



**Statement of the Honorable Rahm Emanuel
Before the Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Hearing on**

**"Protecting the Right to Vote: Election Deception and Irregularities in Recent Federal Elections"
Wednesday, March 7, 2007**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee today on election deception and voting irregularities. I am honored to have worked with your office, Senator Obama, and several other members of this committee on drafting *Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act of 2007*, and I hope that we can move forward quickly on this legislation to protect the right to vote.

Honestly, I would prefer if we did not have to have this hearing today. Unfortunately, though, the last election and others before it have seen repeated instances of campaigning tactics that go beyond political competitiveness.

We have seen repeated phone calls at three in the morning with blatant misinformation on a candidate's background; we have seen flyers posted in minority communities lying about the date of the election; we have seen letters sent to legal immigrants threatening them with arrest for trying to vote because they were born outside of this country. We have seen far too many examples of these abuses, and it is time to put an end to these deceptive practices.

I served as Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee during the last election cycle. My job was to elect Democratic candidates to Congress, and I had a firsthand look at the day-to-day of many campaigns. In my role, I saw the specifics of misleading robo-calls, malicious flyers, and misinformation campaigns designed to keep certain groups of voters away from the polls on Election Day. That is why I am committed to making sure that future campaigns are not decided by false information and intimidation that keep Americans from voting when and how they want.

I look forward to passage and implementation of the *Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act* to prevent repeat occurrences of some of the tactics that hinder voter turnout. I want to thank Chairman Conyers, Congressman Holt, Congressman Becerra, Congressman Honda, and Congressman Ellison for serving as lead co-sponsors of this important legislation. I would also like to thank Mr. Nadler, Mr. Scott, Ms. Jackson-Lee, Ms. Waters, Mr. Delahunt, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Davis of this committee for signing on as original co-sponsors of the bill.

I am proud to have introduced the *Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Act* last week, and again, I want to thank you, Chairman Conyers, for inviting me to participate in this forum and for leading the charge on addressing this problem. I look forward to continuing to work with you, Senator Obama, and the rest of this panel as we seek to ensure that each American is able to vote free from intimidation and misinformation.