

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are writing to express our strong support for resuming Operation Jump Start.

As you know, this effort deployed National Guard troops to meet our Southwest border security needs. Operation Jump Start was a tremendous success. Guardsmen built 37 miles of fence, repaired 700 miles of roadway, assisted in confiscating over 298,000 pounds of drugs, offered support in over 166,000 arrests and helped in 100 rescues. They were vital in securing 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. The mission ended in July 2008.

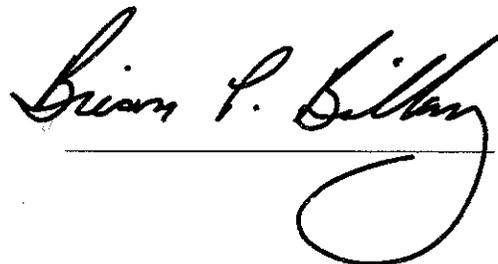
As you know, the Mexican military's crackdown on drug cartels and corruption has increased violence and decreased stability in the region. Last year, more than 6,000 people and this year more than 1,000 have died as a result. On February 20, the State Department issued a travel alert as drug cartels are engaged in an increasingly violent conflict among themselves and the Mexican government for control of trafficking routes along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Due to the current situation in Mexico, we believe that more resources are needed to ensure additional border security. There are still significant security and infrastructure needs on the border and the National Guard should be used as an asset in this regard.

At a time when drug violence from Mexico threatens to spill over the border and expose our communities and families to the consequences, we strongly encourage you to resume Operation Jump Start. We look forward to working with you to ensure the security of our borders.

Sincerely,

  
Ed Royce

  
Brian P. Sullivan

Sam Johnson

Howard Coble

Todd Tiahrt

Kent Starks

Larry Miller

Don Rumsfeld

Bill Roser

K. Marrett

Rodney Alexander

Sue Myrick

Cc: DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano