

BAUCUS' GIRLFRIEND HELPED ARRANGE HIS SEPARATION

Okay, [this is just creepy](#), but creepy in terms that may impact politics more than Tiger Woods taking a hiatus from golf:

The Missoulian newspaper today [disclosed](#) that Sen. Max Baucus's future girlfriend, Melodee Hanes, was involved in discussions with the senator's divorce lawyer in 2007 while serving on the Montana Democrat's Senate staff. The Montana newspaper quoted from billing records submitted by Baucus's lawyer, Ronald F. Waterman, in Helena.

Main Justice obtained a copy of the billing records. Click [here](#) to see them.

The records show that Hanes – whom Baucus later recommended to the White House as a finalist for Montana's U.S. Attorney – consulted with the divorce lawyer on such delicate matters as how to determine the value of the home Baucus shared with his then-wife, Wanda, in Washington's exclusive Georgetown section.

Mind you, nothing about this development (unlike the fact that MaxTax nominated his girlfriend to be US Attorney and that he brought her on a trip to Dubai) is ethically scandalous. MaxTax just had his then State Director and now girlfriend handle discussions with the lawyers drawing up his separation agreement with his then wife.

Indeed, at one level this proves the point Baucus' office has been making—that Baucus' relationship with Hanes (which reportedly started in June 2008) had nothing to do with his split with his ex-wife.

But it is all rather, um, cozy.

Update: It gets creepier. Baucus' then wife, Wanda, [didn't know](#) that he was scheming on a separation at the time.

Wanda Baucus, the senator's second wife, said Friday that she knew nothing about the 2007 meetings and that the couple had not at that point discussed getting a divorce.

"I think this whole thing is very sad. It's not the way you do things," she said in an interview.

[snip]

"Ending a 25-year marriage is a serious undertaking that should be discussed first within the family," Wanda Baucus said. "There's no justification for the staff being involved in such private matters."

Which I guess means Baucus' then State Director and now girlfriend knew that he was splitting before his then wife did.