

Leo Wise
Staff Director
Office of Congressional Ethics
1017 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2009

Dear Mr. Wise:

We are writing to respectfully request that the Office of Congressional Ethics begin an investigation into whether Rep. Michele Bachmann (Minnesota's 6th Congressional District) has violated House franking rules.

On Tuesday, May 26, 2009 an email was sent by Rep. Michele Bachmann using the email account Bachmann.Bulletin@mail.house.gov with the subject line 'Bachmann Bulletin - Car Dealerships Getting Pink Slips From The Federal Government'.

In the section of the email titled 'Concerns About The Obama Auto Task Force's Arbitrary Pink Slips:' the following following paragraph was included:

"In the meantime, however, I want all local businesses that might be impacted by this to at least know what options they may have. My staff and I have been in close contact with the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA), which represents auto dealers' interests in Washington. NADA has hired a firm to represent the legal interests of those auto dealers that have been chosen by the Task Force to close. Any such auto dealer should call 703-821-7000 for more information."

Pages 128-129 of the House Ethics Manual state that E-mails sent by a congressional offices must comply with the franking regulations. Pages 7-8 of the House Franking Rules regarding examples of nonfrankable items states that grassroots lobbying or soliciting support for a Member's position on a legislative, public policy or community issue may not occur and that no material that advertises, promotes, endorses or otherwise provides a benefit to a political organization may be included in franked materials. Rep. Bachmann's May 26, 2009 email advocates that recipients of the email contact the National Automobile Dealers Association, a political organization.

We respectfully request that the Office of Congressional Ethics investigate to determine if Rep. Bachmann violated House franking rules. If Rep. Bachmann did, we respectfully request that this matter be forwarded to the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for further review and appropriate sanctions.

We are aware that the False Statements Act, 18 U.S.C. § 1001 applies to information submitted to the Office of Congressional Ethics.

Sincerely,

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