



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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BAUCUS RESOLUTION WOULD SET RULES FOR SENATORS' CHARITIES
*Senator introduces lobbying reform amendment as stand-alone legislation;
would require more disclosure of donations, prohibit personal gain from charity organizations*

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, introduced legislation today establishing ethics rules for charities controlled by Senators or by their families. The Baucus resolution would require disclosure of donations of more than \$200 to any such charity. It also would prohibit Senators from profiting personally from any such charity. Baucus originally introduced the proposal in March as an amendment to S. 2349, The Legislative Transparency and Accountability Act of 2006.

“This legislation should not be viewed as a statement on the ethical conduct of members that currently maintain and control charities. The public has a right to know what people or companies – that may or may not have business before the Senate – are donating to charities controlled by Senators,” said Baucus. **“My bill simply aims to give the public confidence that when a Senator starts a charitable organization it is for charitable purposes.”**

In addition to the donation disclosure requirement, the Baucus resolution would amend Senate conflict-of-interest rules to ensure that Senators do not profit personally from charities they or their families control. It would do so with the following prohibitions:

- Senators, their spouses or their staff may not receive compensation from the charity.
- An individual or firm may not receive money from a charity if they have financial ties to a Senator's political action committee.
- The charity may not pay for a Senator's travel expenses if the Senator is engaging in fundraising activities.
- Funds may not be transferred to another charity to pay for a Senator's travel.

The Senate Ethics Committee could waive conflict-of-interest rules in limited cases for charities that are substantially influenced by family members of the Senator, but that do not personally or politically benefit the Senator. For instance, if a Senator's spouse sought a paid position with a charity that is supported primarily by the general public, the Ethics Committee might review that case and waive the Baucus rules on disclosure and compensation.

This proposal has been endorsed by the watchdog groups Public Citizen and the National Committee on Responsive Philanthropy. It is expected to be referred to the Senate Ethics Committee for consideration.

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