

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Representative Lee Terry (NE-02) tonight released the following statement after an ABC report wrongfully alleged Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R-IL) to be under federal investigation:

"No Member of Congress is above the law. While the FBI broke protocol when raiding the office of William Jefferson (D-LA), they were right investigating a corrupt Member of Congress. Corruption cannot and will not be tolerated.

"The Speaker publicly disagreed with the constitutionality of the raid of Jefferson 's office. Following this, 'federal law enforcement sources' fed ABC blatantly false information that Speaker Hastert was under investigation for corruption. This appears to be clear retaliation for the Speaker's criticism of the manner in which a search warrant was exercised.

"Tonight, ABC aired a story that the Speaker was under investigation. While the DoJ sent ABC a statement saying, 'Speaker Hastert is not under investigation by the Justice Department,' ABC chose to run the story.

"This is an irresponsible and unjustified press response to a story about a lot of loose allegations swirling around Washington, DC . It is important to ask why ABC was so anxious to run a story planted by those who wish to tarnish the reputation of Speaker Hastert in response to his criticism of the actions of government agents in the investigation of Jefferson .

"ABC owes a sincere apology to both Speaker Hastert and all Members of Congress.

"If the FBI wants to raid my office as a result of my statement, bring it on. The FBI has my permission to raid my office and take all my files.

"Democracy does not work without the trust of the people and I will not stand by as ABC ends up recklessly deceiving the American public."

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