

FRANK R. WOLF
10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

RANKING MEMBER—COMMERCE-JUSTICE-
SCIENCE

TRANSPORTATION-HUD

CO-CHAIR—TOM LANTOS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

July 8, 2009

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The Hon. John Conyers
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Lamar Smith
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
2142 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conyers and Ranking Member Smith:

I write to urge the House Judiciary Committee to hold a hearing on Attorney General Eric Holder's decision to dismiss the Department of Justice's (DOJ) case against the New Black Panther Party for voter intimidation on November 4, 2008. The dismissal of this case, which civil rights activist Bartle Bull called, "the most blatant form of voter intimidation I have encountered in my life in political campaigns in many states, even going back to the work I did in Mississippi in the 1960s," merits congressional attention, if only to force the department to explain its decision to dismiss this case.

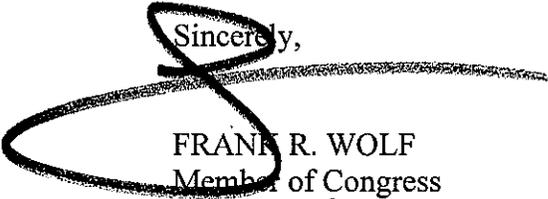
Following the department's surprising dismissal, I sent the attorney general the enclosed letter requesting additional information regarding his decision. Additionally, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which I oversee as ranking member of the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee, voted unanimously to send the enclosed letters to the department on June 16 and June 22. To date, neither the commission nor I have received any response to our inquiries.

Upon his installation as attorney general, Eric Holder declared, "**We will protect the civil rights of our fellow citizens, all of our fellow citizens** – in the workplace, in the housing market, in our educational institutions **and in the voting booth**, as well as in their day to day lives." I believe that the House Judiciary Committee has an obligation to determine whether Mr. Holder's deeds match his words, especially in light of the many unanswered questions posed by the Commission on Civil Rights and members of Congress.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 5-5136 if I can provide additional information on my inquiry regarding the dismissal of this case.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,


FRANK R. WOLF
Member of Congress