

May 5, 2023

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Supreme Court ethics reform

Dear Senator Grassley:

Yesterday, news reports revealed that conservative megadonor Harlan Crow footed the bill for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas's child's private school tuition, just the latest revelation in the highly problematic relationship between Crow and Justice Thomas that sparked a series of questions about how the Supreme Court handles ethics issues. Since news first broke of Justice Thomas's decades-worth of undisclosed luxury travel and gifts from Harlan Crow, new information has come to light involving Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Gorsuch — throwing the Supreme Court into a full-blown legitimacy crisis.

In the wake of these serious ethics issues, Chief Justice Roberts has refused to act, forcing Congress to step in. Your Democratic colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee led the charge to address the crisis by organizing a hearing focused on Supreme Court ethics reform. Rather than work with them to find actionable solutions for the crisis at hand, you slammed their actions as a “hit job” and focused your attention on peddling debunked conspiracies regarding President Biden. Instead of resurfacing conspiracies and political stunts, I urge you to focus on the open corruption crisis plaguing the Court.

For years, you have publicly championed your work on Supreme Court issues, calling yourself an advocate for “greater accountability in the federal judiciary” and sponsoring legislation to increase judicial transparency. But when given a rare opportunity to take a stand against ongoing ethical misconduct at the highest level, you have scoffed at reasonable concerns and refused to act.

Your sudden about-face on Supreme Court ethics issues forces the American people to wonder if the tens of thousands in campaign contributions you've accepted from Harlan Crow might have clouded your judgment. Americans deserve an explanation. What is the extent of your relationship with Crow? Why are you suddenly standing on the sidelines on transparency and accountability in the judiciary?

Our nation's highest court should not have the lowest ethical standards, as they do now. Without immediate reform to restore credibility and integrity to our Court, public trust in one of our core American institutions will continue to erode. Instead of peddling conspiracies, I urge you to join your Democratic colleagues in taking action to address the Court in crisis.

Sincerely,



Kyle Herrig
President, Accountable.US