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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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<http://www.house.gov/judiciary>

November 2, 2009

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

We are concerned about allegations of wrongdoing that have recently come to light about ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now. This concern leads us to request that you schedule a hearing for the House Judiciary Committee to examine the wrongful and potentially criminal conduct of ACORN and its numerous affiliates. We also request that the Committee open an investigation into these allegations. We request that this hearing be held within the month to ensure that the serious criminal matters raised by these allegations can be promptly addressed.

Over the last year a significant amount of information has been made public that raises serious questions about the activities of ACORN and its affiliates. For example, in 2008 it was uncovered that approximately \$1 million was embezzled from the organization by the brother of its founder, yet the organization failed to report the theft to its Board or law enforcement officials until the theft was made public by the media. Recently, it was reported that the Louisiana Attorney General, who is conducting his own investigation into ACORN, believes the embezzled amount might be as high as \$5 million.

Last year in Seattle, local prosecutors indicted seven ACORN workers for conduct considered to be the worst case of voter registration fraud in Washington state history. Of 2,000 names submitted by ACORN, only nine were confirmed as valid. The rest—over 97%—were fake. In Missouri, officials found that over 1,000 voter addresses submitted by ACORN did not exist. Eight ACORN employees pled guilty to federal election fraud there. In Ohio, an employee of one ACORN affiliate was given crack cocaine in exchange for fraudulent registrations that included underage voters and deceased individuals. Last year in Pennsylvania, a former ACORN worker was charged with 19 counts of perjury, making false statements, forgery and identity theft. Ultimately, voter registration fraud allegations have led ACORN to be subject to investigation in 20 states and ACORN and its employees have been charged with over 50 different counts of election-related fraud. In addition, ACORN has paid over \$1 million in

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restitution to avoid criminal prosecutions, and has admitted to submitting 400,000 false or fraudulent voter registration forms in the 2008 election.

It is likely that this sort of information led the U.S. Census Bureau to inform ACORN last month that it would terminate their partnership for the 2010 Census stating, "Unfortunately, we no longer have confidence that our national partnership agreement is being effectively managed through your many local offices." In addition, the IRS has also decided that it will no longer work with ACORN on its volunteer tax assistance program.

Most recently, there is evidence that ACORN employees have been prepared to assist in interstate and international trafficking of young women and girls for sexual purposes. Undercover video from private citizens appears to show ACORN employees willing to conspire with persons they believed to be involved in prostitution and trafficking in persons.

A number of the signatories to this letter have publicly expressed concerns about these allegations and Ranking Member Smith has urged federal law enforcement agencies to open investigations into these allegations. However, given the organization's history of receiving federal funds and its previous partnerships with federal agencies and large multi-national corporations, we believe that this Committee also has a duty to examine the numerous allegations against ACORN and its affiliates.

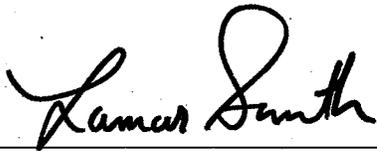
The allegations against ACORN and its affiliates, and the questions those allegations give rise to, span the breadth of the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction. These allegations include voter fraud, human trafficking, and RICO offenses. ACORN's conduct also raises a number of questions, including whether ACORN has engaged in voter fraud involving illegal aliens, bankruptcy fraud through the assistance or encouragement of individuals to enter bankruptcy in a fraudulent attempt to discharge debt, and the fraudulent submission of mortgage applications by low-income persons.

Congress has an obligation to address matters of significant import to the country. Clearly, these allegations and questions implicate many equities falling under the jurisdiction of this Committee. Thus it is only appropriate that this Committee pursue this matter further through a hearing and an investigation.

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Our Constitutional Republic is dependent upon the integrity of our election process. We know that you too share this belief. Some of the most serious allegations against ACORN are that the organization engaged in activities that undermine the integrity of our elections. Because of the seriousness of these allegations, we ask that you reply to this request no later than Friday, November 6, 2009. We look forward to working with you on this matter.

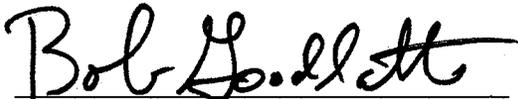
Sincerely,



Lamar Smith



Howard Coble



Bob Goodlatte



Darrell E. Issa



Steve King



Louie Gohmert



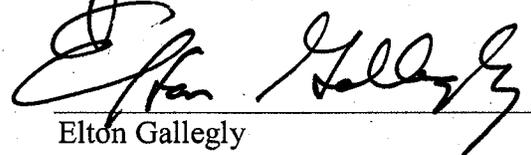
Ted Poe



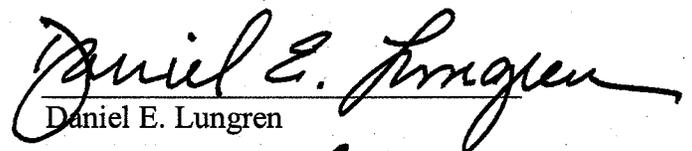
Tom Rooney



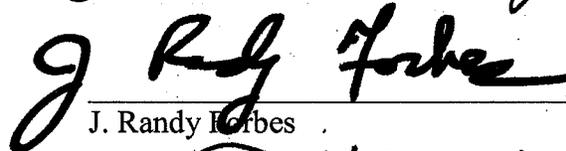
F. James Sensenbrenner



Elton Gallegly



Daniel E. Lungren



J. Randy Forbes



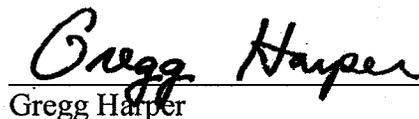
Trent Franks



Jim Jordan



Jason Chaffetz



Gregg Harper