

Pelosi seeks probe of Bolten, Miers

by UPI

WASHINGTON - House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has called on Attorney General Michael Mukasey to open a grand jury probe of a current and a former White House staffer.

The House voted to pursue contempt of Congress charges against White House Chief of Staff Josh Bolten and former White House Counsel Harriett Miers for not responding to subpoenas issued as part of Congress' investigation into the U.S. attorney firing probe.

Mukasey and his predecessor, Alberto Gonzales, said they would not allow Jeffrey Taylor, U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, to take action. Taylor would be responsible for prosecuting the criminal case against Bolten and Miers, The Politico reported.

The Justice Department maintains criminal charges cannot be brought against executive branch officials for refusing to comply with a congressional subpoena once the president invokes executive privilege, as President George W. Bush did in the case of Bolten and Miers.

"There is no authority by which persons may wholly ignore a subpoena and fail to appear as directed because a president unilaterally instructs them to do so," Pelosi wrote to Mukasey Thursday.

Besides approving the contempt citations, the House authorized Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers, D-Mich., to initiate a civil contempt action against the two aides.

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