

Please Take 5 Minutes and Help Clean Up the Legislature

**Check out WV-CAG's letter to Speaker Kiss
(see other side)**

- \$700,000 of public money going to a golf course owned by a senator?
- Vote buying in Logan County?
- An Education Chairman double dipping at the public trough?
- Lobbyist spending way out of control?

It's getting dirtier and dirtier down in Charleston. We need the Legislature to clean itself up through the passage of a modern, tough new ethics-in-government law. Please take 5 minutes and call (or better yet write a short hand-written letter) expressing your disgust with the way the legislature is conducting itself. It's time that the Legislature begins to heal itself.

Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin

Room 227, State Capitol Complex

Charleston, WV 25305

304-357-7801

House Speaker Bob Kiss

Room 234, State Capitol Complex

Charleston, WV 25305

304-340-3210

(Editor's Note: This letter will be available at our website ~ www.wvcag.org.)

August 13, 2004

House Speaker Bob Kiss
Room 234, State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Mr. Speaker,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the West Virginia Citizen Action Group and its members, I request that you seriously consider creating a special interim committee on legislative ethics. Recently, public confidence in the legislature has declined to such an extent that we believe it is critical for legislative leadership to address this issue in a timely manner.

I realize that adding issues midway through the interim process is unusual but believe it is important for all of us that are connected with the legislature to begin to restore confidence and trust in the legislative branch. Further I am concerned that if the leadership does not act quickly and begin to examine potential changes to the ethics laws the issue will become a partisan issue much trumpeted by the minority party.

Those of us who work closely with the legislative branch are aware that questionable ethics of the members are limited to a small number of individuals. However, because the public perceives the abuse as widespread, the resulting distrust is cast on all who serve in the legislature.

No substantive revisions of the ethics law have occurred since its passage nearly 16 years ago. Considering the current crisis of faith and trust, new considerations of legislative ethics should begin now and not wait until the next legislative session. Creating a panel to begin to identify potential amendments sooner than later will ensure a more deliberate approach.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Norman Steenstra

Executive Director WV-CAG