



Klein Strips Smith of Assignments, Chairmanship

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Sen. Jeff Klein has stripped Sen. Malcolm Smith of his chairmanship and committees. In a statement just issued by the Independent Democratic Conference Klein implies that Smith should consider resignation. The move comes in response to Smith's arrest earlier today on [charges](#) that he tried to bribe his way onto the Republican ticket in the New York City mayoral race:

These are very serious allegations that, if true, constitute a clear betrayal of the public trust. As a result of these charges, I have made the decision to strip Senator Smith of his committee assignments and of his conference leadership position. By participating in the alleged scheme, Senator Smith breached the trust of the Independent Democratic Conference. I trust that the U.S. attorney's office will act expeditiously to resolve this matter and to ensure that justice is served. Finally, given the level of criminality alleged, I believe that Senator Smith should seriously consider whether or not he can continue to effectively serve his constituents."

Smith joined the Independent Democratic Conference late last year. The IDC paired with Senate Republicans just as it seemed Senate Democrats had won back control of the Senate. Smith is the only member of color of the IDC. Placards in front of Smith's office listing his committee assignments were taken down earlier today. Klein seems to hint in his statement that Smith should resign. It isn't clear what it would mean for control of the Senate if Smith resigned or if he is convicted.

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