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January 5, 2011

Dan Busby, President
Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability
440 W Jubal Early Dr, Suite 130
Winchester, VA 22601

Dear Mr. Busby,

I am writing to express my appreciation for the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability's (ECFA) ongoing dialogue with me and my staff about the accountability of religious organizations. In my June 8, 2009, letter to you, I explained that my staff was considering several proposals to address policy issues. In that letter, I stated that I would reserve judgment on any proposals until my staff had completed its work.

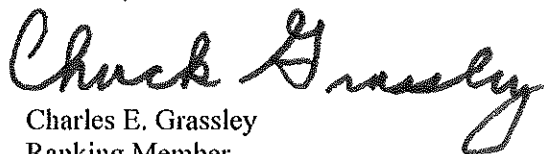
I am enclosing a copy of the memo to me that transmits my staff's reviews of the media-based ministries I wrote to in 2007. This memo also outlines the policy issues identified by my staff. I am writing to request your input on how to address these issues and to help facilitate discussion on whether these issues can be addressed without legislation. ECFA has a proven track record of accountability with its member organizations and is uniquely situated to work with representatives from the religious and broader nonprofit community. The Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, spearheaded by Independent Sector, provided invaluable feedback to my staff's 2004 proposals regarding charity reform. ECFA's work will be just as vital in informing me and making a positive difference in the religious community.

As you consider the issues my staff raised, please remember our discussion in my office when you visited me with other members of ECFA board on March 12, 2009. I stated then that I believe that legislation should be the last resort. However, ideas for reform often inspire informed and thoughtful discussions which, in turn, lead to self-correction and eliminate the need for legislation.

ECFA was founded because of a challenge then-Senator Hatfield made in 1977 to Christian groups to be more accountable. He apparently was responding to a scandal in the religious community at that time. The size and diversity of the religious community in the United States has grown tremendously since the ECFA was created. I hope that a discussion of the issues raised by my staff will similarly result in increased accountability while acknowledging this growth and diversity.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member