

Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) is calling on Congress to investigate a series of recent reports that detail rampant corruption in Afghanistan. The reports shed light on the shady dealings between government officials and the Kabul Bank, which include [an illicit \\$200,000 donation to the reelection campaign of President Hamid Karzai](#) and nearly [\\$45 million in no-interest loans made to Afghan political elite](#)

In a letter to Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense and Foreign Operations, Welch urged the subcommittee to conduct a series of hearings to uncover the breadth of corruption at the Kabul Bank and within the government of Afghanistan. The latest reports about the bank add to a troubling pattern of events revealing pervasive corruption among government officials. In just one example, [more than \\$3 billion in cash was openly flown out of Kabul International Airport by top Afghan officials](#)

"As Congress struggles to get America's fiscal house in order, we should be questioning every U.S. dollar spent in support of this corrupt government," wrote Welch. "I urge you to open an investigation into these recent reports and conduct a series of hearings to put a spotlight on the theft, waste and misuse of funds provided by American taxpayers in support of a hopelessly corrupt Afghan government."

Welch sits on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and has traveled to Afghanistan three times to meet with Afghan government officials. He has been a leader in the effort to root out corruption in the country. Most recently he introduced legislation that would prevent the Afghan government from taxing American companies that administer aid to

Afghanistan. Chairman Chaffetz and Ranking Democrat Rep. John Tierney (D-Mass.) have also been strong leaders in fighting corruption in Afghanistan.

The full text of Welch's letter is copied below. For a PDF of the letter, [CLICK HERE](#) .

Dear Chairman Chaffetz,

Earlier this week the New York Times reported that the Kabul Bank made over \$45 million in no interest loans to Afghan political elite. As previously reported by the New Yorker, Afghan officials have used their largest financial institution as a private slush fund, effectively rendering it insolvent.

These latest reports add to a troubling pattern of events that reflect a pervasive corruption among Afghan government officials. For example, more than \$3 billion in cash was openly flown out of Kabul International Airport by top Afghan officials and former Vice President Ahmad Zia Massoud's attempted to leave the country with \$52 million in cash.

As Congress attempts to get America's fiscal house in order, we should be questioning every U.S. dollar spent in support of this corrupt government. I write to urge you to open an investigation into these recent reports and conduct a series of hearings to put a spotlight on the waste and misuse of funds provided by American taxpayers in support of a hopelessly corrupt Afghan government.

I look forward to working with you and Ranking Member Tierney on this issue.

Sincerely,

PETER WELCH

Member of Congress