

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Honorable Rod Paige  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington DC 20202

Dear Secretary Paige:

Over the past couple of days, the media have reported on the contract your department had with Ketchum public relations firm. According to media accounts, Ketchum paid \$240,000 to the Graham Williams Group, a company owned by Mr. Armstrong Williams, for his commitment to provide positive commentary on the No Child Left Behind Act and to allow you and other department officials to promote the Act through his program.

Section 624 of the Transportation, Treasury, Independent Agencies, and General Government Appropriations Act, 2005 prohibits the use of any appropriated funds for publicity or propaganda within the United States not authorized by Congress and the Government Accountability Office has ruled previously that this prohibition, which has been in place since 1951, includes materials that are covert propaganda.

Given our jurisdiction over the funds involved, we would appreciate your careful review of the contract with Ketchum and the payment made to Mr. Williams. We also request that you provide us with a list of any other grant, contract or funding arrangement involving FY'02, FY'03, or FY'04 appropriated funds being used for public relations or anything similar to the purpose of the Ketchum contract.

We look forward to a response within five business days.

Sincerely,



Arlen Specter  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health  
and Human Services, and Education  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations



Tom Harkin  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health  
and Human Services, and Education  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations