



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

November 13, 2014

BENNIE G. THOMPSON
SECOND DISTRICT
MISSISSIPPI

2466 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-2402
(202) 225-5876

Robert Shuler Smith
District Attorney
Hinds County District Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 22747
Jackson, MS 29225-2747

Dear Mr. Smith:

As a candidate on the November 4, 2014, Hinds County Elections ballot, I was disappointed and dismayed to have learned that thousands of voters who wanted to register their voice in the election had their constitutional rights trampled upon by the illegal actions of Hinds County Election Commission Chairwoman Connie Cochran, who failed to order the state-mandated number of ballots. Furthermore, I am outraged that after Ms. Cochran admitted to having broken the law, violated thousands of people's constitutional rights, and further broke state law by not having the election results tabulated within the mandated time period, absolutely no legal actions have been taken against her – none.

Connie Cochran admitted that she knowingly and willingly broke the law by not ordering the state-mandated number of ballots. State law calls for Hinds County to have enough ballots for 75 percent of registered to be able to cast votes. However, because Ms. Cochran reportedly thought that "if it had rained, [Hinds County] would have been fine," she took it upon herself to order less than half of number of ballots necessitated by state law. Simply put, she broke the law.

It is unconscionable that an individual can single-handedly deny thousands of Hinds County residents the opportunity to vote. Far too many individuals have fought and died for the right to vote to have someone like Ms. Cochran decide that citizens of Hinds County should not have a voice because "it might rain." Her actions are, at best, criminal and, absolutely, deceitful and treacherous. Furthermore, it is unacceptable that she is facing no criminal charges for a crime that she has admitted to having committed. If someone robs a bank and tells the Clarion Ledger that they did, I guarantee they would be arrested and charged. The same should happen to Ms. Cochran.

As a candidate in the November 4 election, a life-long resident and voter of Hinds County, MS, and representative of the people of the Second Congressional District of Mississippi, I urge you to use all available powers of your office to make sure that justice is done in this matter.

Sincerely,

Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress