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November 15, 2012

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

I am terribly distressed at the slow pace and possible major oversights in the DOJ Office of Professional Responsibility's (OPR) investigation into the misconduct within the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Louisiana. I, along with my Congressional Black Caucus colleagues, called for this investigation into the conduct and tenor of behavior of attorneys in that office in March of this year. We were pleased to see that the OPR initiated the investigation, but recent developments have led me to conclude that it is impaired.

It has come to light that yet another high ranking official has acted improperly in the conduct of her duties in the office. It has been discovered that the First Assistant U.S. Attorney in the office was posting inappropriate statements on online news comment boards related to matters in which she was involved on behalf of the office. This clear breach of propriety follows the similar Sal Perricone incident which was the subject matter of the aforementioned March 2012 letter. The First Assistant has been demoted while the investigation broadens into *her* conduct, but the repetition of this behavior in the same office leads me to believe that the issues in the office are far reaching and more dire actions may need to be taken to restore trust and accountability to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The constituents I represent have long suffered under the burden of various public officials not conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the public trust. The U.S. Attorney's Office is supposed to be a bulwark of trust and integrity. These repeated breaches of propriety serve to erode trust in that institution and are obvious legal and ethical failings. I am no longer confident that the OPR investigation is proceeding in a manner that will restore public confidence to the office in a timely fashion.

I demand to review the current results of the OPR investigation to date. The fact that the investigation has taken so long, coupled with the fact that a very high ranking official in the office has now been found to be acting improperly does not inspire confidence and raises many questions. I want to review the current results so that I can be assured that the appropriate punitive measures are being explored and that the investigation is swiftly moving to a satisfactory conclusion.

Sincerely,

Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress

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