

Statement by Rep. Michele Bachmann: Amendment 020
House Financial Services Committee Markup
H.R. 1728, the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is a straightforward amendment with which my colleagues on the Committee should be familiar. It simply limits eligibility for the housing counseling grants and legal assistance grants authorized under the bill to exclude organizations or employees of organizations that have been indicted for voter fraud.

Similar language was passed as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 to prohibit groups, such as ACORN, from obtaining Neighborhood Stabilization Program dollars. This year, however, it has been interesting to watch the provision get tossed around.

It wasn't included in the so-called "stimulus" bill even though twenty-three members of this Committee sent Speaker Pelosi and President Obama a letter urging its inclusion. And, no amendments on this issue were made in order by the Rules Committee when we considered H.R. 1 on the House floor. All the while, groups like ACORN continue to fill their coffers with taxpayer dollars while simultaneously facing charges of voter fraud and tax violations.

According to recent testimony to the House Judiciary Committee, ACORN has been under investigation in some states for, among other things:

- "Violations of the Internal Revenue Code as a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization for intervening in partisan campaign activities;
- "Violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (FECA) which prohibits expenditures by non-profit corporations, including ACORN and Project Vote, that are made in coordination with, at the request, behest, suggestion or with the material involvement of a federal campaign; and
- "Fraudulent voter registration activities, failure to comply with state law in voter registration drives, absence of quality control and training, and the internal procedures as to how ACORN responds to allegations of illegality."

The fact is: either you're against allowing organizations that engage in or employ individuals under investigation for voter fraud to receive taxpayer dollars, or you aren't.

This amendment makes your position clear.

I think we owe it to our constituents and taxpayers across the nation that are already weary and frustrated and outraged by the massive government spending and government bailouts this Congress has pushed forward to at least show them that we won't continue

to funnel their hard-earned tax dollars into the hands of groups who use and abuse them year after year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.