



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

December 8, 2008

The Honorable Steven C. Preston
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Preston:

On October 22, 2008, I sent a letter to President Bush requesting that all federal funds be withheld from the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), citing reports that a federal investigation has been launched by the U.S. Department of Justice into possible criminal activity by the organization. In this light, I was greatly disturbed by an announcement made last week by NeighborWorks America, a government-created entity which directs tens of millions of taxpayer dollars to state housing agencies and nonprofit groups, that it awarded two taxpayer-funded grants totaling \$17.2 million to ACORN.

ACORN is not an organization that should be subsidized by taxpayers' hard-earned money. ACORN, which for years has been closely connected with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, appears to have played a key role in the irresponsible schemes that led to the recent financial meltdown that has already cost Americans trillions of dollars in the form of government bailouts and lost retirement savings. Congress has not yet held investigatory hearings to examine the details of ACORN's involvement in these schemes. Until credible oversight hearings are conducted and completed in a manner that clears ACORN of wrongdoing, the organization should not receive taxpayer money.

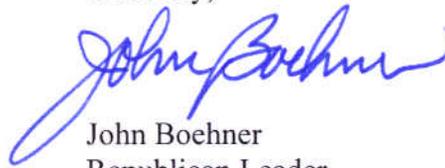
The U.S. Department of Justice is also reportedly in the process of conducting an investigation into potentially criminal activity related to ACORN's voter registration practices. In state after state, and election after election, ACORN has reportedly sought to undermine the electoral process through fraudulent voter registrations. Numerous allegations of voter registration fraud committed by ACORN employees and supporters have been documented. Until these investigations are completed and ACORN is cleared of any wrongdoing, the organization should not receive taxpayer money.

The federal government's financial support for ACORN has already been lengthy and expensive. According to federal records, ACORN received more than \$31 million in federal funds from 1998 to 2008, and substantially more has been directed through states and localities that receive federal block grants.

It is my hope that you will take immediate action to stop additional taxpayer funds from going to ACORN as long as these serious questions remain unanswered for American taxpayers. I ask that you direct Federal Housing Commissioner Brian D. Montgomery, who serves on the board of directors of NeighborWorks with five other federal officials, to exercise his authority as a director to prevent the release of the funds awarded last week.

The American people have a right to know that their tax dollars are being used responsibly by the federal government and those to whom it provides federal grants. Until such assurances are provided concerning ACORN through appropriate federal oversight and investigation, the organization should not receive another penny from American taxpayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Boehner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

John Boehner
Republican Leader