

Report: Pearce among those who sought to weaken independent ethics office

Written by By Matthew Reichbach NM Political Report
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Rep. Steve Pearce was one of the Republican members of Congress who voted to gut the independent office looking into ethics, according to a news report.

The vote came during a closed-door meeting by Republicans and became public Monday. After a major public outcry, Republican lawmakers changed course Tuesday and announced they scrapped plans to remove the functions from the Office of Congressional Ethics.

Politico reported that Pearce was one of those who supported removing many key functions of the independent OCE, including its ability to refer allegations to law enforcement. The now-dead proposal sought to send give more power to the House Ethics Committee, which is made up of members of Congress.

From *Politico*:

Reps. Sam Graves (R-Mo.) and Steve Pearce (R-N.M.) also vocally supported the amendment. They or their staff had come under OCE's microscope.

A spokesman for Pearce said he had not spoken with the congressman about his vote.

“What is known, he has stated publicly his concerns over OCE’s process and has sought amendments in previous years that would maintain a high level of ethics in the House and ensure an individual’s protections under the Constitution,” Todd Willens told *NM Political Report* in an email.

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