

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Zachary Fardon
United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois
219 S. Dearborn St., 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Fardon:

We write regarding a series of recent *Chicago Tribune* articles about violent crime in Harvey, Illinois and investigative actions in Harvey by federal law enforcement. The articles paint a troubling picture of Harvey and raise significant questions about Harvey's law enforcement and local government and federal law enforcement operating in Harvey.

Understanding that you are new to this position, we ask for your help in addressing these questions by responding to the following inquiries and requests:

- 1) What is the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois (USAO) doing to combat violent crime in Harvey? Specifically:
 - a) How many cases involving violent crime in Harvey has the USAO prosecuted over the past five years? What were the outcomes of those cases?
 - b) How many, if any, of your office's Assistant U.S. Attorneys are specifically responsible for monitoring and investigating violent crime in Harvey?
 - c) What coordination is there between the USAO and local law enforcement in investigating and prosecuting violent crime in Harvey?
- 2) The *Chicago Tribune* reports that an undercover FBI agent used \$140,000 to form a special political committee. This committee was reportedly used to support the candidacy of the incumbent mayor while the mayor's police department was under investigation for corruption and the mayor was being criticized for his law enforcement hiring decisions. In public statements, the USAO and the FBI have said that all protocols were followed, but both have refused to explain or release records showing who approved the campaign efforts and why. Please explain the law enforcement purpose for the special political committee, the source of the committee's \$140,000, and who in the USAO and/or the Department of Justice approved the establishment of the special political committee.
- 3) The *Chicago Tribune* notes that the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division and the USAO spent three years (December 2008 through January 2012) investigating the Harvey Police Department (HPD). The investigation concluded that there was no pattern or practice of civil rights violations, but there were "serious deficiencies" in HPD's

operations creating “an unreasonable risk of constitutional violations” (http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/spl/documents/harvey_findings_1-18-12.pdf). The Civil Rights Division issued recommendations for reform and said it might re-open its investigation if appropriate measures are not taken. Have the Civil Rights Division and/or the USAO assessed whether the HPD has implemented the Justice Department’s recommendations in the more than two years since the HPD received these recommendations? Will the USAO consider whether the Department of Justice needs to re-open its investigation of the HPD or open a new investigation in the wake of the revelations in the *Chicago Tribune* articles?

We are greatly concerned about violent crime in the Northern District of Illinois. It is an issue that Senator Durbin raised with Attorney General Eric Holder during his most recent appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee. As Senator Durbin said during the hearing, it is our hope that the Attorney General will dedicate more federal prosecutors and agents to the Northern District of Illinois to address the violence. In the meantime, however, we urge you to use the resources available to bring some relief from violent crime to the citizens of Harvey, and to ensure that the actions of federal law enforcement do not contribute to the challenges facing Harvey.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Robin Kelly
Member of Congress