

Tauzin reportedly linked to Jefferson case

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The unnamed U.S. congressman who allegedly helped Rep. William Jefferson by writing a letter to a corporate executive is former Rep. Billy Tauzin, R-La.

Jefferson is under indictment for alleged influence peddling involving companies seeking to do business in Africa. One of the companies involved was iGate, based in Louisville, Ky.

The Hill reported Tuesday that it obtained a copy of a letter Tauzin, then chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, wrote to iGate Chief Executive Vernon Jackson.

"To the best of my knowledge, this letter has nothing to do with the investigation. He is not a target," said Ken Johnson, who worked with Tauzin in Congress and now works with him at a drug industry lobbying group. "Jefferson did ask for it, but it was principally a staff-driven letter."

Federal prosecutors apparently do not consider Tauzin a target of their investigation since he is not named in the indictment.

Tauzin spent more than two decades in Congress, first as a Democrat and then as a Republican. He now heads the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

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