

Leahy, Specter ask Gonzales to clarify

by UPI

WASHINGTON - Two top members of the Senate Judiciary Committee Wednesday asked U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales to clarify testimony he gave last week in Congress.

Judiciary Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and ranking member Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., asked Gonzales in a letter to "promptly supplement your testimony of April 19" regarding Gonzales' knowledge and involvement in the dismissal of eight U.S. attorneys.

The letter asked Gonzales to submit responses by May 4 to questions that he did not answer during his testimony because he said he could not recall or did not know the answers.

"You spent weeks preparing for the April 19 hearing," Leahy and Specter wrote. "Yet during your testimony, in response to questions from senators on both sides of the aisle, you often responded that you could not recall."

The letter said Gonzales failed to provide answers "well over 60 times," and the result was that the committee's effort to investigate the firing of the prosecutors had been "hampered."

"The questions asked by senators should not have been a surprise," Leahy and Specter wrote. "You were alerted in letters to you well in advance of last Thursday's hearing."

Gonzales said the dismissals were "flawed" but nothing improper occurred and said he would resign if he became ineffective.

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