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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

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May 8, 2007

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The Honorable Alberto R. Gonzales
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Gonzales:

In light of the current Congressional investigations into the hiring and firing of U.S. Attorneys, we write to share two specific concerns.

First, we are disturbed about allegations that the Department of Justice has been aiding an effort by the Bush Administration to restrict voter turnout in ways that favor Republican candidates. According to a April 18th 2007 McClatchy article: "Questions about the Administration's campaign against alleged voter fraud have fueled the political tempest over the firings last year of eight U.S. Attorneys, several of whom were ousted in part because of they failed to bring voter fraud cases important to Republican politicians."

Second, we are concerned about the possibility that U.S. Attorneys were appointed solely for their loyalty to the Bush Administration, rather than for their competence and commitment to justice. As you know, in Minnesota, former U.S. Attorney Tom Heffelfinger stepped down in February 2006 and was replaced by Rachel Paulose, a politically-connected former senior aide in the Department of Justice. According to recent news accounts there has been tremendous turnover in the senior management in Minnesota's U.S. Attorney's Office, four top-level managers resigned in early April.

These revelations raise a number of serious concerns about the potential reasons surrounding Ms. Paulose's appointment. Was Mr. Heffelfinger's resignation entirely voluntary? Was Ms. Paulose's appointment based on "political loyalty" and part of a broader strategy to suppress voter turnout? What steps are being taken to address the turmoil that has plagued this office in recent months? We believe the public deserves definitive answers on these issues.

Accordingly, we request you provide all relevant communications between the Minnesota U.S. Attorney staff and the Department of Justice, and all relevant documents possessed by the

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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The Honorable Alberto R. Gonzales

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May 8, 2007

Department, including but not limited to the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, since the beginning of President Bush's second term on the issues I have raised in this letter. That would include, but not be limited to, all documents regarding the Department's evaluation of Mr. Heffelfinger and any consideration of removing or replacing him as a United States attorney and documents concerning his resignation; all documents regarding the identification and evaluation of candidates to replace Mr. Heffelfinger on both an interim and permanent basis; all documents regarding efforts to enforce vote fraud and ballot integrity/security laws within the District of Minnesota; and all complaints or communications regarding the management, operation, or morale of the Minnesota US Attorney's office, including documents related to the recent visit by DOJ official John Kelly. Full disclosure of the relevant facts, we believe, will help us all get to bottom of these issues.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Amber Shipley in Representative Keith Ellison's office at (202) 225-4755 or amber.shipley@mail.house.gov

Sincerely,



Keith Ellison

Member, House Committee on the Judiciary



John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman, House Committee on the
Judiciary

cc: The Honorable Richard A. Hertling
The Honorable Lamar S. Smith
The Honorable Linda T. Sánchez
The Honorable Chris Cannon

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FOIA EXEMPTION

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FOIA EXEMPTION (b)(6)

May 15, 2007

The Honorable Alberto Gonzales
United States Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

RE: U.S. Attorney Rachel Paulose & Public Corruption in Minnesota Office of U.S. Attorney

Dear Attorney General Gonzales:

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter, along with attachments, sent to John Kelly, Deputy Director and Chief of Staff, Executive Office for U.S. Attorney, regarding U.S. Attorney Rachel Paulose and public corruption within the Minnesota Office of the U.S. Attorney.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

FOIA EXEMPTION (b)(6)

Enclosures

MEMORANDUM FOR: HARRIET MIERS
FROM: ALBERTO R. GONZALES
ATTORNEY GENERAL
SUBJECT: U.S. ATTORNEY SELECTION

I recommend that you seek the President's approval of the following individual for possible nomination to the Senate:
Rachel K. Paulose, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota, vice Thomas B. Heffelfinger.

Upon the President's approval, all necessary clearances will be initiated. Nomination to the Senate will be forwarded immediately after all such clearances are obtained.
A summary of Rachel K. Paulose's biographical data and resume are attached hereto.
Attachments