



In a [letter](#) today to Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Robin Ashton of the Justice Departments Office of Professional Responsibility, wrote that her investigation found that in their handling of the voter intimidation case against members of the New Black Panther Party, senior career attorneys at DOJ "did not commit professional misconduct or exercise poor judgment, but rather acted appropriately."

The investigation also found "no evidence" that their decisions were improperly affected by political considerations or by the race of the defendants.

For nearly two years, the right wing has been obsessed with the decision by those senior career attorneys to drop civil charges against three defendants affiliated with the New Black Panther Party who allegedly intimidated voters at a Philadelphia polling place in 2008.

This fixation became stronger last year, when [two DOJ attorneys](#) on the trial team who are linked the Bush administration's politicization of the DOJ claimed in media appearances and in testimony that the DOJ's actions were part of a pattern of racially-charged corruption at the department, in which lawyers there refused to protect white voters from intimidation by minorities.

These allegations received a [ready airing](#) on Fox News, but they simply [never added up](#) : There was simply no evidence that this was anything more than a disagreement between career attorneys on how to apply a rarely-used provision of the Voting Rights Act; the Obama DOJ did get obtain an injunction against one of the defendants in the case; it also took action in another case to protect white voters from intimidation by black political leaders; and the Bush administration had failed to take action in a similar case in which Latino voters were allegedly intimidated by whites.

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