



VIA EMAIL

October 29, 2010

T. Christian Herren  
Chief  
Voting Section  
Civil Rights Division  
Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Chris:

This letter relates to my client True the Vote, Inc., in Houston, Texas.

A number of false stories have been published about my client relating to poll watching activities during early voting. True the Vote has made it clear that in no way were any alleged actions by poll watchers that purportedly violated Texas law representative of the organization. Claims to the contrary are false. True the Vote conducts extensive poll worker training and specifically teaches that Texas law permits poll workers to be no more than passive observers. Poll watchers cannot lodge objections or intervene in disputes, and this is taught to all of them.

As I would suspect that Harris County is slated for coverage next week, my client would like to invite the lead attorney on coverage to observe final briefings of the poll watchers before they deploy. These briefings will occur on Monday and they can accommodate his or her schedule so as not to conflict with any briefings with DOJ observers. I have some confidence they would see that True the Vote strives to ensure that the elections are run in full compliance with the law, whether the laws pertaining to election integrity, or poll watcher limits. Because DOJ observers have always endeavored to reach out to all community groups, it would seem especially fruitful if your lead coverage attorney could observe the actual briefings of poll watchers before they deploy.

Moreover, I believe it would be prudent to establish open lines of communication between your lead attorney and True the Vote because as problems arise on election day – either reports of poll watcher harassment or complaints DOJ receives – it seems prudent to exchange telephone numbers for reports. True the Vote has regularly communicated with Harris County in this fashion, and if the Department is present on Tuesday in an observer capacity, it would seem especially prudent to do the same.

If coverage is not planned, or has not been finalized, my client urges you to approve coverage. They believe that the presence of federal observers in the polling place will serve to mitigate some of the more threatening harassment directed toward poll watchers. The poll watchers trained by True the Vote are often elderly retirees. They have endured a variety of insults and discourteous behavior from a variety of sources. As you know, a federal presence tends to keep everyone on their best behavior.

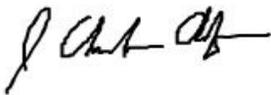
My client would also urge your lead attorney also to address the poll watchers on Monday should he or she accept their invitation to observe the briefings. If for no other reason, it is good for them to fully understand the roll of the federal presence so as to avoid any polling place surprises. They need not limit any address to this, of course. They might also consider briefing the poll workers about language minority agreements and obligations, or any other matter which the Department might find helpful under the circumstances.

Finally, I would urge the Department to consider deploying staff from the Community Relations Service. Racially incendiary charges have been lobbed about in Harris County. For example, Kristen Clarke of the LDF falsely claimed that poll watchers were only deployed to polling places in minority areas. This is patently false and she had no basis for this defamatory claim. Poll watchers are present in every early voting polling place. They fully understand the importance to conducting their activities without regard to suspect criteria.

Nevertheless, the lie has taken hold in some corners resulting in an incendiary circumstance where some political activists aggressively confront the poll watchers trained by True the Vote. Insults have been recklessly lobbed at the poll watches, with racially charged accusations. I am afraid that these are the very circumstances for which the Community Relations Service exists. Of course you will find perfectly adequate support for the deployment of the Community Relations Service from the individuals opposed to the poll watcher's presence. While my client believes their fears are not supportable, those concerns exist, further weighing in favor of the deployment of the Community Relations Service as soon as possible to Harris County.

Thank you for your consideration. And always feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Christian Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

J. Christian Adams

c.c. Russ Nobile (TX)