

January 21, 1998

BY HAND DELIVERY

The Honorable Robin H. Carle
Clerk of the House of Representatives
H-154
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ms. Carle:

As Chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, I have a great interest in ensuring that the Assassination Records Review Board, which is under the jurisdiction of the Committee, completes its work by its scheduled termination date of September 30, 1998. Earlier this year, I introduced H.R. 1553, now Public Law 105-25, which extended the authorization of the Review Board for one additional year, until September 30, 1998. This one-year extension of authoroization for the Review Board was included in President Clinton's fiscal year 1998 budget, and received bipartisan support in Congress.

During consideration of H.R. 1553, I stated my firm intention for this to be the final extension of authorization for the Review Board. Accordingly, it is of utmost importance that all federal agencies and Congressional Committees holding assassination records fully cooperate with the Review Board, in a timely manner, in order that documents may be processed and transferred to the National Archives in compliance with the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-526).

The Review Board has advised me that it appreciates the cooperation of the Clerk's Office in attempting to facilitate the review and identification of assassination records among certain House Committee records for which the Clerk's Office has responsibility. In particular, I understand that the Review Board is attempting to obtain authorization to inspect the records of the following three House committees (as well as authorization to release any identified assassination records held by these committees): (1) the House Committee on Un-American Activities; (2) the House Government Operation's Subcommittee on Government and Individual Rights, chaired by Congresswoman Bella Abzug; and (3) the House Judiciary's Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, chaired by Congressman Don Edwards.

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While the Clerk's Office has been cooperative and helpful, the Review Board has informed me that no recent progress has yet been made in granting the Review Board the necessary authorizations to complete the identification and public release of assassination records that may reside within these Congressional holdings. Accordingly, I urge you to take all appropriate steps, as soon as possible, to ensure that the relevant Congressional records can be inspected and transferred to the National Archives so that the important goals of the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 can be fulfilled.

Sincerely,

Dan Burton
Chairman