EXHIBIT 15

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March 5, 2004

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VIA FACSIMILE AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

The Hon. Joel Hefley, Chairman
The Hon. Alan B. Mollohan, Ranking Member
House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct
HT2 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-6328

Re: Representative Nick Smith

Dear Chairman Hefley and Ranking Member Mollohan:

I am in receipt of your February 13, 2004 letter to Representative Nick Smith. As suggested by your correspondence, Representative Smith has referred the matter to undersigned counsel.

In December 2003, Representative Smith submitted to your Committee a lengthy and complete statement of his recollection of events surrounding the somewhat tumultuous late evening and early morning hour November 21-22 vote on amendments to the federal Medicare program, particularly as they apply to prescription drugs. Representative Smith heard argument and debate from numerous sources about the merits of the bill and the political cost of opposing it. In the end, Nick Smith followed his long-standing principles and voted "no."

In his letter of December 17, Representative Smith confirmed to your Committee that, notwithstanding press reports characterizing some of the speech and debate as implying that financial support for his son's Michigan congressional

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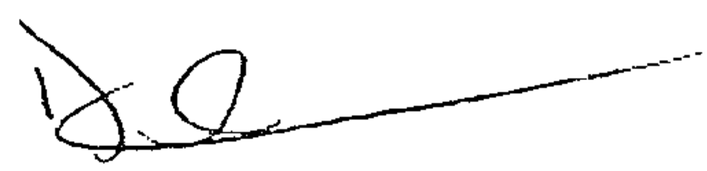
campaign could be affected by his vote, "no House member made an offer of financial assistance . . . for my son's campaign in exchange for my vote." By this reply, Representative Smith reaffirms that recollection.

Very truly yours,



David D. Aufhauser

cc: Representative Nick Smith