

*This article originally appeared in Roll Call on February 22, 2012*

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In response to reports that Rep. [Ron Paul](#) (R-Texas) was double-reimbursed for travel, Rep. [Mike Quigley](#) (D-Ill.) is drawing up a resolution to strengthen travel reporting requirements in the House.

Quigley's proposal would require Members to itemize individual travel expenses, among other things, in order to fill in gaps in publicly reported data that arose in 2009.

That year, the House for the first time released its quarterly expense reports online. But Congressional administrators erased a vast array of details on the expenditures, making it impossible to determine what much of the money was actually spent on.

The changes also make it almost impossible to track whether Members are being paid by taxpayers and other groups for the same items.

In the case of Paul's flights, Roll Call obtained copies of credit card statements for an American Express card in Paul's name on which many flights were purchased. The flight details on those statements matched two payment records, the first filed to the Federal Election Commission by Paul's campaign and the second to office expenses itemized in quarterly Congressional disbursement statements published by the Chief Administrative Officer of the House.

Even before the 2009 changes, public records alone did not provide enough information to determine whether a payment from a campaign committee and another from a Member's House

office budget are for the same item.

For instance, in December 2008 Paul's campaign paid \$1,217.50 for a plane ticket. Later that month, taxpayers also paid Paul \$1,217.50 for a plane ticket. But details that could show whether they were the same ticket — such as departure date, passenger name and flight path — weren't reported in the campaign's FEC filings.

The credit card statements included those and other details, allowing the payments to be matched for dozens of flights.

The post-2009 House records offer almost no details. Expenses are described as "commercial transportation" or "travel subsistence." In many cases, the amounts itemized are large enough to suggest numerous expenses are being grouped together on the same line item, obscuring the costs of individual purchases.

Quigley said he drafted the proposal in response to Roll Call's story, but he said it isn't meant to single Paul out. Instead, he urged an investigation to clarify the circumstances of the flights.

"I believe that's merited and will take its natural course," he said.

Quigley's remarks came in response to an inquiry sent by Roll Call to 23 members of the Congressional Transparency Caucus asking whether they would voluntarily provide the details of their travel expenses, including receipts and other documentation, for July 1 to Sept. 30, the period covered by the last statement of disbursements.

Quigley is the chairman of the Transparency Caucus.

Most offices did not respond to repeated inquiries. Other offices balked at the request.

“You’re asking us to give you more information than we’re required?” asked Catherine Mortensen, a spokeswoman for Rep. [Doug Lamborn](#) (R-Colo.). “Why would we do that?”

“I think our office is going to pass this time,” said John Hadlock, a spokesman for Rep. [Jason Chaffetz](#) (R-Utah).

A spokesman for Rep. [Jared Polis](#) (D-Colo.), the sixth-wealthiest Member of Congress, said Polis does not accept taxpayer reimbursements for his travel.

Only two offices voluntarily provided Roll Call with more documentation than what is publicly reported: Quigley and Rep. [Patrick McHenry](#) (R-N.C.).

Quigley provided copies of reimbursement “vouchers,” which are forms sent to the House Finance Office with accompanying receipts that document expenses that are being reimbursed.

McHenry’s office allowed Roll Call to review these vouchers and the receipts that were sent in, and provided copies of several sample vouchers and receipts.

These records show that the House has all the information one would need to track duplicate reimbursements, but many of those details aren’t reported.

For official air travel, for example, McHenry provides the House Finance Office with credit card statements for the House-issued card he uses to purchase the tickets. The statements indicate purchase date, passenger name, flight path, ticket price and departure date.

The full voucher records also include documents with personal information, such as a Verizon telephone bill that included a call history.

Quigley told Roll Call that two reforms could improve transparency and reduce the opportunity for double-dipping.

First, he recommended reporting itemized travel expenses with more robust details about who is traveling and to where.

Secondly, he said Members should be required to use the House-issued credit card for purchasing travel expenses. Using such a card means reimbursement payments aren't sent to Members' personal bank accounts.

"I have never been reimbursed at the federal level. Never want to be in a million years," Quigley said. "To me, it's just not worth the red flag."

Most Members use House-issued cards to purchase plane tickets, experts said, but a small minority, including Paul, use personal credit cards.

Quigley is considering including other potential reforms in the resolution as well.

"I come from a state where four governors have gone to jail since I've been alive," the Illinois lawmaker said. "Two of my last four predecessors in this seat went to jail or are going to jail. I got elected on this issue. I was the reformer of Cook County, and I recognize that this is a big deal.

"It's not the sheer dollar figures, it's the lack of trust – that lack of accountability and transparency that really bothers people," he added. "I think the public understands that if it can happen with a couple thousand dollars, it can happen with millions."