

JARED POLIS
2ND DISTRICT, COLORADO

501 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0602
(202) 225-2161
(202) 226-7840 (FAX)

website and email:
<http://polis.house.gov>



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
January 4th, 2011

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The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General of the United States
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 5111
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

I am writing to call to your attention the case of Sholom Rubashkin and some of the problematic circumstances surrounding it. Mr. Rubashkin is the former manager of the Agriprocessors kosher meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa which was raided by federal agents in May 2008. In November 2009, Mr. Rubashkin was sentenced to 27 years of prison by Judge Linda Reade after being convicted of 86 counts of financial fraud.

Since the Department of Justice has been under your tenure, you have demonstrated a strong commitment to fairness and transparency, which I commend. However, I am concerned about questions that have arisen regarding the handling of this case. I have read that prior to the raid on the Agriprocessors plant, several federal agents who would subsequently take part on the raid had apparently improper communication with Judge Reade. It has been reported that this information was not disclosed to defense attorneys and they only learned about it from a FOIA inquiry after the sentence had already been delivered. While this might have been a routine and innocuous meeting, the fact that it was hidden creates the implication of impropriety.

I agree that in regards to immigration enforcement, we should be prosecuting unscrupulous employers who hire undocumented immigrants and not the immigrants themselves. If Mr. Rubashkin was guilty violating immigration law, he should have been punished to the full extent of the law. However, none of Mr. Rubashkin's charges were immigration-based. Whether or not Mr. Rubashkin's financial transgressions merit the sentence he received, the dubious actions between federal agents and the presiding judge certainly merit a close investigation.

It is imperative to strengthen transparency and fairness in our judicial system. The questionable actions that took place in this case have cast aspersions on the decision and deserve a thorough and careful investigation. I look forward to your reply and working together on this matter.

Yours truly,

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

DISTRICT OFFICES -

BOULDER OFFICE
4770 BASELINE ROAD, SUITE 220
BOULDER, CO 80303
303-484-9596
303-568-9007 (FAX)

MOUNTAIN OFFICE
101 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1010
FRISCO, CO 80443
970-668-3240

THORNTON OFFICE
1200 EAST 78TH AVENUE, SUITE 105
THORNTON, CO 80229
303-287-4159