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Congressman Tierney Accepted $72,000 Worth of Free Travel, With Flights, Hotels, and Meals from Aspen Institute

Billionaire-Backed Interest Group Includes David Koch on Board. Trips Included All-Expenses-Paid Junkets to Puerto Rico, Tunisia, and Paris

MIDDLETON -- For three consecutive bitterly-cold Februaries, while you were digging out from blizzards and nor'easters, do you know where your Congressman was?

Not shoveling snow. Congressman John Tierney has been out of the country, traveling the world on all-expenses-paid trips to warmer locales paid for by a special interest "Think Tank" called the

Aspen Institute, funded by billionaire George Soros and whose board includes David Koch.

"Escaping a New England winter to travel for free, at the behest of a special interest group, while your constituents were bearing snow, ice, and the worst recession in decades is about as out of touch as you can get," said Marisa DeFranco, the Democratic Candidate challenging Tierney. DeFranco was recently endorsed by the National Women's Political Caucus. "While most regular people can't afford such exotic destinations as Jordan, Tunisia, and France, Congressman Tierney has had no problem finding someone willing to sponsor him to see the world while we lost jobs and watched our fishing industry crumble."

Since 2008, Congressman Tierney has accepted six (6) foreign, and one domestic, all-expenses-paid trips with the Aspen Institute. He has traveled, for free, more than every other Massachusetts Senator and Representative, combined.

"I do not begrudge Mr. Tierney his vacations, but when the taxpayers pay you $174,000, you should be able to afford to see the world -- and maybe a few bits of his own country and district while he's at it," Marisa DeFranco said.

The DeFranco campaign has researched Mr. Tierney's trips, and using coach airfare numbers and business-class hotel rates, valued the trips at more than $40,000, which nearly doubles when you factor in meals and "per diem" expenses.

The trips include:

* February 18-20, 2008 -- Charleston, S.C. for a "Congressional Program" with the Aspen Institute

* August 15-23, 2008 -- Paris, France for a "Congressional Program" with the Aspen Institute

* February 14-20, 2009 -- Amman, Jordan for a "Congressional Program" with the Aspen Institute

* May 31 through June 6, 2010 -- Tunis, Tunisia for a "Congressional Program" with the Aspen Institute

* February 22-28, 2011 -- San Juan, Puerto Rico for a program on "Energy Security Policy Considerations for the New Congress"
* April 25 through May 1, 2011 -- Vienna, Austria

* September 24-30, 2011 -- Barcelona, Spain for an Aspen Institute program on "Policy Challenges in the Muslim World."

The research also showed that Congressman Tierney did not travel in 2012, when he faced a strong Republican challenge during the election year. He also traveled five out of seven times

with his wife accompanying him.

"It's time for the North Shore to have a Representative in Congress who hasn't lost touch with reality," Marisa DeFranco said. "I have pledged to run a clean money campaign, free of PAC funds, and I will never accept lavish gifts from a special interest group. It's wrong, and virtually every other member of the New England Delegation seems to have gotten the point."

So, next time you're shoveling snow, digging out your car, looking at the job numbers, or wondering why dragger boats can fish but you can't, ask yourself: Where in the world do you think your Congressman is right now?

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Paid for by DeFranco for Congress
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