

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, October 26, 2010.

Hon. BARACK OBAMA,
President of the United States of America, The
White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We are writing to you today to express our extreme concern regarding the deteriorating security situation along our Nation's southern border. It seems that every day brings a new report of some atrocity; the most recent being the apparent murder of a U.S. citizen at Falcon Lake, Texas; yet little if anything appears to be being done by our government or the Mexican government to stop the bloodshed and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Protecting our borders and our citizens is a paramount responsibility of the Federal government; enshrined in the preamble of the Constitution. It would be an unforgivable breach of our constitutional responsibilities if we do not take stronger measures not only to prevent the upward spiral of violence from further spilling over into the United States and threaten the safety of U.S. citizens on American soil but to reclaim those areas of our border already overrun by smugglers and criminals. We can no longer pretend that this is simply Mexico's problem. The time has come to recognize that the drug violence along the border is a direct threat to the United States and act accordingly.

First, it has become apparent that the Mexican government and law enforcement authorities are either unwilling or unable to address this problem unilaterally. Therefore, we believe it is imperative that you immediately begin serious dialogue with President Calderon on building a comprehensive framework, in the spirit of Plan Colombia, that will better coordinate a more aggressive and proactive strategy to turn the tide of this conflict.

Second, we must complete construction of the border fence. Any responsibility we have to minimize the impact of the fence on the physical landscape or native species in the region pales in comparison when measured against the value of human lives that will be lost if we do not seal the border.

Finally, we believe it is critical that we deploy additional National Guard troops to the border. Media reports indicate that 17,000 National Guard troops were deployed to the Gulf region to respond to the recent oil spill. Yet, you have only pledged 1,200 National Guard troops to protect the border—and according to media reports only a small fraction of those troops have arrived to date. It is unrealistic, if not pure insanity, to believe that a mere 1,200 National Guard troops, even with the support of the Border Patrol, can effectively cover the nearly 2,000 mile long Southwestern border of the United States. We must put additional bodies on the ground and we must give them the weapons and specify rules of engagement that give them the authority to do whatever is necessary to secure the border. A National Guard trooper armed with only a pistol and given no authority to engage the enemy is useless against a criminal armed with military grade weapons and ammunition.

Mr. President, we implore you to view this situation for what it is, a war and to act accordingly.

Sincerely,

DAN BURTON,
RALPH M. HALL,
EDWARD R. ROYCE,
TED POE,
PETE OLSON.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 4, 2010.

Hon. BARACK OBAMA,
President of the United States of America, The
White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On October 26th I and four of my colleagues, sent you a letter expressing our extreme concerns regarding the deteriorating security situation along our Nation's southern border. Since that time five more Americans have been killed along the border region. Protecting our borders and our citizens is a paramount responsibility of the Federal government; enshrined in the preamble of the Constitution. I strongly urge you to consider the proposals laid out in my letter from October 26th. Americans are dying; it is time to recognize that the drug violence along the border is a direct threat to the United States and act accordingly.

Thank you for giving your personal time and attention to this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

DAN BURTON.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AGENT BRIAN TERRY: U.S. BORDER PATROL—ON THE THIRD FRONT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, it was about midnight when gunfire erupted in a remote area of Rio Rico, Arizona, a city near the border of Mexico and the United States. Border Patrol agents and unknown gunmen exchanged shots in the dark, and one shot proved to be deadly, claiming a life in this war zone—our southern border, the third front.

Radio chatter alerted dispatch of the incident, and a call for assistance was received this Tuesday night about 11 p.m. Border Patrol agents were making rounds in a very isolated and rugged area just north of the border town of Nogales.

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They were trying to catch bandits, the kind that target illegal immigrants. They rob and steal and pillage those immigrants, and our Border Patrol agents protect those immigrants. Banditos have long traveled border districts, robbing these individuals.

But while on patrol Tuesday night, United States Border Agent Brian Terry, and this is his photograph, Madam Speaker. Brian Terry and team members encountered a group of armed gunmen. Upon seeing Agent Terry and three other Border Patrol agents, they opened fire on Agent Terry and his comrades with automatic weapons. Border Patrol Agent Terry was shot in

the back with an AK-47. He died en route to a hospital.

Four suspects have been arrested for this dastardly crime. One individual is still at large and on the run. Justice is deserved and needed for these murderers. Border Patrol Agent Terry is irreplaceable—yet another American life claimed by the violent border battle on the third front.

Agent Terry was 40. He was a brother and a son. His family called him a tough, big guy who committed his life to public service. Terry was headed home today to Michigan to see his family for Christmas. He had purchased his plane ticket earlier this week.

He was an agent for 3 years, but he had a military background. Right out of high school, he joined the United States Marine Corps, and he served 3 years. Part of that time he was in the combat zone in Iraq. He later became a police officer and he joined the Border Patrol in 2007. His life was dedicated to public service and the protection of the American people. He had been a member of the elite Border Patrol Tactical Team; and according to his family, he loved that job. He would call home before going on a mission, and he would call when he got back in. The excitement of protecting this Nation fueled his passion in the workplace, and he put his life on the line to protect our security and sovereignty as a Nation. And he paid for it by giving his life.

Madam Speaker, going back to the year 2004, I have a chart that shows assaults that have occurred on our Border Patrol agents. In 2004, about 400 assaults occurred. All of the way to 2009 and even this year, there are over a thousand assaults committed against our Border Patrol agents by illegals arrogantly coming into the United States. Mainly those assaults are by rocks being thrown at those Border Patrol agents and causing injuries. You don't hear too much about the assaults against our border protectors. But the media sure tells us a lot about how important it is that we let people who are here in this country illegally stick around and make the rest of us pay for it.

Agent Terry's fatal shooting is not the first murder of a Border Patrol agent. Border Patrol Agent Robert Rosas of Campo, California, was assassinated in 2009 while responding to criminal activity in a notorious alien and drug smuggling area. The men and women on the border are under constant assault. They are the iron gatekeepers to a violent battle that reveals each day and every night uncontained authority.

Because you see, Madam Speaker, whether we want to admit it or not, there are portions of the Texas-Mexico border, the U.S.-Mexico border, that are under the operational control of the drug cartels. The United States does not have control; Mexico does not have control. Not in all areas, but some areas; and that is where this ruthless

third front is taking place. The border war is a bloody battlefield between the law and the outlaws. Once a Texas Ranger told me: Congressman POE, after dark it gets western on the border. He said we are out-manned, out-gunned, and out-financed by the enemy.

Madam Speaker, we need the moral resolve as a Nation to secure the dignity of our borders and to protect the people who are protecting us, our Border Patrol agents. They are doing the job that we asked them to do, so it is long overdue that we protect the border of this country like we protect the borders of other nations so that no more Border Patrol agents will be murdered by those who sneak into our country.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING RETIRING CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to pay tribute to our colleagues Congresswoman CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, members of the Congressional Black Caucus who are retiring at the end of the 111th Congress.

I will say a bit about each of them in a moment, but I do want to recognize and first thank them all for their service to their constituents and to our country and really to the world. Each of them in their own way has contributed to the cause and the mission of the Congressional Black Caucus which was founded almost 40 years ago and continues as the "conscience of the Congress."

Since our founding in 1971, the Congressional Black Caucus has remained true to its mission to root out inequality and injustice. Our voice has been heard throughout the Halls of Congress and throughout the world. We have been advancing the role of government to empower and protect families and children with every legislative tool at our disposal.

Congresswoman KILPATRICK is an immediate past chair of the Congressional Black Caucus who I served under as first vice chair during the 110th Congress.

Congresswoman KILPATRICK is a brilliant and focused lawmaker who I have also had the pleasure of serving with a member of the House Appropriations Committee where she has been a forceful advocate for her constituents and the State of Michigan.

While serving on Capitol Hill, Congresswoman KILPATRICK has worked to level the playing field for minority-owned media outlets and advertising firms that face discrimination from

major advertisers. She has hosted forums on diversity in advertising and was a leading force in the successful effort to secure a Presidential executive order compelling all Federal agencies to increase their contractual opportunities with minority businesses.

Prior to her coming to Washington, Congresswoman KILPATRICK taught business education in the Detroit public schools before being elected to the Michigan State House where she served for 18 years and was the first African-American woman to serve on the Michigan House Appropriations Committee.

Congresswoman KILPATRICK has a deep commitment to our young people and the security of their future. She established the Sojourner Truth Project to inspire young African-American women to be leaders. Her spirit, her heart, and her intellect soar. The world is a better place because of this great woman.

Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, my friend, our colleague, believe it or not is a former elementary school teacher. She continues to educate us all each and every day. She is also a school psychologist who has lectured at both California State Universities at Los Angeles and Long Beach.

In 1975, she became the first African-American woman to be elected to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education, and she led efforts during some very tumultuous times to expand school integration and improve academic standards.

For almost 20 years, Congresswoman WATSON served in the California State Senate where I served later. She was the first African-American woman to serve in that body, and she became a statewide and national advocate for health care long before the rest of the country was talking about health care reform. She was an advocate for consumer protection, women and children.

During her tenure in Sacramento, she served as the chair of the Health and Human Services Committee and as a member of the Judiciary Committee. Let me tell you, and I always say this about Congresswoman WATSON, there were 40 members of the California Senate. I came to politics as a result of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm running for President. She was the first African-American woman elected to this body. Congresswoman WATSON, I used to watch her as being the only African-American woman in California in the State senate, and how she was able to maintain her integrity, her principles, her intellect and who she was as a black woman and yet negotiate very important legislation on behalf of the whole State. I want to salute her.

Congresswoman WATSON also served as the ambassador to Micronesia. She represented our country in a magnificent way. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated her mastery of foreign policy. She is an international leader. She is Dr. WATSON who served in that capacity as ambassador until

2001 when she returned to California to run for Congress in a special election after the untimely death of our beloved Congressman Julian Dixon.

□ 1730

She is an exceptional public servant, and she has demonstrated throughout her life a remarkable commitment to improving the human condition. And so we salute you, Congresswoman WATSON, and we look forward to this next chapter of your life.

And also, let me just take a moment to honor the extraordinary career of Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, a man who took up the torch from his mother, our former esteemed colleague, Congresswoman Carrie Meek, and he has carried it further than any of us would have ever imagined.

Other Members will talk more about Congressman MEEK, but we salute all of our retiring Members and wish them well and Godspeed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DETENTION FACILITIES AT GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to again make the case for why the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay should remain open and why Khalid Sheikh Mohammed—or any other hardened terrorist currently residing at Guantanamo Bay—should never be transferred to the United States to stand trial or for continued detention.

When a clear majority of the American people support keeping Gitmo open—as you can see from this chart to my left, Madam Speaker, this pie chart basically says, when you ask the American people what should happen to Guantanamo, fully 55 percent say keep it open. Only 32 percent are in favor of closing Guantanamo Bay detention facility, and 13 percent had no opinion.

Well, Madam Speaker, President Obama made closing Guantanamo Bay an immediate priority upon taking office, and he pledged to close the facility within his first year in office. It has indeed been troubling that the administration, in its push to close Guantanamo Bay to, so-called, "improve" our world standing, has succumbed to letting untruths dictate the popular story line about how the United States treats its detainees. Rather than expend the effort to correct what have become blatant fabrications, they continue to fight—even as recently as this