

January 17, 2007

The Honorable Ellen Segal Huvelle
United States District Court for the District of Columbia
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Re: United States v. Ney, No. 06-cr-272 (ESH)

Dear Judge Huvelle:

I feel that I know Bob Ney as well as anybody else. I met him in January 2002 and went to work for his congressional staff in May 2002. Since then, I have been one of his top aides, his neighbor, and one of his best friends.

Bob Ney is one of the hardest working and decent people I have ever known. As a Member of Congress, Bob gave unselfishly of himself, taking time out of his weekend to visit concerned citizens and going above and beyond to assist his constituents. Bob Ney loved his job and loved the people he was representing in the United States House of Representatives.

Even though Bob has admitted to misconduct during a period of his time in office, I can say with certainty that Bob was never "on the take" and always had the best of intentions in his work. I think Bob and his staff, myself included, became too comfortable with the way business is done in Washington.

I firmly believe that Bob's addiction to alcohol drove him to make some bad decisions. He drank too much on a regular basis, and it began to interfere with his judgment in his personal life and as a Member of Congress. As the investigation started to intensify in late 2004 and early 2005, Bob began to drink even more. Bob was a functioning alcoholic who could rarely make it through the day without drinking and would often begin drinking beers as early as 7:30 am. As his condition intensified, those around him suffered increasingly from the ill effects of his addiction.

Since Bob has pled guilty, I have remained very close friends with him. Through this ordeal, Bob has lost everything he has worked so diligently for over the last 26 years. He has paid dearly for crossing ethical lines and will continue to pay dearly if he is incarcerated. Through

this difficult time in his life, I am convinced that the only reason he has been able to get through it has been because of rehabilitation and recovery programs.

Every day is difficult for Bob. His career ended terribly. Financially, he has nothing. Every day he wakes up to the stark reality that he may be one day closer to being incarcerated. With all of that happening, it would be easy to relapse, but Bob hasn't relapsed. Instead, he has become a better person, and I believe there is a direct correlation between his new lifestyle and the rigorous recovery programs he continues to go through.

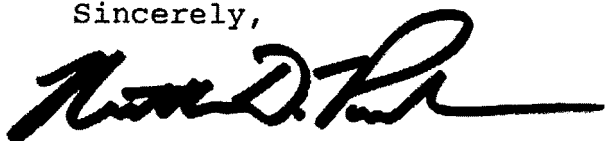
Bob Ney is a changed man. Bob has gone through extensive rehabilitation and he faithfully attends recovery meetings. These programs have changed his life for the better. He has recognized the problems that alcohol caused in his life and courageously battles the demons of addiction.

Every day as I wake up, I see Bob drive past my house to a 7:00 am recovery meeting. Some days Bob will go to as many as three recovery meetings. These meetings have given him hope and renewed his faith. They have played the biggest role in making him the better person that he is today.

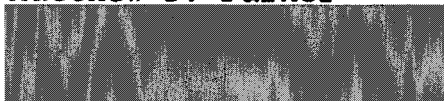
Bob has begun to triumph over alcohol addiction. I am pleading for Bob to be able to continue with rehabilitation programs while he is incarcerated. These programs have made a huge difference in his life, and I really think it would be an injustice if he were not given the opportunity to get the help that he desperately needs.

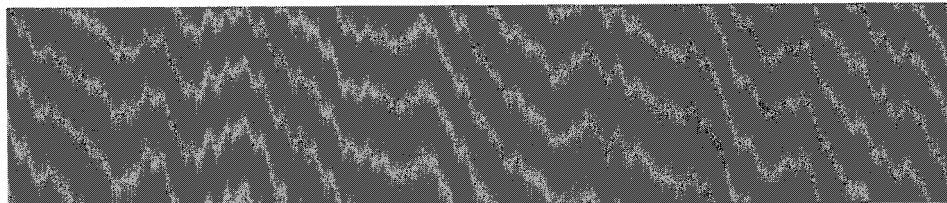
I humbly ask that when you sentence Bob you take his history into consideration. As a public servant for over 26 years, Bob helped thousands of people. But now he needs your help to see that he will continue with the treatment that he so desperately needs.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Parker





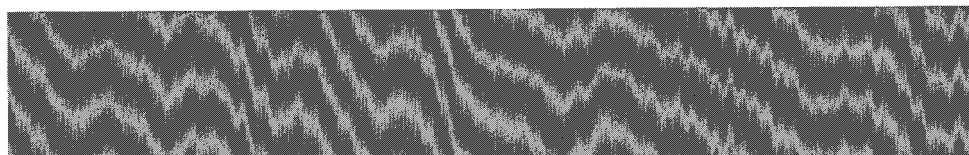
The Honorable Ellen Segal Huvelle
United States District Court for the District of Columbia
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
Re: United States v. Ney, No. 06-cr-272 (ESH)

Dear Judge Huvelle:

I am writing in support of leniency for Robert Ney, whom I have known since he was first elected to Congress in 1994. I am a liberal journalist based in Washington, D.C., who has been on the air with Republican Congressman Ney on a local radio station in Mr. Ney's congressional district. I reported on the day's news, and he presented his views as the representative from his district. We became friends, and although we did not often agree politically, we shared the belief that our government needs to do more for working families. Former Congressman Ney is considered by both sides of the political aisle to be a champion for housing, education, and healthcare for all Americans. Robert Ney was the most extraordinary member of Congress I have encountered in my fifteen years on Capitol Hill. He is a peacemaker, mediator and healer of the ills of our nation, and I believe that our nation is in critical need of this type of servant-based leadership. His downfall has emboldened his sense of compassion and renewed his intention to live a life of service to others.

Unfortunately, Congressman Ney made some grave personal judgments for which he has paid, and will continue to pay, a heavy price. Although he takes full responsibility, I believe that alcohol was the driving force behind those poor judgments. I will always regret that I waited too long before I sought help for him and his alcoholism. Having worked extensively in the field of alcohol addiction before becoming a journalist, I had been very concerned about his drinking since the year 2000. I spoke about my concerns with people who knew Congressman Ney, with the radio host I worked with in his district, and with Congressman Ney's wife, yet I did not confront Congressman Ney about his drinking until last February. Until he told me, I was not aware of his wife's problem with prescription drugs. Neither of them was willing to confront the other.

Many Republican and Democratic members of Congress and staff members would like to support former Congressman Ney, but because of the political climate in Washington, they dare not. I have spoken with several of them and the following is a synopsis of some of those conversations: (I have excluded names as this letter is being made public, but I would be glad to provide you with their names if you would like to verify what they have told me.)



A female Democratic Representative told me what a "good man he is" and how he reached out to help poor people because of his concern for them. A male Democratic Representative said that he and then-Congressman Ney looked out for each other because so few members were concerned about the working Americans who struggle in their district. Another Member of Congress, also a Democrat, related a time when then-Congressman Ney chaired a subcommittee. Congressman Ney gave everyone a chance to speak, to vent and to present his or her ideas. When Louis Farrakhan walked into the hearing, as this Member told me, he asked Mr. Farrakhan to speak. "There are not even many members of the Black Caucus who would have even offered him a chance to speak." One of the Members I spoke with told me how much then-Congressman Ney had cared, and how other members of congress had done far worse things. That Member told me that those members are getting off with fines and so forth, but Congressman Ney did not act in lockstep. His voting in congress angered *the powers that be* in the majority, and he is paying for it unfairly.

His housing staff cried when I went to see them—some of them veterans of the Hill for over twenty years. They said there would never be another member of congress who cared so much or who would be a better boss.

Robert Ney's dedication to the betterment of others has been a lifelong vocation. As a young adult, he was volunteer and teacher in Iran. He was the only member of Congress fluent in Farsi. He believes the path to cooperation starts with service; that our service to others builds the bridges upon which we can meet and move forward to a better future. He carried this philosophy into one of the most powerful governing bodies in the world, and he used his power in that capacity to help others. He no longer derives his power from the office he holds, but from the mettle of his character. It is my hope that you will consider returning former Congressman Ney to our society, which so profoundly needs his service.

Respectfully,



Ellen F. Ratner
Bureau Chief

Attachment: "My Friend Bob Ney" *The Hill*, October 25th 2006

January 6, 2007

The Honorable Ellen Segal Huvelle
United States District Court for the District of Columbia
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Re: United States vs. Ney, No. 06-cr-272 (ESH)

Dear Judge Huvelle,

My name is Wesley E. Leggett and I am writing to you today to hopefully bring to your attention an entirely different picture of Bob Ney than the investigators and prosecutors have presented.

Approximately 15 years ago, as a result of our professional careers, my affiliation with Bob Ney began. I was the State Director of Veterans Employment & Training for the U.S. Dept. of Labor in Ohio. At that time, Bob Ney was a State Senator in Ohio and then later was elected as Congressman for the 18th Congressional District. Our personal friendship developed through the various elected and appointed positions that I held at state and national levels with the Disabled American Veterans and the AMVETS. Bob has always been an advocate for our veterans and our active military personnel.

There were numerous times, throughout my career, that I consulted and directly worked with Mr. Ney on various issues regarding veterans benefits and entitlements, simply because of our respective career positions. Judge Huvelle, I can honestly tell you that I cannot recall one single time that I reached out for his professional assistance and/or advice that he did not respond. Bob Ney, in my opinion, was and still is, one of the premier supporters of veterans causes that ever held an elected office. Bob Ney was a veterans advocate in his professional life, as well as his personal life. He truly exemplified what an elected official should be in this country.

Mr. Ney's commitment and loyalty for our military active duty personnel is equally true, which was TRULY exemplified by him personally traveling to Iraq during his own service to our country as the Congressman for the 18th district. Mr. Ney would never have had to leave his safe haven office in Washington, DC. Bob Ney was willing to put himself in harms way (by personally going into Iraq) so that he would have first hand knowledge of what was taking place over there and more specifically to ascertain that our military forces were receiving everything that they needed to win that war.

Judge Huvelle, I am aware of the charges that were brought against Mr. Ney, as well as his guilty Plea. I will continually support Bob Ney for the rest of my life. However, I am not suggesting that he did not commit some infractions of the law and does not deserve some type of reparations for those deeds, but rather I would like to encourage you to consider two very important facts when you sentence him.

1) The total number of years that he served the people of this great nation not only in his professional career, but also as a private citizen. Judge Huvelle, I suggest to you that Bob Ney has served the people of this country his entire life in one capacity or another. I also know for a fact that Bob Ney always held his staff in the highest regard and trusted them to provide him with the best and most detailed facts possible. Today, I know that his trust eventually became his greatest detriment and as a result he is facing severe

legal consequences; his career is ruined; he has lost his house, his vehicles; all of his personal savings and retirement benefits and has been left with a mountain of unpaid bills.

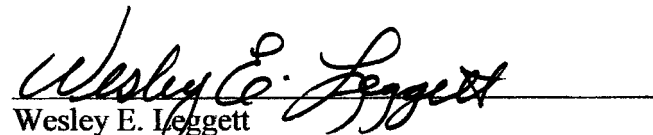
2) Bob Ney, by his own admittance and acceptance, has started dealing with, what I believe is the most crucial factor in his present case. That is that he is an alcoholic. However, since his admittance to specific issues, Bob has gone through rehabilitation and has been attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings on a daily basis, and often times two meetings a day.

Judge Huvelle, as a friend of the court as well as Bob Ney, I encourage you to strongly consider Bob's alcoholism during his sentencing. I believe deep in my heart that if you do, you will very clearly see that Bob Ney is not a bad guy trying to become a good guy, but rather Bob Ney was a sick man and is now trying to become well. Judge Huvelle, I know this for a fact because I too am a recovering alcoholic. This statement to you is clearly a plea to you to please read the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III (DSM III) as it relates to alcoholism, which is what doctors use to diagnose various diseases. In that manual it clearly defines alcoholism as "a continual and progressive disease that if left untreated may become potentially fatal." It goes on to say that the most effective way to treat this disease is by first going through a treatment program that provides specific education on the disease, as well as the possible consequences of leaving the disease of alcoholism untreated. The disease of alcoholism took this man from being a very successful state senator and United States Congressman to now facing many legal and financial consequences. His drinking severely clouded his judgment, as well as his ability to make sound, clear decisions.

Judge Huvelle, in closing, I do not believe and I know deep in my heart that Bob Ney is not in any way a criminal. Did he make improper decisions? Absolutely. But is he a criminal that deserves to be locked away? Absolutely not. Judge Huvelle, we do not lock up diabetics when they forget to take their insulin and create panic or when they begin to seizure in public, nor do we incarcerate people with Bi-polar Disorders who do not take their medications and act inappropriately in public places. So why would we believe that incarcerating Bob Ney will be more beneficial to him or our society than assuring that he continues to receive the recommended treatment for his disease as we would a diabetic or someone with a bi-polar disorder or someone with cancer? Judge Huvelle, these are all treatable, but potentially fatal diseases if left untreated that are recognized by the American Medical Association.

In closing, I thank you in advance, for taking the time to read my plea for Bob and the disease of alcoholism. I pray that God will provide you with the wisdom and the willingness to do the next right thing for Bob Ney.

Respectfully submitted,


Wesley E. Leggett

