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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Committees:
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Chairman, Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats
Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
(VICE CHAIRMAN)
Subcommittee on Space
Subcommittee on Environment

June 14, 2013

Hon. Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Holder:

Edi Rama, the Socialist party candidate for prime minister of Albania, has been heavily promoting a photo of himself with President Barak Obama in the hope it will help him win the June 23 elections. The issue is that the photo may have been arranged with the help of a large campaign contribution allegedly made by an Albanian resident of New Jersey. It has been reported that Dritan Prifti and his wife bought two $40,000 tickets to a campaign fundraiser for the Obama Victory Fund 2012 held on the night of October 8, 2012. The wife did not attend, Mr. Rama using her ticket instead so he could have the opportunity to pose with President Obama. It has been alleged in the press that $10,000 of the ticket money was to purchase the photo op.

Mr. Prifti is a limousine driver who had reportedly never given money to a campaign before. It is questionable whether he and his wife could have come up with $80,000 on their own to buy tickets to such an event. Foreign nationals like Prifti and Rama are prohibited to contribute to U.S. election campaigns, and laundering campaign contributions through someone else is also a crime. That these suspicious contributions may also be part of a scheme to affect the outcome of an election in Albania, a NATO ally, makes the issue worthy of an investigation.

Has there been a conspiracy to circumvent U.S. election laws in this case? Where did the money come from to buy the tickets to the fundraiser? How did Mr. Prifti get from New Jersey to California to attend the event? What was a prominent foreign politician doing at a fundraising event from which he should have been barred by law? I would request that a full investigation into this issue be made immediately. I am also sending this request to the Federal Election Commission.

Sincerely,

Dana Rohrabacher

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on
Europe, Eurasia and Emerging Threats