



**One Hundred Twelfth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515**

December 9, 2011

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
US Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Madam Secretary:

The purpose of this letter is twofold; first, to bring to your attention the findings reached as a result of our October 14, 2011, Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Management hearing, "A Call to Action: Narco-Terrorism's Threat to the Southern U.S. Border;" and second, to request your Department review and further develop a comprehensive border strategy.

Witness testimony revealed violence from Mexico-based drug cartels is spilling over into the United States. This is especially true for farmers and ranchers along the southern border, who face a near-constant fear of cartel retaliation should they seek to hinder the cartels' operations. According to testimony, Texas has experienced 22 murders, 24 assaults, 15 shootings and five kidnappings, stemming from cartel activity, and it is estimated two-thirds of criminal activity in Texas is drug-related.

A recently released report by Generals Barry R. McCaffrey (Ret.) and Robert H. Scales (Ret.) entitled "Texas Border Security: A Strategic Military Assessment" outlines how drug cartels exploit holes in US border security to infiltrate the United States and establish drug trafficking lanes. The report's most groundbreaking assertion is that cartels are working to set up a safe zone, one county deep, within the United States. The Cartels' efforts are a threat to United States sovereignty, homeland security, and the quality of life for American citizens who live in the region.

The hearing also underscored the success of Texas state authorities in adapting and combating the narco-terrorist threat. Testimonies praised the efforts of the State's Unified Commands, headed by the Texas Rangers, who work at Joint Operations and Intelligence Centers, located throughout the state. These centers provide a point of synergy for federal, state, and local authorities helping coordinate resources and intelligence. Efforts by Texas are resulting in

measurable successes in countering the operations of transnational drug cartels. However, states lack federal support to enhance and continue operations.

A comprehensive strategy is needed for our Southern Border. The McCaffery-Scales report provides a strategic framework incorporating State and local participation. We request your department use the report as a basis in the development of the Department's strategy.

The Mexican drug cartels present a dangerous threat to the national security of the United States. I strongly urge you to use every capability of the US Government to counter this growing threat to our economy, our security and well being of our citizens. Equally as important, we must make sure Mexico does not become a failed state and yet another haven for terrorists. Our staff point of contact is Dr. R. Nicholas Palarino, Subcommittee Staff Director for Oversight, Investigations, and Management. He can be reached at (202) 226-8417.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight,
Investigations and Management

cc: The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General, US Department of Justice