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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

August 16, 2016

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The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott,

I was deeply troubled by your recent statements suggesting that elections this year in the United States could be “rigged.” As you surely know, it is dangerous to the very foundation of democracy to suggest without any credible evidence that our elections could be premised on fraud. In fact, in the wake of your damaging and baseless comments, Clay County Supervisor of Elections Chris Chambless wrote on behalf of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections making clear that there is no credible threat to Florida’s elections. By expressing these unsubstantiated assertions of fraud, you have made the troubling decision to align yourself with irresponsible claims that weaken your role as our state’s chief executive, tasked with the ultimate responsibility of safeguarding Florida’s election process.

Instead of fear mongering and undermining voter confidence, you have a responsibility to uphold the integrity of our elections process. This certainly does not mean wasting tax-payer dollars pursuing another unnecessary purge of voter rolls, which disproportionately disenfranchises poor and minority voters in an attempt to chase imagined voter fraud. You have recklessly pursued this course of action too many times in the past. Therefore, I urge you to move forward with responsible solutions to manage eligible voter files, such as coordinating with other states to ensure the highest possible degree of accuracy without blocking poor and minority voters from their right to vote.

As I suggested to Secretary Detzner in January, if Florida were to join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)—a nationwide database that helps states combat the problem posed by multi-state voter registrations—we could improve the accuracy of our voter rolls at minimal cost and without threatening the rights of legitimate voters. This will prevent people from being simultaneously registered in more than one state and allow Florida to more efficiently identify new eligible voters who recently moved from other states.

My understanding is that it is not too late for Florida to join ERIC for the 2016 election cycle. With your leadership, Florida can enter a new era of even greater accuracy and participation in our elections systems. If you meant what you said when you claimed that your goal is “100 percent participation and zero percent fraud,” you will follow through with this simple and cost-effective step to protect the integrity of Florida’s elections.

Sincerely,

Ted Deutch
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

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