

McCain disappointed by accusatory article

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said Thursday he was "disappointed" by a published report questioning his relationship with a lobbyist eight years ago. The New York Times published an article about the Republican presidential hopeful's relationship with lobbyist Vicki Iseman, whose clients had business before the Senate Commerce Committee, of which McCain was chairman. "I'm very disappointed in The New York Times piece. It's not true," said McCain, who said he and Iseman were "friends" and she didn't influence him regarding legislative actions. The GOP front-runner said he wasn't approached by staff members in 2000 about not seeing Iseman, which contradicts the Times article. The accusations in the article strike at the heart of his campaign regarding lobbyists and using his influence. "At no time have I ever done anything that would betray the public trust or make a decision, which, in any way, would not be in the public interest and would favor anyone (or) organization," he said. He said he answered questions the Times e-mailed to him but his answers were not part of the article. He said he didn't try to dissuade the newspaper from publishing the story. "Something like this is always distracting and disappointing," McCain said. "I'm hoping we can put to rest whole situation (because) it keeps me from talking about big issues."

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