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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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March 5, 2014

The Honorable Darrell E. Issa
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to strongly condemn your actions at today's Committee hearing. You began the hearing by spending approximately 15 minutes posing questions to former IRS official Lois Lerner, who stated, as she had nine months ago, that she was invoking her Fifth Amendment right not to testify.

When it came time for Ranking Member Cummings to take his turn for five minutes of questioning under the Rules of the House of Representatives, you instead quickly adjourned the hearing, turned off Ranking Member Cummings's microphone, and refused to allow him to make any statement or ask any questions, including even a procedural question about the Committee's willingness to accept a proffer from Ms. Lerner's attorney.

When Democratic Members protested your actions, you returned, turned on Ranking Member Cummings' microphone momentarily, and allowed him to begin. However, when it became clear that you did not like what Ranking Member Cummings was saying, you again shut off his microphone and repeatedly signaled to Republican staff with your hand across your neck. Rather than allowing Ranking Member Cummings to read his statement and questions on the record, all of the Committee's Republican Members then left the hearing room.

We believe your actions today were disrespectful and abusive, and they impugn the integrity of this Committee and undermine the credibility of its work. They also make it appear that the Committee is more concerned with political spectacle than gathering facts in a balanced and impartial manner.

We request that you apologize immediately to Ranking Member Cummings as a first step to begin the process of restoring the credibility and integrity of our Committee.

Sincerely,

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