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Contact: Brittany English
202-464-1662
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Lobbyists Defeat Congress in a Tough Battle on the Court

Bethesda, MD- Sporting red jerseys, a bipartisan team of congressional members--including **Rep. Jeff Flake** (R-Ariz.) and **Rep. Joseph Crowley** (D-N.Y.)--took to the basketball court at George Washington University last month against a group of powerful lobbyists.

The game, available at www.lobbyists.info/congress_vs_lobbyists_basketball_video.cfm, was serious business for both sides. Coaches from rival schools--Georgetown University Head **Coach John Thompson III** and George Washington University Head **Coach Karl Hobbs**--prepped the Congressmen and lobbyists. In pre-game interviews they compared the players to their regular teams.

Before tip-off, **Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.)** joked that the number on his mind was 911, and had his cell phone ready. Luckily, no call to the EMS was needed, but the MVP of the game was the oldest, **Jim Martin**, lobbyist for the 60/Plus Association- shooting three 3-pointers to help propel the lobbyists to a **45-36** victory.

Tension mounted when a visibly angry **Rep. Kenny Hulshof** (R-Mo.) alerted the entire room to a timekeeping error. Although he convinced the referee to add almost fifteen seconds to the game, it was not enough time to save the Members of Congress from its first loss to the lobbyists in five years. The result ensures that no ethics committee, even with the new Lobbying Disclosure law, will have to investigate giving Congress a win. Members joked during interviews that in the past the lobbyists have done well until the last few minutes of the game, when they would become “gimpy.”

This marquee match-up followed a battle between Hill staffers and younger lobbyists. Unlike their older and wiser counterparts, the staffers roundly defeated the team of lobbyists.

Hoops for Hope is sponsored each year by the **American League of Lobbyists** (www.alldc.org) to benefit charities aimed toward helping children, and was founded 9 years ago by **Paul Miller**, lobbyist for Miller Wenhold and former president of the American League of Lobbyists. This year’s charities include **Horton’s Kids** (www.Hortonskids.org) and the **Luke Tiahrt Foundation**, which is dedicated to the memory of the late son of Congressional team member **Rep. Todd Tiahrt** (R- Kan.).

Copies of the video piece (which includes highlights from both games and interviews with Thompson, Flake and Crowley), an unedited version of the full game, and stock photos are available by contacting **Gt le'Y gkuo cpp** (eweissmann@columbiabooks.com) at Columbia Books. A charitable donation of \$10 is requested.

Special thanks to the Blair High School 12th graders who volunteered their time to capture this key sporting event.

The congressional team included:

Senator John Thune (R-SD)
Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY)
Rep. Jeff Flake (R-AZ)
Rep. Kenny Hulshof (R-MO)
Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)
Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA)
Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS)

The lobbyist's team included:

Monte Ward (Advanced Capitol Consulting)
Al Jackson (Al Jackson Jr., LLC)
Brian Pallasch (American Society of Civil Engineers)
Brian Wagner (The Boeing Company)
Booth Jameson (EDS)
Jim Martin (60 Plus Association)
Brad Rosen (AstraZeneca)
Brad Knox (AFLAC)
Andy Blocker (New York Stock Exchange)
Danny Leonard (The Leonard Group)
Dan Cohen (U.S. Oncology)
Paul Miller (Miller/Wenhold Capitol Strategies, LLC)

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