OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

August 9, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Welcome to the Lone Star State. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate the dire threat amassing on our southern border in the form of international drug cartels and transnational gangs, and to again request sufficient federal resources to combat the increasing violence.

Drug cartels and related forces are waging war in Northern Mexico, their tactics including death threats, torture, car bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and beheadings. Since 2006, this war has taken 28,000 lives.

Absent stronger federal action, it's only a matter of time before that violence affects more innocent Americans. There is mounting evidence of spillover violence on U.S. soil. A few high-profile examples from media reports:

> In January 2009, a grenade was thrown into a bar in Pharr, Texas, where three off-duty police officers were customers. Fortunately, it did not detonate. Federal investigators say evidence links this incident to grenades used in separate attacks on the U.S. Consulate and a TV station in Monterrey, Mexico.
>
> In May 2009, Jose Daniel Gonzalez Galeana, a midlevel member of the Juárez Cartel living in El Paso, was shot eight times outside of his Texas residence. Experts believe his

> slaying may be the first time assassins from one of Mexico's violent drug gangs have killed a ranking cartel member on U.S. soil.
>
> In May 2010, a Walmart store in McAllen, Texas, was the site of a suspected cartel kidnapping and murder attempt. The FBI says the number of kidnappings in the McAllen area nearly quadrupled from 11 in 2008 to 42 in 2009.
>
> That same month, armed Mexican pirates attacked Texas fishing boats in the binational Falcon Reservoir.
>
> On June 29, 2010, several bullets believed to be from a gun battle in Ciudad Juárez struck El Paso City Hall. Nine months earlier, a building and a vehicle on campus of The University of Texas–Brownsville were hit by stray bullets.

Drug-trafficking organizations have established connections with transnational gangs throughout Texas and use them to traffic in drugs and humans, providing the cartels with willing soldiers who operate on both sides of the border and in our communities.

The Mexican cartels have recently added a new deadly weapon to their arsenal: Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED), which they use to attack their rivals and the police. These car bombs were used in attacks in the Mexican border city of Juárez last month and in Ciudad Victoria just a few days ago.

We cannot afford to allow these cartels to believe they're free to extend their reach across the border onto American soil. On any given day, the Mexican border region is beset with vicious murders, torture, kidnappings, and armed confrontations with Mexican law enforcement and military.

The need for border security along the Rio Grande should no longer be underestimated by the federal government, Mr. President. An unsecured border is a threat to our national security and tothe safety and security of all our citizens.

Your administration recently announced plans to send 1,200 National Guard troops to the border. Secretary Napolitano wrote that the intent of this plan is "to ensure that law enforcement personnel have the resources and support they need to confront the complex and dynamic challenges that exist along our borders." Given that goal, the deployment of just 286 National Guard personnel along the 1,200 mile Texas–Mexico border is clearly insufficient.

In recent years, the State of Texas has committed hundreds of millions of dollars in state funds and state personnel into border safety and security. Texas has developed a proven and successful multi-agency border security strategy that leverages state and local law enforcement agencies in communities along the border to fill in the gaps where the U.S. Border Patrol is stretched too thin. These brave federal agents are all doing what they can, but more help is desperately needed.

As you are aware, I have a standing request with your administration for 1,000 Title 32 National Guard troops for Texas, and have provided Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Gates with a law enforcement sensitive deployment plan. Texas Military Forces would be embedded with law enforcement contingencies along the Texas–Mexico border on land, on water and in the air, providing direct support of current security operations. I urge you to reconsider the current deployment numbers and approve our requests for greater resources.

I also recommend an expeditious deployment of unmanned aerial vehicles to provide real-time surveillance and intelligence to law enforcement officials along the Texas–Mexico border. The combination of sufficient "boots on the ground," modern technology and the strategic fencing already built in key border areas will help secure our southern border and make America safer.

In Texas, just as in our nation as a whole, border security affects our safety, job creation our quality of life. America cannot have a rational discussion of immigration reform without real, effective border security. The federal government must step up and finally do what is needed to secure our borders.

My previous invitation to you, Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Gates to meet with me, my homeland security staff and local law enforcement experts still stands. Border county sheriffs,

local police, Texas Rangers, state troopers and Texas military forces are all working hard together to protect our citizens and border communities.

Better border safety is an issue all Americans can agree on, regardless of political party or ethnic or regional differences. It matters greatly to the citizens of Mexico as well.

I respectfully but urgently request that the federal government quickly deploy 1,000 troops to the Texas–Mexico border, as well as additional law enforcement tools and technology. We must show the cartels that Washington will no longer tolerate their terrorizing and criminalizing the border region.

American lives, jobs and safety depend on a more robust federal commitment to border safety and security.

Sincerely,

Rick Perry

Rick Perry
Governor

RP:rsk