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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Giving Bureaucrats Government Purchase Cards Wastes the Taxpayers Money

Dear Colleague:

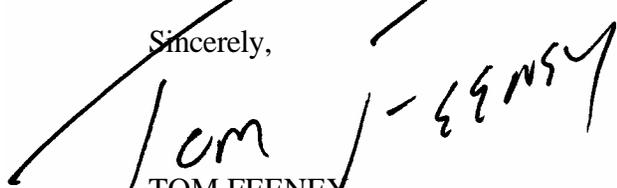
This week Washington Waste Watchers will be investigating waste in the form of the fraudulent misuse of government purchase cards by federal employees. Every year the federal government wastes billions of dollars of the taxpayers' hard earned money. Much of this waste is the result of fraud.

Throughout the federal government federal employees are permitted to use government purchase cards for travel and other expenses without supervision. While these cards are intended to be used for official government business, they have become the source of countless wasteful purchases. *A five month audit of the purchase card program at the Department of Education discovered that 37% of purchase card purchases were not approved by appropriate authorizing authorities. That amounts to \$1.8 million in unauthorized purchases during only 5 months. In a similar study the GAO discovered \$2.3 million in improper or questionable purchases on government cards at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.* These cards have been used to purchase pornography, vacations, designer clothing, jewelry, and even escort services. Most appalling is that there is very little supervision over these cards and very little if anything done to employees that make fraudulent purchases.

Comic P.J. O'Rourke once said: "Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys." It's a bad idea. Giving bureaucrats purchase cards with out supervision is the same thing -- a bad idea. This week Washington Waste Watchers are investigating this bad idea in order to eliminate this waste of the taxpayer's hard earned money.

The fraudulent misuse of government purchase cards is symptomatic of the waste, fraud, and abuse that exists throughout the federal government. As a Co-Founder of Washington Waste Watchers, a working group to combat waste, fraud, and abuse, I am working to identify examples of waste in the federal government and develop solutions to eliminate it. If you are interested in joining Washington Waste Watchers or if you are interested in more information about government purchase card fraud, please contact Myal Greene (5-2706) in my office.

Sincerely,


TOM FEENEY
Member of Congress
District 24, Florida

Today is Washington Waste Watchers' Wednesday

Every Wednesday night members of Washington Waste Watchers will be delivering Special Orders speeches on the topics of waste, fraud, and abuse. This week's topic is fraud.