

Watchdog group tallies Christian right visits to White House: Bush's guests

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Key conservative Christian leaders made dozens of visits to the White House during President George W. Bush's administration, a watchdog group announced.

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington had sought the records for years.

"Newly disclosed Bush-era White House visitor records suggest leading conservative Christian leaders may have had a significant voice in President Bush's administration, and many seem to have had the ear of the president himself," CREW said in a September 4 news release.

James Dobson, founder of the Colorado-based ministry Focus on the Family, visited the White House 24 times, including ten visits with President Bush. Tony Perkins, president of the Washington-based Family Research Council, visited 14 times, including two visits with Bush.

Evangelical women leaders, too, had political clout. Andrea Lafferty, executive director of the Washington-based Traditional Values Coalition, made 50 White House visits, including six with the president.

Wendy Wright, president of Washington-based Concerned Women for America, made the second-highest number of visits—43—including four with Bush.

Other well-known conservative religious leaders who visited Bush and others at the White House included the late Jerry Falwell and the late Paul Weyrich, founder of the Free Congress Foundation. *-Religion News Service*