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DRUDGE REPORT



CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING WASTE IN COPENHAGEN; 21 MEMBERS, ALL-EXPENSES PAID
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An exclusive report that will air tonight on CBS EVENING NEWS WITH KATIE COURIC reveals the alarmingly high number of members of Congress who got an all-expense paid trip to Denmark -- on your dime!

An embargoed script from Sharyl Attkisson's report:

Few would argue with the US having a presence at the Copenhagen Climate Summit.

NATS OBAMA I'M ALWAYS HOPEFUL

(VO: Denmark beauty shot)

But wait until you hear what we found about how many in Congress got all-expense paid trips to Denmark... on your dime.

(VO)

Our camera spotted House Speaker Nancy Pelosi at the summit. She called the shots on who got to go.

That's House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.

And there's the embattled Chairman of the Tax Committee Charles Rangel.

"NATS: YOU TAKIN' CARE OF MR. RANGEL? HE SURE IS!"

(VO)

They were joined by 17 colleagues from both parties: Democrats: Waxman, Miller, Markey, Gordon, Levin, Blumenauer, DeGette, Inslee, Ryan, Butterfield, Cleaver, Giffords, and Republicans: Barton, Upton, Moore Capito, Sullivan, Blackburn.

(ATTKISSON STANDUP)

And that's not the half of it. But finding out more was a bit like trying to get the keys to Ft. Knox. Many referred us to Speaker Pelosi who wouldn't agree to an interview, give cost estimates or even tell us where they all stayed. Her office said it "will comply with disclosure requirements."

(VO)

Senator Inhofe is one of the few who provided us any detail. He attended the summit on his own for just a few hours, to give an "opposing view."

(SOT-INHOFE)

They're going because it's the biggest party of the year. The worst thing that happened there is they ran out of caviar.

(VO: JETS)

(MOVED) Our investigation found that the House delegation was so large, it needed three military jets: two 737's and a Gulfstream Five. Up to 64 passengers -- travelling in luxurious comfort.

(VO)

Add Senators and staff, most of whom flew commercial, and we counted at least 101 Congress-related attendees. All for a summit that failed to deliver a global climate deal.

(VO)

As a perk, some took spouses, since they could snag an open seat on a military jet or share a room at no extra cost to taxpayers.

(FLASH THRU VIDEO AT COPENHAGEN)

That's Congresswoman Giffords holding her husband's hand.

Moore Capito and her husband.

Markey took his wife - shown wearing red - (Susan Blumenthal) as did Sensenbrenner (Cheryl).

Congressman Barton-- a climate change skeptic-- even brought along his daughter, not shown here.

(VO)

Until required filings are made in the coming weeks, we can only figure bits and pieces of the cost to you.

(GRAPHIC 1)

Three military jets at \$57-hundred dollars an hour. (\$5,740) Dozens flew commercial at up to two thousand dollars each.

More than 300 (321) hotel nights booked - the bulk at Copenhagen's five-star Marriott.

Meals add tens of thousands more.

(VO)

Watchdog Steve Ellis wasn't against some sort of US presence but...considering the record deficit...

(SOT-STEVE ELLIS, TAXPAYERS FOR COMMON SENSE check)

7:22:48 EVERY PENNY COUNTS. CONGRESS SHOULD BE SHAKIN' THE COUCH CUSHIONS LOOKING FOR CHANGE, RATHER THAN SPENDING CASH FOR EVERYBODY TO GO TO COPENHAGEN. 23:00

(ATTKISSON STANDUP)

Nobody we asked would defend the super-sized Congressional presence on camera. One Democrat said it showed the world the US is serious about climate change.

(GRAPHIC: MILITARY JET WITH SMOKE AND FIGURES) And all those attendees who went to the summit rather than hooking up by teleconference? They produced enough climate-stunting carbon dioxide to fill 10,000 Olympic swimming pools. (40,500 tonnes/source: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change)

(VO: US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations/US Senators and Staff Only) Which means even if Congress didn't get a global agreement...

00:03:01 "EXCUSE ME" CRASH! (SLAMS DOOR on CAMERA)

... they left an indelible footprint all the same. Sharyl Attkisson, CBS News, Washington.

Developing...