

Obama, Clinton won tax breaks for donors

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Both Democratic U.S. presidential hopefuls pledged to curb lobbyists' influence in Washington, yet have won tax breaks for some of their contributors. The campaign for Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., accepted \$54,350 from a member of a law firm that lobbied him to introduce a tax provision for a Japanese drug company operating in Illinois, USA Today reported Tuesday. Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., introduced legislation -- which subsequently became law -- at the request of New York food importer, requiring the government to refund thousands of dollars in duty charged on imported tomato products, the newspaper reported. The company donated to Clinton's campaign in 2000 and 2002. It's legal for congressional members to accept campaign money from people who benefit from their actions, the newspaper said. Clinton has accepted money from lobbyists, but recently has stepped up her criticism of what she called, "a government of, by and for the special interests." Obama touts his refusal to take donations from Washington lobbyists, but he accepts money from their co-workers who are not registered to lobby, USA Today said. In speeches, he has derided circumstances allowing "lobbyists (to) write check after check and Exxon makes record profits."

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