

**Statement of Chairman Tom Davis  
Committee on Government Reform  
Business Meeting: Committee Vote to Immunize William Bulger and Francis P. Salemme  
April 9, 2003**

We are here today to vote on the separate resolutions to grant William Bulger and Francis Salemme immunity, so that the Committee on Government Reform may receive testimony and information from Mr. Bulger and Mr. Salemme in Committee proceedings. Let me say at the outset that this Committee's consideration of immunity for Mr. Bulger and Mr. Salemme at the same time is not intended to suggest in any way that the Committee is trying to connect the two. We are doing this at the same time solely as a matter of conserving the resources of the Committee, the House Counsel, and the courts.

During the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, this Committee conducted a two-year investigation of the Department of Justice's misuse of F.B.I. informants in the New England region from 1964 until the present. This investigation remains open.

James "Whitey" Bulger was an informant for the F.B.I. in Boston. James Bulger was repeatedly able to avoid arrest due to information illegally leaked to him by his F.B.I. handler. When James Bulger was indicted, he was tipped off by his handler and was able to flee the jurisdiction. James Bulger is currently wanted on eighteen counts of murder, as well as other RICO offenses, some of which were committed during his tenure as an F.B.I. informant. He is currently listed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List.

Pursuant to subpoena, William Bulger, James Bulger's brother, appeared before this Committee on December 6, 2002. At that time, William Bulger exercised his Fifth Amendment privilege and declined to testify. Granting immunity to William Bulger is essential to this Committee, as he may have information regarding both law enforcement's efforts to locate James Bulger and the Justice Department's misuse of F.B.I. informants.

This information will help the Committee gain a complete understanding of the scope of the FBI's misuse of informants in Boston. That understanding will, in turn, inform the

Committee's consideration of possible remedies, which could include enhanced whistleblower protections or a review of the FBI's guidelines for the use of confidential informants.

Francis Salemme, who also has information regarding the Justice Department's misuse of informants, is willing to cooperate fully in this Committee's investigation. Mr. Salemme has requested immunity, so that he may be completely open and candid with the Committee. Granting immunity to Francis Salemme is also important to this Committee's full understanding of the Justice Department's misuse of informants.

The Justice Department has informed the Committee that it has no objection to the grants of immunity to either William Bulger or Francis Salemme. Pursuant to the Department's suggestion, however, we also contacted state law enforcement authorities regarding the grant of immunity to Mr. Salemme. They had no objection. Therefore, the Committee seeks immunity for William Bulger and Francis Salemme as an appropriate means to further this investigation.

###