



**One Hundred Eleventh Congress**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Homeland Security**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 9, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

Republican Members of the Committee on Homeland Security recently contacted Administrator Fugate expressing strong opposition to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) September 4, 2009 decision to award a nearly \$1 million Fire Prevention and Safety grant to the ACORN Institute of New Orleans, Louisiana. We were pleased to learn from FEMA officials that the agency has not, and will not, provide any of this funding to ACORN, an organization that has engaged in questionable, and in some cases unlawful practices, and is not worthy of the public trust.

ACORN employees have been charged with voter fraud in multiple states and some were recently caught on tape encouraging prostitution, tax fraud, and human trafficking. This is not the type of organization to which Federal resources should be provided, and we were pleased to learn that the Internal Revenue Service and the United States Census Bureau have severed ties with ACORN.

We must ensure that our limited homeland security resources are provided to state, local, tribal, and public and private organizations with security expertise and that will use this funding in a manner that most enhances our homeland security. To that end, we would appreciate your response to the following questions.

1. Has ACORN, or any of its affiliates, received funding, other than the FEMA award noted above, from the Department of Homeland Security (Department) or one of its components? If so, please provide a listing of the amount of funding, from which Department entity it was provided, the purpose for which it was provided, whether the funding has been spent, and whether the Department or the relevant component has conducted oversight to ensure the funds were spent in accordance with the terms of the award.
2. What mechanisms are in place at the Department and within its components to ensure that recipients of the Department's funding have not engaged in unlawful activities prior to the provision of funds?

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3. What mechanisms are in place at the Department and within its components to rescind and recoup funding provided to organizations that do not comply with the conditions of the award or otherwise have engaged in unlawful activities? Are you utilizing, or do you have plans to use, any of these mechanisms to recoup funding from ACORN?

In light of the importance of fully protecting taxpayer dollars, we would appreciate receiving your response by no later than October 23, 2009. We look forward to working with you to ensure the Department's resources are spent as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Thank you for your time and personal attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



PETER T. KING  
Ranking Member



GUS M. BILIRAKIS  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Management,  
Investigations, and Oversight



MIKE ROGERS  
Ranking Member  
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