

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 27, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

We are writing to express our strong support for continuing Operation Jump Start. While we are aware that you have decided to end operations and have the last National Guard troops leave the border in July, it is our opinion that the National Guard personnel should stay on the border until such time as the Border Patrol is able to deploy a sufficient number of agents to meet our Southwest border security needs.

As Border Patrol Chief David V. Aguilar has stated, Operation Jump Start has been a tremendous success. Guardsmen have built 37 miles of fence, repaired 700 miles of roadway, assisted in confiscating 298,000 pounds of drugs, offered support in over 166,000 arrests and helped in 100 rescues. They have been vital in securing the border by sending more badged agents back to patrolling the border, enhancing border infrastructure, and improving border security and agent safety.

The main reason why the National Guard was deployed under Operation Jump Start was that there were not enough resources on the border for effective security – both in the number of “eyes and ears” on the ground as well as infrastructure being built. National Guard troops were to serve as a provisional measure while the U.S. Border Patrol increased its ranks from around 11,500 to 18,000 within two years.

It is our understanding that when all 6,000 Guardsmen leave, their void is supposed to be filled by adding 6,000 Border Patrol net new agents. It is our hope that you will continue Operation Jump Start at least until all 6,000 new agents have been trained and deployed. Despite aggressive recruiting, the Border Patrol is currently 2,000 BP agents short of this goal.

In addition, there are still significant infrastructure needs on the border and the National Guard should continue to be used as an asset in this regard. We are especially concerned since the authorization granted under the Secure Fence Act to build new fencing expires at the end of this year and by the Department of Homeland Security’s best estimates, additional fence still must be constructed in order to meet the law’s 700-mile mandate.

Operation Jump Start has been an unqualified success. Prematurely ending this mission before the Border Patrol can be fully deployed, threatens to undo all the National Guard's efforts to secure the border and once again expose our communities and families to the consequences of an exposed and undermanned Southwest border. Therefore we strongly encourage you to extend Operation Jump Start.

Sincerely,

Ed Royce

Patrol Mustang

Maryna Baker

Bill Gali

W. Coe Ari

Michael T. McCall

Dean Heller

Brian P. Bily

Aue Myrick

Guyton Wail

Peter Rodde

Chad Ingrey

Fenny Wauke

Scott Garrett

Virgil Good Jr.

John Campbell

John Culberson

Sam Johnson

Thomas B. O

Walter B. Jantz

Donald Mangello

John R

Rodney Alexander

Ray Miller

Howard Coble

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