

August 13, 2013

www.ipi.org

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin,

I am in receipt of your letter of August 6, which is a thinly veiled attempt at political intimidation and an attack on the freedom of speech and freedom of association of those who choose to become involved with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). Your letter has been widely recognized as such not only by its recipients and by the Wall Street Journal, but also by the Chicago Tribune.

If freedom of speech and freedom of association mean anything, they mean that we don't have to answer to you about our speech and about our associations.

The American people have had enough of bullying and intimidation from the Government Class. You have lost track of your commitment to the Constitution and you have lost touch with those you claim to serve. Today, the Government Class lords over the private sector as rulers, rather than as "public servants." You look after your own interests such that the Government Class has higher incomes, better benefits, and greater job security than those who toil to fund your extravagance and whom you have placed on the hook to bail out the unnecessary programs and unfunded benefits that you have secured for you and yours.

And when groups such as IPI and ALEC point this out and call for a return to constitutional restraints on the size and scope of government, they incur your wrath.

You yourself directed the Internal Revenue Service to investigate specific conservative organizations, which sent a clear signal to the IRS that you wanted them to help silence conservative and Tea Party groups.¹ It is no surprise that you are the source of an attempt to put pressure on ALEC, a 40 year-old organization with an outstanding track record and broad membership from the peoples' elected state legislators.

At ALEC, legislators exchange ideas about how to make their state pension funds solvent, how to deliver services to their residents in the most efficient and most effective ways possible, and how to create jobs within their states.

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Meanwhile, the state you represent is financially sick and probably the most politically corrupt state in our union. You might consider investing more time and energy into cleaning up your own mess instead of violating your oath to preserve the Constitution by constraining the free speech and free association rights of your political opponents.

The Institute for Policy Innovation eagerly anticipates your September hearing, and we would very much like an opportunity to expand on this letter during the hearing. Accordingly, we are preparing our testimony now for public release. Please keep us informed as to the schedule and witness list for the hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom".

Tom Giovanetti
President

ⁱ Rove, Karl. "Dick Durbin, the IRS, and Me". The Wall Street Journal. May 29, 2013
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323728204578513011200175592.html>