

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
**Select Committee on
Energy Independence and Global Warming**
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
CHAIRMAN

August 3, 2009

Mr. Jack Bonner
Bonner & Associates
1101 17th Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Bonner:

Recent news reports indicate that Bonner & Associates or a person under its control (collectively "Bonner & Associates") was involved in submitting to at least one Member of Congress letters from prominent African-American and Hispanic civil rights organizations urging changes to the Waxman-Markey American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 when in fact the persons whose names were on the letters did not sign nor approve of the letter, and did not make their stationery available for the letter. Thus, it appears that Bonner & Associates misappropriated the letterhead or logo of these two prominent civil rights organizations and then faked the signatures of persons working at those organizations.

This fraud on Congress distorts the legislative process and disserves the American people. It represents a serious breach that needs to be fully understood as to the extent and scope of these wrongful acts. In order to enable us to understand the facts and circumstances relating to this matter, I ask you to respond to the following questions:

1. On its web page, Bonner & Associates touts its reputation for getting so-called "grasstops" from minority organizations and veterans groups, among others, to support a client's position. Were the faked letters from the NAACP and Creciendo Juntos part of a "grasstops" effort? What company, companies or organization hired Bonner & Associates to generate "grasstops" support in Virginia? To the best of your knowledge, have these client companies or organizations registered under the Lobbying Disclosure Act? How much is Bonner & Associates being paid for its "grasstops" efforts relating to the Waxman-Markey bill?
2. Is Bonner & Associates generating "grasstops" or "grassroots" in other states or in other Congressional districts for these same or similar clients concerning the Waxman-Markey bill? Please identify a) other states and b) Congressional districts in which Bonner & Associates is engaged on (i) "grasstops" or (ii) "grassroots" concerning the

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Waxman-Markey bill and for which clients. Were the letters from these civil rights groups shared with either (i) any of your clients, or (ii) other “grasstops” or “grassroots” advocacy coalition members? Was it discussed during any conference calls or on email distribution lists so that this false information could have been used to leverage in a misleading way to enlist civil rights or other organizations support in Charlottesville or anywhere else in the country? Were these letters provided to other firms as part of a coordinated effort?

3. Some news reports suggest that Bonner & Associates may have terminated your agent that it alleges was responsible for the faked letters. If those stories are accurate, on what date did this agent first begin working (either as an employee or contractor) for Bonner & Associates? Was this agent a contractor? If yes, what was the term of the contract? Were any other agents fired or contracts terminated as a result of what has come to light?

4. Of all the people who work for or with Bonner & Associates to generate “grasstops” in 2009, what percentage operates as a contractor? Does Bonner & Associates market itself to potential clients as having local agents available to generate “grasstops”? How many of these agents are full time and how many are temporary?

5. As a general matter, how does Bonner & Associates compensate and assess performance of persons in the field or in call centers (“boiler rooms”) who are instructed to find “grasstops” and “grassroots” support? Is there a quota system – i.e., a minimum number of letters or calls of support to earn one’s pay during a given period of time? Are such persons compensated per letter or call of support? If so, how much? Does the compensation vary according to the nature of the organization involved in the “grasstops,” so that, to use one example, labor unions have one compensation level and religious organizations have another?

6. Does Bonner & Associates provide a script or similar material to persons working from boiler rooms to generate “grassroots” support for clients concerned about the Waxman-Markey bill? Is there a similar script or similar material given to persons hired (as an employee or contractor) to generate “grasstops” support for clients concerned about the Waxman-Markey bill? In each instance, if the answer is yes, please provide a copy of any such script or similar material.

7. Assuming that the news reports referenced in question #3 are accurate, how was that person compensated? Specifically, did this person have a quota of “grasstops” letters? Did this person receive compensation for each letter sent? What was this person paid for generating the letter from a) the NAACP, and b) Creciendo Juntos?

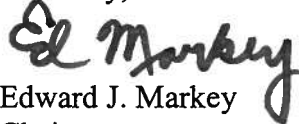
8. Did Rep. Thomas S.P. Perriello receive any letters concerning the Waxman-Markey bill that were generated by Bonner & Associates? How many? Were any of those letters sent without the knowledge and consent of the person whose name appeared as the signatory of the letter? How many? Please provide copies of all letters sent to Rep. Perriello, including those sent fraudulently and otherwise.

9. According to news reports, two of the fraudulent letters sent to Rep. Perriello were on the letterhead of the local chapters of the NAACP and Creciendo Juntos. How did Bonner & Associates come into possession of the letterhead or logo of these two civil rights organizations? Specifically, in each and every instance identified in question #6, identify who obtained the letterhead or logo and how the letterhead or logo was obtained.
10. Did any other Members of Congress receive letters that were sent a) without the knowledge and consent of the person whose name appeared as the signatory, or b) with misappropriated organizational logo or letterhead? If yes, provide copies of all such letters.
11. Explain in detail the steps that Bonner & Associates undertook (such as audits, employee or contractor interviews by outside counsel) to respond to question #10. In addition, please explain your internal control measures to prevent the kind of fraud being reviewed herein.
12. Have any documents relating to Bonner & Associates' "grasstops" efforts concerning the Waxman-Markey bill been destroyed since you or anyone in management first became aware that there might have been improprieties regarding your work in this area?

For purposes of your reply, the term "Bonner & Associates" means anyone whom Bonner & Associates employs now or previously and anyone with whom Bonner & Associates had or has a contractual relationship. The term "letter" includes correspondence sent via mail, overnight or courier service or by email, and specifically includes the content of an email as well as any attachment thereto. Any part of a question above that is sub-designated should be responded to separately so the answer would not be combined with a response to another sub-designated part of the question.

Given the seriousness of this matter, I hope this has your fullest attention. Please respond to these questions by August 12, 2009. If you have any questions, please contact Gerard J. Waldron or Michael Goo with the Select Committee staff.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
Chair

cc: Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Ranking Member
Rep. Thomas S. P. Perriello