

Allegations against judge troubling, Salazar says

By **ROBERT BOCZKIEWICZ**

THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN – March 29, 2008

DENVER - Sen. Ken Salazar, D-Colo., said Friday he is troubled by allegations of personal misconduct against the chief federal district judge in Colorado.

The Pueblo Chieftain reported in December that Chief Judge Edward Nottingham is under investigation by the federal court system on at least two issues.

The investigation began last summer when a former wife —following a bitter divorce — reportedly told the FBI the judge used his federal computer to view an Internet dating site that purportedly offered pornography.

Last fall, the investigation broadened when a Denver attorney, who is confined to a wheelchair, filed a complaint to the federal court system against the judge. The attorney alleged Nottingham threatened to use his official authority against her when she objected to him parking in a space designated for physically disabled people.

"I am very troubled about recent allegations made against Chief Judge Edward Nottingham," Salazar said in a written statement. "I believe that a United States district court judge should serve in an exemplary manner, both on and off the court. I will examine the evidence concerning the allegations and then decide what future action might be appropriate.

"I have a simple aim here and that is to try to make sure that the United States District Court for the state of Colorado is the very best district court we can have in our state and in the country," Salazar said. "Because there are going to be three judicial vacancies where we will be making appointments and confirmations of the positions in the next several months, I hope it's a new beginning for the district courts in Colorado."

Nottingham's attorney, Stephen Peters, said in a written statement, "There are very specific procedures in place for investigating the conduct of a federal judge. We expect that those procedures, one of which involves confidentiality, will be followed as the investigation of Chief Judge Nottingham concludes."

The Chieftain reported two weeks ago that the court system has hired a retired FBI agent to help in its investigation of the judge.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.