

February 2, 2016

The Honorable Robert Goodlatte
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Conyers:

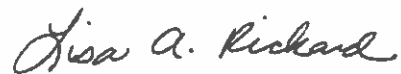
On behalf of the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform (“ILR”) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, I write today in strong support of the House Judiciary Committee’s creation of the Executive Overreach Task Force. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chamber and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America’s free enterprise system. ILR is an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber dedicated to making our nation’s overall civil legal system simpler, fairer, and faster for all participants.

Exercise of government authority should be subject to appropriate checks and balances, yet enforcement officials have virtually unrestricted discretion in deciding whether to initiate investigations, file lawsuits, and craft often unreasonable settlements. Unfortunately, in today’s environment, government enforcement has too often become an unprincipled exercise of unconstrained power, resulting in an extortion-like environment in which companies and individuals often have no choice but to agree to unreasonable settlement demands.

As a result, ILR and the Chamber welcome the creation of the task force to examine the historic breakdown of the separation of powers and checks and balances that has led to the current unprecedented increase in executive branch overreach. We applaud the task force’s mission to study the impact of executive branch power and are hopeful that it will fully examine and highlight the tools at Congress’ disposal to restore the proper balance of powers and hold the executive branch accountable for abuse of its authority.

Government officials should be guided by the public interest and not by personal or political advantage or philosophy when making enforcement decisions. We applaud the Judiciary Committee's efforts to protect the fundamental principles of checks and balances that are the hallmark of our governmental system. Accordingly, ILR and the Chamber support the Resolution Establishing the House Committee on the Judiciary Executive Overreach Task Force and its mission and urge its adoption by the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa A. Rickard".

Lisa A. Rickard

cc: Members of the Committee on the Judiciary