

# Issa Subpoenas Gov't Documents In Boeing Case

Sam Hananel, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican chairman of the House Oversight committee has subpoenaed documents from the National Labor Relations Board's lawsuit against Boeing Co., increasing the political pressure over a case that has the GOP fuming.

Rep. Darrell Issa of California, a leading critic of the dispute, claims the lawsuit interferes with the company's ability to decide where to do its work.

The case "is unprecedented in a global economy and hobbles a leading American job creator at a time of economic vulnerability," Issa said in a letter Sunday to the agency's acting general counsel, Lafe Solomon.

The NLRB alleges that Boeing violated labor laws by opening a new production line for its 787 airplane in South Carolina. The agency claims Boeing is punishing Washington state workers for past strikes and wants the company to return the work to Washington. Boeing has vigorously denied the charges, claiming it opened the South Carolina plant for valid economic reasons.

South Carolina is one of 22 right-to-work states that prohibit union fees from being a condition of employment.

The NLRB has agreed to provide some documents to Issa, but says revealing other sensitive files would interfere with prosecution of the case and establish a dangerous precedent that could hinder future cases.

"I am disappointed and surprised by this development," Solomon said Monday. "For months, my staff and I have diligently tried to satisfy the committee's desire for information while also preserving the integrity of our process and the rights of the parties in a case being actively litigated."

Solomon said he would try to work with Issa to find "a reasonable and responsible balance."

In June, an administrative law judge denied Boeing's motion to dismiss the charges. Testimony is expected to begin later this year and the case could take months or years to resolve.

Democrats on the oversight committee have accused Issa of abusing his authority to help a private party during active litigation.

"There is no dispute that you have authority under the House Rules to issue a unilateral subpoena to further legitimate oversight efforts by the committee," Democrats said in a letter to Issa last month. "But you also have an obligation to

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use this power responsibly and not to exercise it to affect the outcome of an ongoing legal proceeding."

Issa's subpoena requires the labor board to provide the documents no later than noon Friday.

The case has become a major political issue, with Republican presidential candidates blaming the Obama administration for supporting the case. President Barack Obama says the case was brought by an independent federal agency and he is reluctant to interfere. But he has strongly hinted that Boeing and the Machinists union should be able to settle their differences.

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