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May 2, 2005

The Honourable Judy Sgro, MP
House of Commons
Confederation Building, Room 207
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Ms. Sgro,

I am writing in response to your letter of November 15, 2004 regarding your decision to grant a Temporary Resident Permit (TRP) and work permit to Ms. Alina Balaican.

Attached to your letter of November 15, 2004 is a Statement of Facts. I have reviewed this Statement carefully, and I have found it to correspond to my own understanding of the facts in almost all respects. That is, I believe on the basis of my own investigation that you had never met Ms. Balaican, that you did not know that Ms. Balaican was a volunteer in your campaign office when you decided to issue the TRP and work permit for her, and that the grounds upon which you made this decision were entirely consistent with the criteria that you have been using in your role as Minister.

On the other hand, it is also clear to me that while you were not aware of the volunteer status of Ms. Balaican, members of your staff did know of this.

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Thus, your staff for whom you bear responsibility did, in fact, place you in a conflict of interest one which could only have been avoided by not accepting campaign volunteers who were simultaneously seeking your intervention on their behalf or a refusal by both you and your staff to consider requests arising from such individuals. In this case, it appears that you have acted appropriately but that your staff did not.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bernard J. Shapiro".

Bernard J. Shapiro
Ethics Commissioner of Canada