House Speaker defends Ohio’s Jordan as ‘man of integrity.’” *The Washington Post* (July 11, 2018).

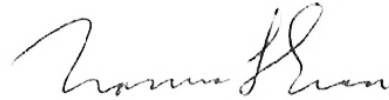
Verification

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