

President Requests Funds to Strengthen Border Security

Today, the President sent Congress a request for \$1.948 billion in emergency funding to help secure America's borders. The request includes funding for the first 1,000 of 6,000 new border patrol agents that will be deployed in the next two years and the resources to train them, the temporary deployment of up to 6,000 National Guard troops to assist the Border Patrol with surveillance and logistics, new border security technology and infrastructure, and 4,000 new detention beds.

- **The President believes America can be a lawful society and a welcoming society at the same time.** We will fix the problem of illegal immigration, and we will deliver a system that is secure, orderly, and fair.
- **Border security is part of the President's vision for comprehensive immigration reform.** The President outlined to the American people Monday night a five-point plan that includes increased border security, a temporary worker program, accountability for employers, a strategy to deal with the millions of illegal immigrants who are already here without granting amnesty, and continuing America's melting pot tradition.
- **Today's request does not increase the cost of the Administration's supplemental request.** These funds are offset by reductions elsewhere in the Administration's original emergency request for the War on Terror. The President will veto the emergency supplemental appropriations bill if it exceeds \$92.2 billion for any reason other than funding needed to prepare for a possible avian flu pandemic or if it includes non-emergency or wasteful spending.

Department of Homeland Security: \$1.172 billion

Customs and Border Protection & Federal Law Enforcement Training Center: \$830 million

- **More Border Patrol Agents:** \$235 million for 1,000 new Border Patrol agents and related support costs, \$50 million for additional recruiting and expanded training capacity at the Border Patrol Academy, \$25 million to expand the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and \$20 million for additional office staff to free-up agents for law enforcement duties. Funding for 1,500 additional agents was included in the President's FY2007 Budget and funding for 3,500 agents will be sought over the next two years, in order to deploy 6,000 new agents by the end of 2008.
- **Increased Physical Security:** \$250 million for enhanced security infrastructure including vehicle barriers, lighting, all-weather roads, and fencing, as well as \$75 million for new high-tech communication and command and control resources.
- **More Air Support:** \$95 million for two additional unmanned aerial vehicles and five additional helicopters.
- **New Facilities and Equipment:** \$50 million for new and expanded stations, checkpoints, and forward operating bases to accommodate new agents and their supplies, and \$30 million to replace worn-out vehicles in the Border Patrol's 9,000-vehicle pool.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement & State and Local Government Assistance: \$342 million

- **Detention Beds to End Catch-and-Release:** \$80 million for 4,000 new beds, which will help end catch-and-release along the southern border.
- **Detention Staff:** \$70 million for detention and removal staff and \$30 million for enhanced fugitive operations and detention alternatives.
- **Increased Removal and Transportation:** \$97 million to transport aliens and return them to their own countries.
- **Assisting State and Local Efforts:** \$50 million to train state and local law enforcement authorities to assist the Border Patrol and other Federal officers on targeted enforcement missions, and \$15 million for "Operation Stonegarden" initiatives in selected states to enable state, local, and tribal law enforcement personnel to coordinate directly with Federal Customs and Border Protection personnel to increase patrol presence, provide traffic-control support at the border and at checkpoints, and participate in Integrated Border Enforcement Teams.

National Guard: \$756 million

- **To Help During This Period Of Transition And In Coordination With Governors, Up To 6,000 National Guard Members Will Be Sent To Our Southern Border.** The Department of Homeland Security, and specifically the Border Patrol, will remain in the lead. National Guard units will assist the Border Patrol by operating surveillance systems, analyzing intelligence, installing fences and vehicle barriers, building patrol roads, and providing training. National Guard units deployed to our border will not be involved in direct law enforcement activities – that duty will be done by the Border Patrol.
- **This Initial Commitment Of Guard Members Would Last For One Year.** After that, the number of National Guard members will be reduced as new Border Patrol agents are added and new technologies come online. At any one time, these 6,000 Guard members account for less than 2 percent of the total National Guard force of more than 440,000. Guard members will be deployed in two- to three-week rotations to meet this 6,000 person level. We have enough National Guard members to deploy to our border, while continuing to respond to natural disasters and fight and win the War on Terror.
- **The President Is Committed To Working With Our Nation's Governors.** Military personnel will be employed consistent with applicable Federal, state, and local law. The National Guard Bureau will serve as the coordinating authority to deploy National Guard units from across the country to perform the border security mission in support of DHS. The National Guard units will remain under the command and control of their respective State Governors and Adjutants General.
- **The United States Is Not Going To Militarize The Southern Border.** Mexico is our neighbor and friend. We will continue to work cooperatively to improve security on both sides of the border, confront common problems like drug trafficking and crime, and reduce illegal immigration.

Department of Justice: \$20 million. New funding is requested for additional administrative law judges, immigration attorneys, and technical and clerical staff to support the timely disposition of an expected increase in immigration hearings, and new funding for enhanced law enforcement efforts by United States Attorneys along the southern border.

The Request does not increase the cost of the Administration's supplemental request. The President has promised to veto the emergency supplemental bill if it exceeds \$92.2 billion for any reason other than for preparations for a possible avian flu pandemic or if it includes non-emergency or wasteful spending. Today's request is consistent with that promise. The funds are fully offset by reductions elsewhere in the Administration's original February supplemental request by delaying certain less-urgent military procurement efforts to future appropriations legislation. There will be no proposed reductions that would impact personnel or operational activities necessary to the War on Terror. Many of these offsets are similar to ones already identified by Congress.

The House And Senate Must Pass A Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill

- **All Elements Of This Problem Must Be Addressed Together – Or None Of Them Will Be Solved At All.** The House has passed an immigration bill. The Senate should act by the end of this month – so that the House and Senate can work out their differences and send the President a comprehensive bill to sign.
- **America Needs To Conduct This Debate In A Reasoned And Respectful Tone.** Feelings run deep on the matter of immigration – and as we work out this issue, all of us need to keep some things in mind. We cannot build a unified country by inciting people to anger, or playing on anyone's fears, or exploiting the issue of immigration for political gain. We must always remember that real lives will be affected by our debates and decisions, and that every human being has dignity and value no matter what their citizenship papers say.