



City of Phoenix

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

March 23, 2016

The Honorable Loretta Lynch
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

*Re: Request for U.S. Department of Justice Investigation Into
Disparate Distribution of Polling Locations in Maricopa County*

Dear Attorney General Lynch:

Just after Midnight this morning, more than five hours after the polls closed on Tuesday, the final voters in Maricopa County were at last able to cast their ballots in Arizona's presidential preference election. Throughout the county, but especially in Phoenix, thousands of citizens waited in line for three, four, and even five hours to vote. Many more simply could not afford to wait that long, and went home. This is unacceptable anywhere in the United States, and I am angry that County elections officials allowed it to happen in my city.

Maricopa County officials approved a plan that cut polling locations by 85 percent compared to the 2008 presidential preference election (and 70 percent compared to the lower-turnout 2012 presidential preference election), and distributed fewer polling locations to parts of the county with higher minority populations. For example, in Phoenix, a majority-minority city, County officials allocated one polling location for every 108,000 residents. The ratios were far more favorable in predominantly Anglo communities: In Cave Creek/Carefree, there was one polling location for 8,500 residents; in Paradise Valley, one for 13,000 residents; in Fountain Hills, one for 22,500 residents; and in Peoria, one for every 54,000 residents.

Because of the unacceptably disparate distribution of polling locations, I respectfully request the U.S. Department of Justice investigate what took place in Maricopa County to ensure all voters are treated equally under the law.

The Honorable Loretta Lynch

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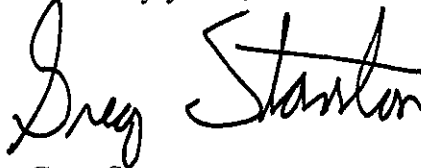
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My request comes on the heels of consistent activity that has created a culture of voter disenfranchisement in this state:

- Although Arizona ranks 16th in population, it ranked 5th on the total number of provisional ballots it rejected in 2014, discarding more ballots than states with more than double its population. Maricopa County's rejection rate was even higher than the state's. Minority voters were significantly over-represented among the rejected ballots.
- Since 2006, Arizona elections officials have rejected more than 121,000 provisional ballots and more than 46,000 mail-in ballots.
- Earlier this month, State officials approved a law that aims to suppress voter turnout by making it a felony (with a presumptive one-year prison term and \$150,000 fine) for volunteers, or even a friend or a neighbor to turn in a person's valid, sealed and signed early ballot.

Yesterday's fiasco demonstrates the urgent need for an independent and thorough law enforcement investigation to safeguard one of the most sacred rights we have as citizens, and I appreciate your serious consideration on this matter. Please contact me should you have any questions or need further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Stanton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Stanton
Mayor