

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 6, 2006

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear John:

During my short time in the U.S. Senate, one of the aspects about this institution that I have come to value most is the collegiality and the willingness to put aside partisan differences to work on issues that help the American people. It was in this spirit that I approached you to work on ethics reform, and it was in this spirit that I agreed to attend your bipartisan meeting last week. I appreciated then – and still do appreciate – your willingness to reach out to me and several other Democrats.

For this reason, I am puzzled by your response to my recent letter. Last Wednesday morning, you called to invite me to your meeting that afternoon. I changed my schedule so I could attend the meeting. Afterwards, you thanked me several times for attending the meeting, and we left pledging to work together.

As you will recall, I told everyone present at the meeting that my caucus insisted that the consideration of any ethics reform proposal go through the regular committee process. You didn't indicate any opposition to this position at the time, and I wrote the letter to reiterate this point, as well as the fact that I thought S. 2180 should be the basis for a bipartisan solution.

I confess that I have no idea what has prompted your response. But let me assure you that I am not interested in typical partisan rhetoric or posturing. The fact that you have now questioned my sincerity and my desire to put aside politics for the public interest is regrettable but does not in any way diminish my deep respect for you nor my willingness to find a bipartisan solution to this problem.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama
United States Senator