

# Center for American Progress



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## **American Airlines, Verizon and Nissan Pledge to Stop Financing Tom DeLay's Legal Defense Fund**

### ***Move Comes In Response to American Progress Action Fund's "Drop the Hammer" Campaign***

Under pressure from nearly 20,000 citizen activists, American Airlines, Verizon and Nissan North America have formally pledged to stop contributing to Rep. Tom DeLay's legal defense fund. For four weeks, individuals have sent nearly 150,000 e-mails to the three companies demanding action through DropTheHammer.org, a website created by the American Progress Action Fund. John Podesta, President of the American Progress Action Fund, said, "We congratulate these companies for responding to the public's concern and taking a positive step towards restoring confidence in an ethical government."

**American Airlines issued the following statement to the American Progress Action Fund on May 3 :**

Subject: DeLay campaign

American Airlines does not intend to make any future contributions to Representative DeLay's legal defense fund. The \$5000 contribution, made three years ago, was done by an individual who is no longer part of American Airlines.

Roger Frizzell  
Vice President, Corporate Communications and Advertising American Airlines  
817-967-1577

**Verizon Communications issued this statement to the American Progress Action Fund on May 4:**

Subject: "Drop the Hammer" campaign

It is Verizon's corporate policy not to contribute to legal defense funds. This policy has been in effect for several years. The contribution cited by your organization was made

almost four years ago, before that policy went into effect.

David Fish  
Exec. Director, Media Relations  
Verizon Communications, Inc.  
202-515-2514

**Nissan North America issued this statement to the American Progress Action Fund on May 4:**

In July 2001, Nissan North America made a \$5,000 donation to the Tom DeLay Legal Expense Trust. We have not made any subsequent donation to this trust, we will not make any donations to the trust in the future and we do not plan to seek a refund.

Fred Standish  
Director, Corporate Communications

**Background on DropTheHammer.org**

The American Progress Action Fund launched the DropTheHammer.org campaign on April 6. The campaign asked concerned citizens to contact five corporations that had donated to DeLay's defense fund and ask that the corporations pledge to make no further donations to DeLay's defense fund.

Collectively, these five corporations have received over 200,000 e-mails. A corporation-by-corporation breakdown is noted below. Bacardi USA and RJ Reynolds remain targets of the DropTheHammer.org campaign. Later this week, DropTheHammer.org is launching a national radio advertising campaign.

American Airlines:	64,772 e-mails
Verizon:	33,246 e-mails
Bacardi USA:	15,753 e-mails
RJR Nabisco:	46,809 e-mails
Nissan USA:	47,388 e-mails