

October 4, 2006 Congressman Murtha Statement on Foley Situation

For Immediate Release

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Johnstown, PA - I've been watching the news reports carefully about the situation surrounding the resignation of Congressman Foley. It is imperative that we hold the people involved accountable. We have to understand what happened and when the details were known. It is essential that the Republicans hold the members who knew about this responsible. It is crucial to our country that they understand that the United States Congress holds people accountable for their actions.

We have an obligation to our young people to protect them. There is nothing more important than this. We changed the page program rules 20 years ago to protect pages from situations like this. We set them up in safer dormitories and introduced a buddy system. If these allegations of a cover up by the Republican Leadership are true, it's outrageous. They talk about morals and family values, but this situation will certainly not help their credibility or our credibility as a country worldwide.

We need to know if other pages were put in jeopardy because the Leadership didn't act sooner.

I hope there wasn't a cover up. There is absolutely no excuse for allowing this to go on, especially if they had even a hint of a problem months ago. If there was any sign of wrongdoing, a red flag should have gone up immediately.

These kids participate in this program because they're interested in learning about Congress. They admire the Members of Congress, but these young people are vulnerable. Many of them are out on their own for the very first time. They are in Washington to work hard and learn. We need to protect these kids.

The Ethics Committee is scheduled to meet on Thursday and hopefully we'll get a valid and prompt investigation of this situation.