

Congress Used \$199K of Taxpayer Money to Settle Sexual Harassment Claims



Summary: On Tuesday, a report was released that showed thousands of taxpayer dollars were used to settle sexual harassment complaints.

The House Administration Committee was given a report on Tuesday that showed almost \$199,000 was paid out to settle Capitol Hill sexual harassment claims in the past ten years, according to NBC News. The money came from taxpayers.

The information was given to Representative Gregg Harper, a Republican from Mississippi. Harper is the chairman of the House Administrative Committee, a group commissioned by the Office of Compliance (OOC). He sought the numbers as an effort to gain a handle on the amount of sexual harassment in Congress.

According to NBC News, the pay-out information was not available to the public in the past, and it was shared during a closed-door meeting held this morning.

The new details released on Tuesday show that taxpayers paid \$115,000 to settle Congressional sexual harassment complaints from 2008 to 2012. This is an addition to the \$84,000 that was settled from 2013 to 2017 that had already been disclosed.

The \$84,000 amount came from a complaint against Representative Blake Farenthold, a Republican from Texas. After news of his settlement, he announced he will not seek re-election.

With these two amounts, it appears that \$199,000 of taxpayer money was used to settle sexual harassment claims from 2008 to the present. Harper said that he would also like to review information from 1997 to 2007.

Harper told NBC News that his committee is working on bipartisan legislation to end sexual harassment in government.

"As I have stated from the beginning of this review, one case of sexual harassment is one too many," Harper said in a statement. "We must create a culture within our Capitol Hill community that instills in every employee and employer, new and old, that there is no place for sexual harassment in the halls of Congress."

Since the fall of famous Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein in October, accusers have come forward in all industries to share their stories of sexual harassment or misconduct. In Congress, this has resulted in the resignations of power players such as Jim Conyers and Al Franken and the political demise of candidate Roy Moore.

Susan Grundmann, executive director of the OOC, said that the new information released could not include details because of confidentiality agreements.

"Earlier this month the OOC provided the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration with a statistical breakdown of settlement amounts involving Senate employing offices from 1997-2017. That information represents the full extent of what we can provide with regard to settlements under the CAA involving the Senate," Grundmann wrote. "Any additional disclosure would involve an invasive search of strictly confidential records, which would be contrary to existing law."

- [Men Who Have Recently Resigned After Sexual Harassment Accusations](#)
- [All the Men Recently Accused of Sexual Harassment](#)
- [19 Hollywood Power Players Recently Accused of Sexual Harassment](#)
- [House Addresses Sexual Harassment Problem on Capitol Hill](#)

Source: NBC News

What do you think of taxpayer money being used to settle sexual harassment cases? Let us know in the comments below.

