

Rep. Allen West (R-Fla.) used the occasion of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday to warn President Obama against race-based politics.

West, who is black, sent a message to Obama in a Facebook note titled: "Mr. President, please don't play the race card in 2012..."

"This campaign must be about ideas, policy and the direction of this country, and the President must not hide behind a curtain of so-called racial bias," West wrote.

In the post, West, a Tea Party favorite, criticizes Attorney General Eric Holder for a comment Holder made last month.

Holder told The New York Times in an article published in December, "This is a way to get at the president because of the way I can be identified with him ... both due to the nature of our relationship and, you know, the fact that we're both African-American."

"As we proceed into this general election cycle," West wrote, "it would be a disgrace if Mr. Holder's comment is the first salvo in the upcoming campaign to deflect honest assessment of the President's performance in office."

"Mr. Holder and others need to know, the criticism of the President is not of his person, but of his policies, which have clearly failed our nation — and most tragically of all in this supposedly post-racial period — have failed the black community," West said.

West argued that Obama's overwhelming election in 2008 indicated American voters "made their decision based on his character, his vision of hope and change, and his ability to relate with everyday Americans." He goes on to point to his own election in 2010, and that of South Carolina Rep. Tim Scott, another black Republican.

"A powerful movement of respect for black conservatism is brewing in this country, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would be proud of it," West wrote.

"My message to President Obama is this: 'Mr. President, your very presence in office demonstrates Dr. King's dream has indeed come true. But how devastated would Dr. King be to know the Americans who are still fomenting racism at the highest levels are the very people for whom he fought for and died?'

For online story, click [here](#)