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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 15, 2010

The Honorable Mark Ritchie
Secretary of State
180 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Secretary Ritchie:

For more than a year, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has been investigating criminal activity and voter fraud. As a part of this investigation, my staff has reviewed thousands of pages of emails, letters, public filings, and other documents and records. This review has uncovered the concerted efforts of nation-wide organizations to subvert the American electoral process.

Recent reports indicate that convicted felons participated in the 2008 Minnesota election for United States Senate. On July 12, 2010, the results of an 18-month study by the Minnesota Majority, a government watchdog group, found “at least 341 convicted felons . . . voted illegally in the 2008 Senate race between [former comedian Al] Franken, a Democrat, and his Republican opponent, then-incumbent Sen. Norm Coleman.”¹ As you know, that race was adjudicated in favor of Mr. Franken some six months after the election. The margin determining Mr. Franken’s election was 312 votes, “fewer votes than the number of felons whose illegal ballots were counted.”²

Moreover, the possibility that a reported 2,803 felons potentially voted in the 2008 general election warrants the strictest scrutiny. According to its report, “Minnesota Majority has obtained 341 copies of Hennepin and Ramsey County court [records] that document felons’ ineligibility to vote on November 4, 2008, that are linked to electronic voter history records of people whom the [Minnesota Statewide Voter Registration System] indicates voted in 2008.”³ Minnesota Majority further reported “[t]he highest

¹ Ed Barnes, *Felons Voting Illegally May Have Put Franken Over the Top in Minnesota, Study Finds*, FoxNews, July 12, 2010, available at: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/07/12/felons-voting-illegally-franken-minnesota-study-finds/>.

² *Id.*

³ Minnesota Majority, Report on Fraudulent Votes Cast by Ineligible Felons in Minnesota’s 2008 General Election, June 28, 2010, at 3.

concentration of the suspected fraudulent votes was found in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties.”⁴

In February of this year, I released a report entitled, “Follow the Money: ACORN, SEIU and their Political Allies.” This report found that both Hennepin and Ramsey Counties discovered fraudulent voter registration activities by the Minnesota chapter of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (“ACORN”) (now known as Minnesota Neighborhoods Organizing for Change).⁵ In a previous report on ACORN, congressional investigators on my staff found ACORN’s Minnesota chapter hired a felon to engage in voter registration activities.⁶

Indeed, the connection between ACORN and registered felons in Minnesota is not an isolated incident. ACORN has a history of using felons to conduct its nation-wide efforts at political subversion. In addition to Minnesota, ACORN hired felons to register voters in both Wisconsin⁷ and Nevada.⁸

The likelihood that voter fraud perpetrated by convicted felons could have influenced the outcome of the 2008 Minnesota Senate race justifies further investigation into these matters. Therefore, I write to request that you direct Minnesota county auditors, municipal clerks, school district clerks and other appropriate state and local officials to retain indefinitely all records and materials from the November 2008 election currently in their custody. It is likely these documents provide evidence of voter fraud critical to my ongoing investigation.

Please respond to the following on or before July 30, 2010:

- (1) Provide a written commitment to withhold from destroying or disposing of any Minnesota election records from the 2008 election cycle.
- (2) Identify by name, address, and date of birth those felons convicted in Minnesota, who voted during the 2008 election cycle, including both primary and general elections.
- (3) Identify by name, address, and date of birth those persons charged with voter fraud or other felony/felonies in Minnesota prior to or during the 2008

⁴ *Id.* at 1.

⁵ Minority Staff Report, *Follow the Money: ACORN, SEIU and their Political Allies*, Feb. 18, 2010, at 51-52, Table 9, Appendices (“State Governmental Actions table”), available at: <http://republicans.oversight.house.gov/images/stories/Reports/20100218followthemoneyacornseiuandtheirpoliticalallies.pdf>.

⁶ Minority Staff Report, *Is ACORN Intentionally Structured as a Criminal Enterprise?*, July 23, 2009, at 44-45, available at: http://republicans.oversight.house.gov/images/stories/Reports/20091118_ACORNREPORT.pdf.

⁷ Associated Press, *ACORN Hires Felons to Register Wis. Voters*, available at: http://wcco.com/local/felon_voter_registry.2.830275.html.

⁸ Mary Pat Flaherty, *ACORN Nevada Office Raided*, Wash. Post, Oct. 7, 2008, available at: http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2008/10/07/acorn_nevada_offices_raided.html.

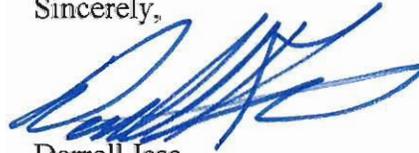
election cycle and who (a) were subsequently convicted of a felony after November 4, 2008 and (b) voted in either the 2008 primary or general election.

- (4) Produce copies of all voter registration cards and the complete voting history for the past five (5) years of those felons identified in numbers 2 and 3 above.
- (5) Provide any information related to the registration of convicted felons to vote in the 2008 election cycle, including whether these felons were registered to vote by ACORN.
- (6) Provide documents concerning the State of Minnesota's guidelines designed to prevent convicted felons from registering and participating in federal elections.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal investigative committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Pursuant to House Rule X, it has authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time."

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Daniel Epstein with the Committee staff at (202) 225-5074.

Sincerely,



Darrell Issa
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Edolphus Towns, Chairman