United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 3, 2005

Honorable Richard B. Cheney
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

We are dismayed that you have chosen to ignore bi-partisan calls for a thorough house cleaning after the recent indictments and resignation of your Chief of Staff, and instead promoted two staffers who have themselves been connected with the Plame affair.

Seasoned government veterans and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have urged you and President Bush to swiftly bring in a fresh new team of advisors who would be above reproach and could bring new energy to helping solve the many problems that now plague your Administration and the nation.

According to recent press reports, both of the staffers you promoted, David Addington and John Hannah, have been connected to the leak investigation and perhaps even referenced in the Libby indictment itself. While neither of them has been accused of criminal wrongdoing, and we do not do so in this letter, these two men did apparently have some involvement in a troubling attempt by your Administration to smear one of your critics and his wife in a way unbecoming the White House.

These promotions signaled it would be business as usual, just when you should have signaled a fresh start and new leadership in your office. Instead of cleaning house, you simply rearranged some of the furniture.

To date, the White House has expressed no concern, no regret, no apology, and no explanation for what happened in the Valerie Plame case. While some of this can be attributed to an ongoing investigation, the White House should not simply use the criminal investigation as an excuse to delay much-needed changes it can make on its own.

When President Bush ran in 2000, he pledged to the American people that "We must always ask ourselves not only what is legal, but what is right." The events that led to exposing covert agent Valerie Plame were not right. If this Administration intends to live up to its campaign pledge, rearranging a few staffers will not be enough. Real change is needed, and we urge you to begin right away.

Sincerely,

Harry Reid
U.S. Senator

Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator

Dick Durbin
U.S. Senator

Debbie Stabenow
U.S. Senator