

# Rehberg's son works for lobbyists

[https://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/rehberg-s-son-works-for-lobbyists/article\\_0416ffd2-fa13-11e0-b1e0-001cc4c002e0.html](https://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/rehberg-s-son-works-for-lobbyists/article_0416ffd2-fa13-11e0-b1e0-001cc4c002e0.html)

By MATT GOURAS Associated Press

Oct 19, 2011

U.S. Rep. Denny Rehberg has made a point of criticizing Democratic Sen. Jon Tester's campaign money ties to lobbyists in their battle for the U.S. Senate, but the Republican has been less vocal about his son's position as an executive with a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm.

Rehberg's son, A.J. Rehberg, who has worked at GAGE since 2008, more recently became the point man for the Mongolian government's interests on Capitol Hill. But Rehberg says there is no conflict of interest and he has done due diligence in asking the House ethics committee for guidance in the situation.

The congressman was told lawmakers' family members are not prohibited from working at a lobbying firm. GAGE also employs former Republican U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns.

"There is no law, rule, or standard of conduct that absolutely prohibits a family member from accepting employment with a lobbying firm, or even engaging in lobbying-related activities," ethics committee leaders told Rehberg in a letter.

Rehberg was advised to establish an office policy prohibiting lobbying of his office by his son as a safeguard, even though A.J. is not a registered lobbyist, and to warn GAGE not to advertise the relationship in attracting clients. He was also told to make sure GAGE was not given extra influence as a result of hiring his son as a vice president.

"But Denny and A.J. have taken it a step further, establishing a professional firewall. There's an understanding between them that they just don't talk shop together," said spokesman Jed Link. "Denny also made it perfectly clear to GAGE that hiring A.J. would neither help nor hurt their standing with him or his office. A.J. being on staff has no impact whatsoever."

Although A.J. Rehberg is not a registered lobbyist for his work with GAGE, the Embassy of Mongolia considers the congressman's son "the primary point of contact for the firm's work with the embassy."

The embassy said in a release earlier this year that it has hired GAGE to be its first ever lobbying firm in Washington, D.C. GAGE says on its website that it represents Mongolia to both Congress and the administration.

But regulatory paperwork shows that GAGE principal Leo Giacometto does the official lobbying work for the Mongolians. GAGE did not return a call Tuesday seeking comment.

The Mongolian embassy counts Rep. Rehberg among about a dozen House members who are part of the U.S.-Mongolia Friendship Caucus established to strengthen relations between the two countries.

Rehberg, the Republican, is pitted against U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, the Democrat, in an intense race. Rehberg has attacked Tester for taking more campaign donations from lobbyists than anyone else in Congress, and the Republican campaign has suggested the donations could lead to improper influence.

The issue has attracted the attention of CREW, or Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. The watchdog group recently asked the State Department, in a public records request, if Rehberg has ever written the agency on behalf of GAGE or its Mongolian interests.

“We are routinely concerned with the issue of members of Congress using their position as profit centers for their families. In this situation it would seem that Mr. Rehberg’s son may be profiting from his father’s position in Congress,” said CREW executive director Melanie Sloan.

Sloan said that any potential clients of GAGE would know the Rehberg name and be able to quickly associate A.J. to his father even if GAGE does not advertise the association. She said it would be hard for Rehberg to claim the high ground in a debate over the influence of lobbyists.

“For him to holler about anyone else’s Washington connections is ridiculous and hypocritical,” Sloan said.

The GAGE firm has deep ties to Montana, which hired Burns when he was ousted in 2006 by Democrat Jon Tester.

Ironically, GAGE until recently also briefly employed a well-known Democratic operative and former Tester employee who played a critical role in beating Burns. But Matt McKenna, who used to work for Tester and is now a consultant to former president Bill Clinton and others, says he is no longer working with GAGE.

# Mongolia hires advocacy representation in Washington, DC

<https://gage.cc/mongolia-hires-advocacy-representation-in-washington-dc/>

Effective January 1, 2011, the [Embassy of Mongolia](#) has hired Gage International ([www.Gage.cc](http://www.Gage.cc)), a business consulting and government relations firm, as their lobbyist in Washington, DC. This is the first time the GOM has retained a lobbying firm. However, it is a common practice and many foreign embassies hire outside advisors to assist them. Gage has been engaged to help the embassy elevate the profile of Mongolia in Washington, DC.

The Gage firm recently joined the [NAMBC](#) and is eager to make contact with U.S. companies and organizations active or invested in Mongolia to assist in developing broader Congressional support for bilateral relations. Gage CEO Leo A. Giacometto will attend our AGM next month for that purpose. Giacometto previously served in various positions in the US Government and is a retired US Army Reserves Lieutenant Colonel (LTC).

As required by law, Gage has registered with the US Justice Department as a Registered Foreign Agent. Mr. AJ Rehberg, Vice President of Gage, will be the primary point of contact for the firm's work with the embassy, (202) 657-1085, [AJ@Gage.cc](mailto:AJ@Gage.cc). Rehberg also serves as Vice President of Public and Government Affairs for Mongolia Forward, a uranium mining venture in Mongolia.

Other members of Gage's executive team are former three-term US Senator Conrad Burns (R-Montana), whom Gage CEO Giacometto earlier served as Chief of Staff from 1995 to 1999 and Matt McKenna, who was Communications director for Senator Mary Landrieu (D-Louisiana), Senator Max Cleland (D-Georgia), and Senator John Tester (D-Montana). McKenna is also former Communications Director for the [William J. Clinton Foundation](#) and is currently serving as Communications Director for former President Bill Clinton.

← [Senator Conrad Burns Joins Growing International Consulting Company](#)

[E9-1-1 Institute Honors Senator Conrad Burns](#) →

# Rehberg's son works for lobbyists

[https://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/rehberg-s-son-works-for-lobbyists/article\\_0416ffd2-fa13-11e0-b1e0-001cc4c002e0.html](https://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/rehberg-s-son-works-for-lobbyists/article_0416ffd2-fa13-11e0-b1e0-001cc4c002e0.html)

By MATT GOURAS Associated Press

Oct 19, 2011

U.S. Rep. Denny Rehberg has made a point of criticizing Democratic Sen. Jon Tester's campaign money ties to lobbyists in their battle for the U.S. Senate, but the Republican has been less vocal about his son's position as an executive with a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm.

Rehberg's son, A.J. Rehberg, who has worked at GAGE since 2008, more recently became the point man for the Mongolian government's interests on Capitol Hill. But Rehberg says there is no conflict of interest and he has done due diligence in asking the House ethics committee for guidance in the situation.

The congressman was told lawmakers' family members are not prohibited from working at a lobbying firm. GAGE also employs former Republican U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns.

"There is no law, rule, or standard of conduct that absolutely prohibits a family member from accepting employment with a lobbying firm, or even engaging in lobbying-related activities," ethics committee leaders told Rehberg in a letter.

Rehberg was advised to establish an office policy prohibiting lobbying of his office by his son as a safeguard, even though A.J. is not a registered lobbyist, and to warn GAGE not to advertise the relationship in attracting clients. He was also told to make sure GAGE was not given extra influence as a result of hiring his son as a vice president.

"But Denny and A.J. have taken it a step further, establishing a professional firewall. There's an understanding between them that they just don't talk shop together," said spokesman Jed Link. "Denny also made it perfectly clear to GAGE that hiring A.J. would neither help nor hurt their standing with him or his office. A.J. being on staff has no impact whatsoever."

Although A.J. Rehberg is not a registered lobbyist for his work with GAGE, the Embassy of Mongolia considers the congressman's son "the primary point of contact for the firm's work with the embassy."

The embassy said in a release earlier this year that it has hired GAGE to be its first ever lobbying firm in Washington, D.C. GAGE says on its website that it represents Mongolia to both Congress and the administration.

But regulatory paperwork shows that GAGE principal Leo Giacometto does the official lobbying work for the Mongolians. GAGE did not return a call Tuesday seeking comment.

The Mongolian embassy counts Rep. Rehberg among about a dozen House members who are part of the U.S.-Mongolia Friendship Caucus established to strengthen relations between the two countries.

Rehberg, the Republican, is pitted against U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, the Democrat, in an intense race. Rehberg has attacked Tester for taking more campaign donations from lobbyists than anyone else in Congress, and the Republican campaign has suggested the donations could lead to improper influence.

The issue has attracted the attention of CREW, or Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. The watchdog group recently asked the State Department, in a public records request, if Rehberg has ever written the agency on behalf of GAGE or its Mongolian interests.

“We are routinely concerned with the issue of members of Congress using their position as profit centers for their families. In this situation it would seem that Mr. Rehberg’s son may be profiting from his father’s position in Congress,” said CREW executive director Melanie Sloan.

Sloan said that any potential clients of GAGE would know the Rehberg name and be able to quickly associate A.J. to his father even if GAGE does not advertise the association. She said it would be hard for Rehberg to claim the high ground in a debate over the influence of lobbyists.

“For him to holler about anyone else’s Washington connections is ridiculous and hypocritical,” Sloan said.

The GAGE firm has deep ties to Montana, which hired Burns when he was ousted in 2006 by Democrat Jon Tester.

Ironically, GAGE until recently also briefly employed a well-known Democratic operative and former Tester employee who played a critical role in beating Burns. But Matt McKenna, who used to work for Tester and is now a consultant to former president Bill Clinton and others, says he is no longer working with GAGE.

Tester’s office, which says former staffers are banned from lobbying the office, said Tuesday it however has no control over where former staffers choose to work and has no comment on those choices.

Tester’s campaign didn’t offer much comment on the employment of Rehberg’s son as a lobbyist.

“This campaign will remain focused on what’s best for Montana and this nation, and Congressman Rehberg’s record — not his children,” said Tester campaign manager Preston Elliott.

GAGE has unique ties to Mongolia, in addition to representing the country’s interests in the United States.

A.J. Rehberg is also a vice president at a Mongolian uranium mining company called Mongolia Forward, which is headquartered in Washington, D.C. Several other GAGE employees are directors or advisers at the company, including Burns and Giacometto, known to many in Montana as a former state legislator and appointee in the administration of former Gov. Judy Martz.

Mongolia Forward says on its website it is trying to secure permits to start the mining venture.

GAGE also leads several other Mongolia business ventures, such as a fiber optic network company, and GAGE is part owner of a Pepsi bottling operation in that country.

“GAGE was instrumental in securing the exclusive Pepsi bottling and distribution rights in Mongolia,” the company’s website reads.

# Rehberg bashes lobbyists as son works for one

Associated Press

Oct 18, 2011



In this Feb. 5, 2011 file photo, Rep. Denny Rehberg R-Mont., speaks at the Red Lions Hotel in Helena, Mont. As Rehberg bashes his Democratic opponent for alleged ties to lobbyists, his own son has a high-ranking position at a lobbying firm where he is the point man for the interests of the Mongolian government in Washington D.C.

(AP Photo/Lisa Kunkel, File)

HELENA — U.S. Rep. Denny Rehberg has made a point of criticizing Democratic Sen. Jon Tester's campaign money ties to lobbyists in their battle for the U.S. Senate, but the Republican has been less vocal about his son's position as an executive with a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm.

Rehberg's son A.J. Rehberg, who has worked at GAGE since 2008, more recently became the point man for the Mongolian government's interests on Capitol Hill. But Rehberg says there is no conflict of interest and he has done due diligence in asking the House ethics committee for guidance in the situation.

The congressman was told lawmakers' family members are not prohibited from working at a lobbying firm. GAGE also employs former Republican U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns.

"There is no law, rule, or standard of conduct that absolutely prohibits a family member from accepting employment with a lobbying firm, or even engaging in lobbying-related activities," ethics committee leaders told Rehberg in a letter.

Rehberg was advised to establish an office policy prohibiting lobbying of his office by his son as a safeguard, even though A.J. is not a registered lobbyist, and to warn GAGE not to advertise the relationship in attracting clients. He was also told to make sure GAGE was not given extra influence as a result of hiring his son as a vice president.

"But Denny and A.J. have taken it a step further, establishing a professional firewall. There's an understanding between them that they just don't talk shop together," said spokesman Jed Link. "Denny also made it perfectly clear to GAGE that hiring A.J. would neither help nor hurt their standing with him or his office. A.J. being on staff has no impact whatsoever."

Although A.J. Rehberg is not a registered lobbyist for his work with GAGE, the Embassy of Mongolia considers the congressman's son "the primary point of contact for the firm's work with the embassy."

The embassy said in a release earlier this year that it has hired GAGE to be its first ever lobbying firm in Washington D.C. GAGE says on its website that it represents Mongolia to both Congress and the administration.

But regulatory paperwork shows that GAGE principal Leo Giacometto does the official lobbying work for the Mongolians. GAGE did not return a call Tuesday seeking comment.

The Mongolian embassy counts Rep. Rehberg among about a dozen House members who are part of the U.S.-Mongolia Friendship Caucus established to strengthen relations between the two countries.

Rehberg, the Republican, is pitted against U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, the Democrat, in an intense race. Rehberg has attacked Tester for taking more campaign donations from lobbyists than anyone else in Congress, and the Republican campaign has suggested the donations could lead to improper influence.

The issue has attracted the attention of CREW, or Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. The watchdog group recently asked the State Department, in a public records request, if Rehberg has ever written the agency on behalf of GAGE or its Mongolian interests.

"We are routinely concerned with the issue of members of Congress using their position as profit centers for their families. In this situation it would seem that Mr. Rehberg's son may be profiting from his father's position in congress," said CREW executive director Melanie Sloan.

Sloan said that any potential clients of GAGE would know the Rehberg name and be able to quickly associate A.J. to his father even if GAGE does not advertise the association. She said it would be hard for Rehberg to claim the high ground in a debate over the influence of lobbyists.

"For him to holler about anyone else's Washington connections is ridiculous and hypocritical," Sloan said.



The GAGE firm has deep ties to Montana, which hired Burns when he was ousted in 2006 by Democrat Jon Tester.

Ironically, GAGE until recently also briefly employed a well-known Democratic operative and former Tester employee that played a critical role in beating Burns. But Matt McKenna, who used to work for Tester and is now a consultant to former president Bill Clinton and others, says he is no longer working with GAGE.

Tester's office, which says former staffers are banned from lobbying the office, said Tuesday it however has no control over where former staffers choose to work and has no comment on those choices.

Tester's campaign didn't offer much comment on the employment of Rehberg's son as a lobbyist.

"This campaign will remain focused on what's best for Montana and this nation, and Congressman Rehberg's record — not his children," said Tester campaign manager Preston Elliott.

GAGE has unique ties to Mongolia, in addition to representing the country's interests in the United States.

A.J. Rehberg is also a vice president at a Mongolian uranium mining company called Mongolia Forward, which is headquartered in Washington D.C. Several other GAGE employees are directors or advisers at the company, including Burns and Giacometto, known to many in Montana as a former state legislator and appointee in the administration of former Gov. Judy Martz.

Mongolia Forward says on its website it is trying to secure permits to start the mining venture.

GAGE also leads several other Mongolia business ventures, such as a fiber optic network company, and GAGE is part owner of a Pepsi bottling operation in that country.

"GAGE was instrumental in securing the exclusive Pepsi bottling and distribution rights in Mongolia," the company's website reads.

[https://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/rehberg-bashes-lobbyists-as-son-works-for-one/article\\_c11edd78-f9d4-11e0-8976-001cc4c03286.html](https://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/rehberg-bashes-lobbyists-as-son-works-for-one/article_c11edd78-f9d4-11e0-8976-001cc4c03286.html)

# Uranium War in Mongolia

<http://www.mongolia-web.com/2727-uranium-war-mongolia/>

Sun, 2010-05-30 10:40



Mongolia-Forward, a United States based company, announced that it is negotiating uranium mining in Mongolia. The Mongolian counterpart is Badamdandin Ragchaa (photo) chairman and CEO of MonAtom, Mongolia's State-owned uranium development company. In a proposed joint venture, the two companies wish to explore, mine and process uranium in Mongolia.

In accordance with the recently enacted Mongolian Nuclear Energy Law, MonAtom would take ownership of 51% of the project.

The original press release published first on May 21, and distributed on May 28, went virtually unnoticed by the Mongolian press. This press release is significant in the Mongolian foreign policy strategy, and is the latest Mongolian move in the uranium-war.

Chairman and CEO of Mongolia-Forward is Leo A. Giacometto (photo). Giacometto is a retired lieutenant colonel of the US army. He was a member of the Northwest Power Planning Council, serves on the board of advisers for Gemnet, a Mongolian-based international telecommunications company, and held several other political, private and public sector positions, in the US and in Mongolia. The most significant position was chief of staff to a United States senator where he helped bridge the gap between American and Mongolian foreign policy goals.

## **Third Neighbor**

The announcement by the American company comes in the wake of the Mongolian foreign diplomacy's delicate balancing act of balancing between Russia and China.

Mongolia with a population of only 2.7 million is wedged between the two neighboring giants, Russia and China.

The Mongolia-Forward announcement introduces the USA as a "third neighbor" (in Mongolian geopolitical terminology) into the recent uranium-war going on in Mongolia.

Mongolia has a vast amount of natural resources. Mongolia holds uranium reserve estimated at 1.2 million tons, worth billions of dollars. China and Russia are in desperate need of uranium to fuel their existing and planned nuclear reactors to supply the increasing electricity demand by their ever-growing population and industry.

Mongolia's balancing act is an attempt to prevent the uranium sector from being dominated by either neighboring country, while ensuring the state gets a fair share of the revenues.

### **Dornod - Uranium War Zone**

Khan bought the abandoned Russian owned property of Dornod uranium in Mongolia about a decade ago.

This did not stop T. Bayarbayasgalan, the head of licensing at the country's Nuclear Energy Agency ("NEA") from invalidating Khan's mining license 237A for the Dornod uranium property. The invalidation was based on infringements of Mongolian law, including the Mineral Law and the Law on Mineral Energy.

Bayarbayasgalan said: The Khan license was invalidated because it had violated many of our laws," he said, "In particular, Khan violated an article in the new Nuclear Energy Law which stipulates that a company needs the permission of Ulan Bator if it intends to transfer its shares".

Clause 7.1 of the Law on Nuclear Energy states clearly that approval of NEA is needed in case of: - *"Selling, bestowing as gift, using as a collateral and otherwise transfer into ownership, possession and utilization by others more than 5 per cent of shares of the company"*

The NEA statement to Khan stated: *"We learned from the Internet that CNNC Inc offered to buy the share of Khan resources"*

Khan Resources through its 58%-owned Mongolian joint venture subsidiary, Central Asian Uranium Company, LLC ("CAUC") has filed a formal claim in the Administrative Court in Mongolia challenging the legal basis for the notice received from the Mongolian Nuclear Energy Agency.

**Uranium-War Casualties** Khan Resources, the Canadian based company, is the major "casualty" in the uranium-war.

The first to coin publicly the term "**war**" was Grant A. Edey (photo) who serves as Khan's Chairman of the Special Buy Out Committee. *"We are right in the middle of a geopolitical war,"* said Grant Edey, the Khan company director, speaking to Reuters.

### **The Russians - ARMZ**

Russia's entry into the Mongolian uranium sector, was announced during a visit by Russian president Dmitry Medvedev in August 2009. In the Russian eyes it is in many ways a return to deposits originally developed by Russians, and abandoned when the Soviet Union collapsed.

Mardai township close to Dornod was built by the Soviets in the 1970s and was reported to house 10,000 Russian workers at the uranium mines with a very high standard of living and commerce. Mardai which was abandoned after the collapse of the Soviet union, is now in ruins. (photo).

The first move in the uranium-war was taken by the Russians in August 25, 2009 when an inter-governmental treaty between Mongolia and Russia was signed. The treaty stipulates the creation

of a joint limited liability company, Dornod Uranium, through which the Dornod Uranium Property would be jointly developed by Mongolian and Russian interests.

The uranium agreement was signed by the Mongolian chief of Nuclear Energy Commission, Sodnom Enkhbat and the head of Rosatom Russian Nuclear Energy State Corporation, Sergey Kiriyyenko, in the presence of the two state leaders, Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, and Mongolian president Elbergdorj. (photo).

In order to exercise the treaty, ARMZ Uranium (Atomredmetzoloto) was sent to the battlefield. ARMZ is the Russian company in charge of all post Soviet uranium mines. ARMZ made an unsolicited take over bid of Khan by offering on November 30, 2009 to acquire all of the outstanding common shares of Khan Resources for C\$0.65 per Khan Share totaling about \$33 million buyout offer.

This bid was regarded by Khan as a hostile takeover, and Khan neglected to cooperate, describing it as "inadequate, failing to recognize the full value of the company"

### **The Chinese - CNNC**

China sent "China National Nuclear Corporation" ("CNNC") to take advantage of the delicate situation.

CNNC negotiated a friendly take over for a higher price of C\$0.96 . Khan's directors recommended that shareholders take up the CNNC bid.

The offer was conditional upon the receipt of all necessary Chinese governmental and regulatory approvals.

The Russians pushed the Mongolians to make sure the bid is not approved by the Chinese authorities. Several Mongolian officials paid a visit to China.

CNNC was notified on 21 May 2010 by the Chinese National Energy Administration, that the offer had not been approved. A few days later CNNC declared that its cash offer to acquire all Khan's common shares would be allowed to expire at the scheduled expiry date on 25 May following its failure to obtain regulatory approval.

### **The Americans - Mongolia-Forward**

Khan, failed to negotiate its way through the complex political challenges that face Mongolia, specifically the delicate Mongolian balancing act between Russia and China. Khan is therefore squeezed out of the Uranium game, paving the way for Mongolia Forward a US company to take over the role of the balancing "third neighbor".

By: Dan [ToMongolia@Gmail.com](mailto:ToMongolia@Gmail.com)

#### Sources:

NEA <http://nea.gov.mn>

ARMZ <http://www.armz.ru/eng>

KHAN <http://www.khanresources.com>

Mongolia-Forward <http://mongoliaforward.com>

CNNC <http://www.cnn.com.cn/english/index.htm>



