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Watchdog Groups Send Request for Independent Investigation of IURC/Duke Ethics Scandal to U.S. Attorney

Common Cause/Indiana and the Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana today sent a letter to Joe Hogsett, the United States Attorney for Indiana's Southern District requesting his office immediately begin an investigation into official misconduct by members and staff of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission and Duke Energy.

Both organizations have called for such an investigation in verbal statements but hope that a written request will provide an impetus for the U.S. Attorney to proceed.

Julia Vaughn, Common Cause/Indiana Policy Director said, "Common Cause/Indiana is gravely concerned by the allegations of unethical conduct that have been raised by media reports of the IURC/Duke scandal. We appreciate the swift action taken by Governor Daniels to remove David Hardy as chairman of the IURC and commend the Inspector General for filing an ethics complaint against former IURC attorney Scott Storms."

Vaughn continued, "But, we remain concerned that the scope of any internal investigation into additional wrongdoing by these individuals, and potentially others, will be limited by the simple fact that it is extremely difficult for any appointee of the Governor to investigate another member of the executive branch. In order to ensure the public interest is fully protected an independent investigation is warranted."

Grant Smith, Citizens Action Coalition Executive Director stated, "CAC agrees with Common Cause/Indiana that the U.S. Attorney should step in at this time. We have received information and uncovered additional facts concerning actions by former IURC chair David Hardy and former IURC general counsel Scott Storms and others that indicate an investigation by law enforcement outside the purview of the executive branch is needed."

Smith concluded, "While we have shared this information with the Governor's office and the Inspector General, we have received no indication that they are acting on it. Perhaps they are simply keeping their cards close to their chest but to ensure this matter is fully

reviewed, an investigation outside the executive branch better protects the interests of Indiana citizens.”