

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 2, 2011

Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State  
US Department of State  
Harry S. Truman Building  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

We write to express our concern for the safety of migrants in Mexico. Given the United States support for the Mexican government's efforts to combat organized crime and reduce violence under the framework of the Merida Initiative, and the transnational nature of migration, we urge you to regularly incorporate the situation of migrants in Mexico as part of the U.S. Department of State's dialogue with the Mexican government.

The horrific massacre of 72 migrants in Tamaulipas, Mexico in August 2010 raised international attention of the dangers that migrants face while traveling through this country, however since then little has been done to effectively address this humanitarian crisis. Migrants in transit through Mexico are increasingly victims of kidnapping by organized criminal groups, at times with the complicity or direct collaboration of local, state, and federal authorities. Those who denounce these abuses are frequently intimidated and threatened.

In a February 2011 report, Mexico's National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) documented 11,333 migrants who were victims of kidnapping from April to September 2010. Beyond kidnapping, migrants are also frequently subjected to other abuses during their journey such as torture, extortion, and robbery; approximately six in 10 migrant women are raped.

We recognize the important efforts being undertaken in Mexico to protect migrants, including reforms so that immigration violations are no longer criminal offenses and the approval of a new Migration Law in May 2011, which provides the basic framework for addressing migration issues in the country. We further applaud the intent of the Comprehensive Strategy to Prevent and Combat the Kidnappings of Migrants in Mexico which was announced by the Mexican government in August 2010. Nonetheless, we are troubled that these efforts have failed to reduce the number of abuses against migrants in Mexico and we are alarmed that massive kidnappings of migrants continue unabated.

Through the Merida Initiative, the United States has provided significant support to Mexico's Federal Police and the National Migration Institute (INM). Regretfully, agents from these same agencies have also been implicated in multiple cases of abuse of migrants. In investigations conducted by the CNDH, they found that nearly 9 percent of migrants who were victims signaled the collusion or direct participation of agents from the INM or federal, state, or local police. These abuses include documented cases of robbery, extortion, harassment and collusion with

kidnapping rings. The impunity that has prevailed for crimes against migrants in transit and the failure to address corruption effectively within Mexican government agencies has greatly increased the risks faced by migrants as they travel through the country.


We believe that strengthening Mexico's efforts to evaluate performance and increase the accountability of its security forces, including the Federal Police and the INM, should be key elements of U.S. assistance to Mexico as a way to ensure that crimes and human rights violations committed by members of these federal agencies do not go unpunished. We also encourage the U.S. Department of State to discuss with our Mexican counterparts ways U.S. assistance could be directed to provide additional humanitarian assistance to attend to migrants in need.

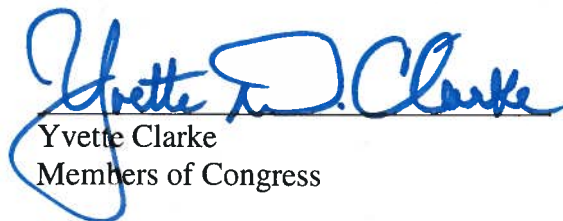
We further ask you, Madame Secretary, to urge the Mexican government to take action to ensure the safety of migrants in transit in Mexico and the safety of those who seek to protect them from abuse. There should be clear mechanisms in place so that migrants who are abused are able to lodge complaints and receive the necessary protection, without fear of reprisals from federal agencies that might be signaled in the complaint. Migrant shelters that are under attack because of their important work to assist migrants and defend the human rights of this vulnerable group should also receive sustained support from the government for their efforts in the form of protection measures concurrent with their needs.

The current levels of abuse against migrants in transit in Mexico represent a humanitarian crisis that has been recognized by international human rights organizations across the globe. The United States, due to geographic proximity to Mexico and high levels of political and economic cooperation, has a clear interest and responsibility in engaging with Mexico to promote policies that will address the abuse of migrants as they travel in search of better opportunities for themselves and their families abroad and we hope you will address this issue as part of your bilateral agenda with Mexico.

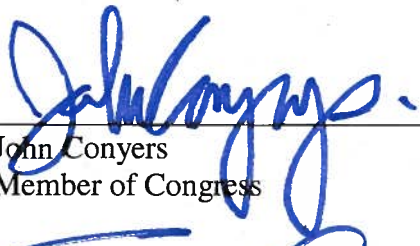
Sincerely,

  
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Members of Congress

  
Howard Berman  
Member of Congress

  
Yvette Clarke  
Members of Congress

  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



John Conyers  
Member of Congress



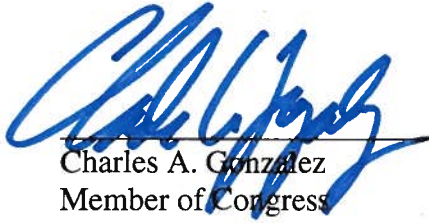
Keith Ellison  
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Bob Filner  
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Charles A. Gonzalez  
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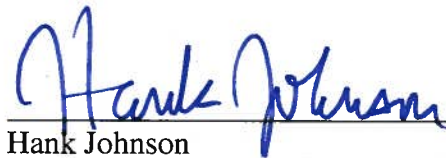
Rubén Hinojosa  
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Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress



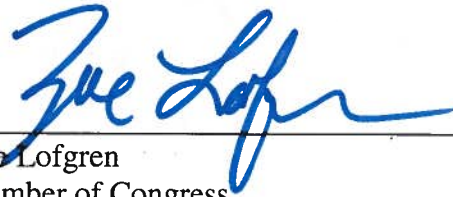
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



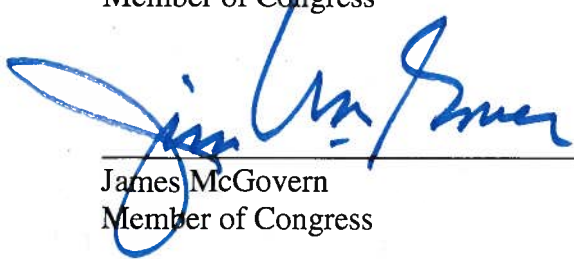
Hank Johnson  
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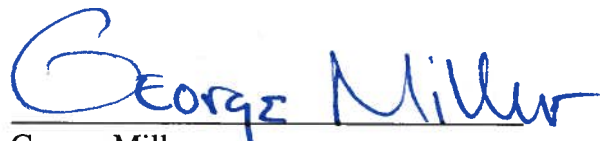
Barbara Lee  
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Zoe Lofgren  
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James McGovern  
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George Miller  
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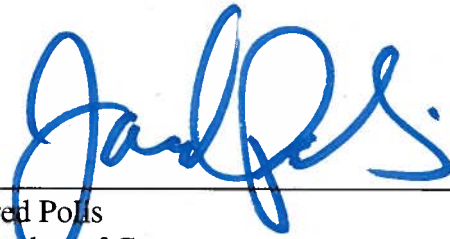
James Moran  
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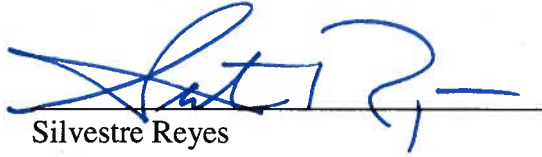
John Olver  
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Ed Pastor  
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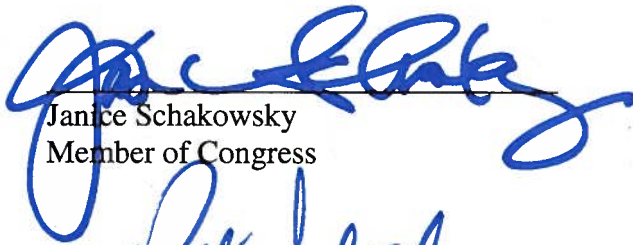
Jared Polis  
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Silvestre Reyes  
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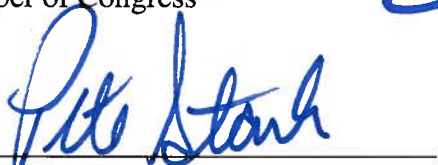
Loretta Sanchez  
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Janice Schakowsky  
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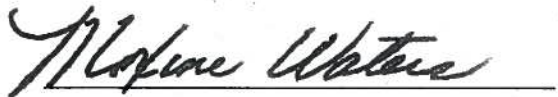
Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress



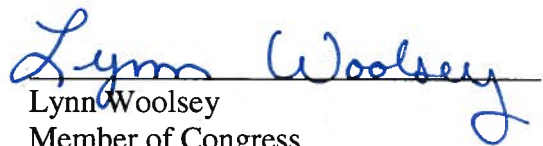
Pete Stark  
Member of Congress



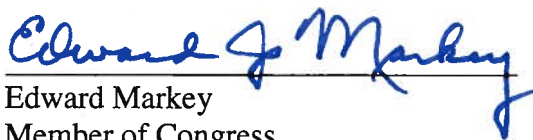
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Member of Congress



Maxine Waters  
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Lynn Woolsey  
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Edward Markey  
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard  
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