

STEVE COHEN

9TH DISTRICT, TENNESSEE

1005 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3265  
FAX: (202) 225-5663

CLIFFORD DAVIS/ODELL HORTON  
FEDERAL BUILDING  
167 NORTH MAIN STREET  
SUITE 369  
MEMPHIS, TN 38103

TELEPHONE: (901) 544-4131  
FAX: (901) 544-4329

[www.cohen.house.gov](http://www.cohen.house.gov)

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4209**

August 11, 2010

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

SUBCOMMITTEES:

COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
LAW—CHAIR

CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS,  
AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

CRIME, TERRORISM, AND  
HOMELAND SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEES:

AVIATION

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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

Dear Attorney General Holder:

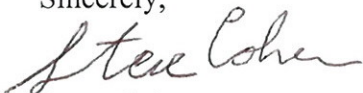
I am writing to ask that the Department of Justice Civil Rights Voting Section launch an investigation into voter irregularities that occurred during the City of Memphis and Shelby County elections held on August 5, 2010. Thousands of voters were mistakenly turned away from the polls because of inaccurate voter rolls. I respectfully request that your Department investigate whether the inaccurate rolls were the result of negligence or intentional criminal misconduct.

Shelby County held its primary elections on May 4, 2010, with an early voting period running from April 14<sup>th</sup> through April 29<sup>th</sup>. Shelby County's general elections were held along with the primary elections for the City of Memphis on August 5, 2010, with early voting from July 16<sup>th</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>. However, during the August 5<sup>th</sup> elections, early voting information from the May 4<sup>th</sup> elections was entered into the electronic polling records instead of the tallies from the July early voting period. Consequently, thousands of people who had voted early in the May elections but had not yet voted in the August elections were erroneously turned away from the polls on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

The integrity of elections is critical to our democracy, and it is vital that we understand how these inaccurate records were developed. If there was an intentional effort to disenfranchise voters, criminal charges must be pursued. Even accidental errors that result in significant confusion and the lost opportunity to vote can undermine voters' confidence in the system and should be investigated and corrected.

I respectfully request that the Department of Justice investigate the inaccurate voter rolls used during the August 5, 2010 elections in the City of Memphis and Shelby County and determine if there was any misfeasance or malfeasance. I appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress