

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 25, 2017

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our deep concerns with regards to your unsubstantiated claims that widespread voter fraud cost you the popular vote in the recent election. On Monday, at your first meeting with Congressional leaders you stated “3-5 million” unauthorized immigrants had robbed you of a popular vote majority. Further, you tweeted today that,

“I will be asking for a major investigation into VOTER FRAUD, including those registered to vote in two states, those who are illegal and even, those registered to vote who are dead (and many for a long time). Depending on results, we will strengthen up voting procedures!”

These statements come on top of unsubstantiated claims that you made both as a candidate that the election was “rigged” and after the election that you

“...won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally.”

As President, you bear a responsibility to uphold the principles of our democracy. The recklessness with which you’ve chosen to spread this misinformation will erode faith in our elections and needlessly destabilize the most important democracy in the world.

The only documented sources you have cited in these repeated misstatements are a 2014 Old Dominion study concerning registration by non-citizens and a 2012 Pew Research study concerning out of date and inaccurate voter registrations. However, neither of these studies have been shown in any way to support your conclusions. The 2014 study has been thoroughly debunked due to concerns about small sample size, confusing questions, and errors in self-reporting. The 2012 Pew Study did not even concern voter fraud and the primary author confirmed that the report found no evidence that voter fraud resulted.”

Numerous members of your own party have disagreed with your statements, including Speaker Ryan who said that that “I have no knowledge of such things [widespread voter fraud],”and just yesterday stated, “I’ve seen no evidence to that effect. I’ve made that very, very clear.” And in a legal filing in Michigan on your behalf stated that “All available evidence suggests that the 2016 general election was not tainted by fraud or mistake.”

The watch-dog group ProPublica, with more than 1,000 individuals watching on Election Day found no evidence of widespread vote fraud in the 2016 election. “We have data that show that [Trump’s assertions about voter fraud is] simply not true. If anything happened on the scale he’s implying, we would’ve seen it.” A recent *Washington Post* review of allegations found there have been just four documented cases of voter fraud in the 2016 election. It is also important to note that a five year investigation the Department of Justice under President George W. Bush found there was no evidence of organized voter fraud in U.S. elections.

At the same time, there is real and tangible evidence that efforts to combat mythical and unproven voter fraud have actually had the result of targeting and suppressing minority voting rights. For example, in *NAACP v. McCrory*, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals found there is almost no evidence of voter fraud in recent elections, but that the North Carolina voter ID bill represented “one of the largest restrictions on the [voter] franchise in modern North Carolina History.” A recent academic study by professors at University of California San Diego and Bucknell also found that strict voter ID laws “have a differentially negative impact on the turnout of Hispanics, Blacks, Asian Americans and multi-racial Americans.”

If you insist on conducting an investigation of these issues, we would request that it be performed by an independent and non-partisan body, and that it be fully transparent. We would also request that the investigation not only consider your claims of voter fraud, but review the ongoing problem of voter suppression and examine the impact of the weakening of the Voting Rights Act following the Supreme Court’s decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* in 2013.

Given that your allegations strike at the heart of the legitimacy of your administration, we would expect that you would agree to follow the independent investigation where it may lead, including vigorously enforcing existing voter protections and working with us to enact laws necessary to protect our citizens’ right to vote.

We look forward to your consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,



John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Judiciary



Cedric Richmond
Chairman
Congressional Black Caucus