

Larson Response to Minority Walk-Off

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LARSON: REPUBLICANS TURNED THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE TODAY INTO ANIMAL HOUSE

WASHINGTON, DC - House Republicans walked off the floor of the House of Representatives today in an effort to avoid voting on contempt of Congress citations that would hold the Bush Administration in general, and Josh Bolten and Harriet Miers in particular, accountable for their involvement in the firing of U.S. Attorneys. The voting went ahead and the citations passed with the support of the Democratic majority.

Congressman John B. Larson CT
-01, Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus, said:

"The political theater enacted by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle today was akin to Otter and Boone leading the Deltas out of the student body at Faber College. If this issue wasn't so important to the nation, we would have to consider holding the Republicans in double secret probation.

In article 1, the Constitution lays out the authority of the Congress. For too long, that authority has been ceded to an executive branch that consistently overreaches and ignores our system of checks and balances.

When Republicans left the floor of the House of Representatives, they again abdicated their responsibility as members of this body to oversee the actions of the executive branch. It is both irresponsible and unconstitutional. The Executive

Branch must answer questions about the firing of
U.S.

Attorneys. No one in this country
is exempt from a legal subpoena and Harriet Miers and Josh Bolten are not above
the law.

The Republican's
stunt on the House floor today is just another example of their rubber stamp of
this administration's disregard for the Constitution and our civil rights in
the pursuit of its own political purposes. Let's
remember that the need for new FISA legislation - the legislation that
Republicans claimed they were leaving the floor in protest over- became apparent
only when the administration's secret and illegal use of unwarranted
eavesdropping was revealed. This is
yet another example of the Bush Administration's dismissal of the Congress as
a co-equal branch of government.

Today, Democrats in
the House stood up to the Administration, reasserted the power of Congress and
held executive branch officials accountable for their actions.
Under the leadership of our Speaker, Nancy Pelosi, we have fought to
reclaim the power that the Executive Branch tried to steal and House Republicans
tried to give away. I am very proud
of the actions of the Democratic Caucus today."