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Boehner Says Obey Letter Violated House Earmark Reform Rules

GOP Leader Offers Privileged Resolution Today Requesting Investigation, Repeats Call for Freeze on All Earmarks

WASHINGTON, D.C. - House Republican Leader John Boehner (R-OH) today said actions taken last week by House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-WI) appear to violate the earmark reform rules House Democrats adopted at the start of the 110th Congress - the very rules Democrats point to in their arguments against a GOP-proposed moratorium on all earmarks.

Boehner is offering a privileged resolution today calling for an Ethics Committee investigation of Rep. Obey and his actions. He also said the rules violation further proves the need for a freeze on all earmarks, and said action must be taken by the House to hold Democratic leaders accountable for repeatedly circumventing their own earmark reform rules.

"This is further proof that the Democratic Majority is not willing to follow its own rules," said Boehner. "The earmark system in Congress is broken and needs to be brought to a halt, but that cannot happen if Democrats are blatantly breaking the earmark rules they set at the beginning of this Congress. It's irresponsible, and Chairman Obey should be held accountable for this latest transgression."

Obey last week sent letters to House Republicans - none were sent to Democrats - threatening to deny earmarks to Members of Congress who have publicly expressed support for an earmark moratorium, such as the Kingston-Wolf-Wamp earmark reform measure endorsed by the House Republican leadership. But House rules, adopted at the start of the 110th Congress and touted frequently by Democratic leaders, prohibit committee leaders from linking earmarks to Members' support or opposition to specific legislation.

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