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KAREN BASS
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July 8, 2013

United States Attorney General Eric Holder
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

I recently watched with horror the video of a California Highway Patrol (CHP) officer in Los Angeles straddle a woman and repeatedly punch her in the head and face. I am concerned that the officer's conduct could be a violation of 18 U.S.C. 242's prohibition against excessive force by law enforcement.

I am pleased that the CHP has announced it will investigate the circumstances surrounding this incident and that CHP has invited the U.S. Department of Justice to participate in its investigation. However, I am requesting that DOJ conduct its own investigation into whether the officer's conduct amounts to a violation of the woman's constitutional right to protection from excessive force or a criminal violation of Section 242.

Although there has been an improvement in police-community relations, the history of tension between police and communities of color in Los Angeles is well known. This is why I am requesting your department conduct a swift and thorough investigation.

If you need to contact my office regarding this issue, please call my Chief of Staff, Carrie Kohns, at (202) 225-7084. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Karen Bass

KAREN R. BASS
Member of Congress, California's 37th District

cc:
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