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## **Conyers on Dannehy Decision: “Not an Exoneration of Bush Officials”**

(Washington)-- House Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.) released the following statement in response to the Department of Justice’s decision not to bring criminal charges related to the U.S. Attorney firing controversy:

“It is clear that Ms. Dannehy’s determination is not an exoneration of Bush officials in the U.S. Attorney matter as there is no dispute that these firings were totally improper and that misleading testimony was given to Congress in an effort to cover them up. Strangely, in deciding not to prosecute, the Department nevertheless concludes that David Iglesias was fired to influence future prosecution decisions in the New Mexico U.S. Attorney’s office, stating that the evidence established Iglesias was removed ‘to eliminate the possibility of any future action or inaction by him.’ Apparently, because the White House plotters were not trying to affect Iglesias’ own decisions, but simply getting him out of the way so that a politically friendly U.S. Attorney could be appointed, DOJ felt the firing did not meet the technical requirements for an obstruction of justice case.

“Similarly, the letter does not conclude that Administration officials testified truthfully to Congress on this subject. Indeed, the letter reaffirms DOJ’s prior finding that Alberto Gonzales and Kyle Sampson made ‘inaccurate and misleading’ statements. Despite coming to this conclusion, however, it concludes only that there was insufficient evidence to make the legal showing needed for a criminal case.

“While the Department has decided not to prosecute those responsible for the false testimony given to the Judiciary Committees in this case, I agree entirely with the Department’s broader conclusion on this matter: ‘[T]he actions of DOJ leadership were contrary to DOJ principles’ and reflect ‘undue sensitivity to politics on the part of DOJ officials who should answer not to partisan politics but to principles of fairness and justice.’ I appreciate Attorney General Holder’s commitment to ensure that such conduct will not happen again. I am proud of the Committee’s effort to bring the facts of this controversy to light, so that the American people themselves can judge the how Bush Justice Department abused our trust.”

