

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 19, 2014

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.  
Attorney General of the United States  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Holder:

Although each of us has written you separately regarding the disturbing events in Ferguson, Missouri, we wish to take this opportunity to commend you for travelling to Ferguson tomorrow to personally lead the federal response. The events of recent days make it clear that the local law enforcement authorities in Ferguson, Missouri are overwhelmed by the circumstances surrounding the police shooting death of Michael Brown and are in dire need of assistance from the Department of Justice to restore both order and community confidence.

The Department of Justice has historically played a critical role in ensuring that local jurisdictions have adequate resources to prosecute controversial cases involving the deprivation of civil rights, particularly cases involving the police. While we appreciate that the facts are still developing in this case and we do not pre-judge the incident, we also believe that the gravity of the situation and numerous lapses made to date by local authorities justifies the immediate intervention of the Department.

There should be no hint of bias in the investigation or prosecution and we hope that both local and federal investigators can work cooperatively to serve the ends of justice for both the victim and those involved in the shooting. Ensuring that this is done is the first step in restoring community trust and confidence in the criminal justice system in Ferguson, Missouri and throughout the United States.

Thank you for your consideration and for your outstanding leadership of the Justice Department.

Sincerely,

John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
U. S. House of Representatives

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Senior Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
U. S. House of Representatives