



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4302
March 9, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-1000

Dear Secretary Panetta,

As you know, the United States continues to face a security threat along our southern border. Drug cartel operations- including drug, human, and weapons trafficking – have become more sophisticated and brutal. These criminals show no hesitation in using violence to intimidate law enforcement in Mexico and what was once a regionally isolated criminal justice matter has grown into a significant national security concern for the U.S. and Mexico.

With the drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment in Iraq, and our role in Afghanistan winding down, it is to be expected that in the next few years there will be a significant amount of surplus equipment that will become available that could be extremely beneficial for border security operations. At the same time, with tax revenue down significantly on both the federal and state levels, many state and local law enforcement agencies are facing considerable budget shortfalls that endanger their ability to successfully complete their missions. Therefore, while border security is primarily a federal function, many state and local law enforcement agencies operate border security operations that could benefit from this equipment. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Department of Defense (DOD) answer the following questions so that Congress and state and local agencies can better understand DOD's plans for this equipment:

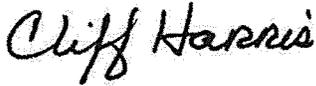
1. What is the current status of eligible equipment returning to the U.S. from Iraq that would have border security applications to the National Guard and state and local law enforcement agencies for border security operations?
2. Is equipment that is not bound for Afghanistan returning to the U.S. or is it being stored abroad? What are the long term plans for this equipment?
3. Is there a full accounting and list of what equipment is currently available and expected to be available? If so, when will this list be made available to eligible agencies?
4. Is it current DOD policy to make certain equipment eligible to foreign militaries either by sales or otherwise before it is made available to U.S., state and local law enforcement agencies?

We look forward to working with you and hope that with this information, we can work towards greater border security and the safety and security of the people of the United States.

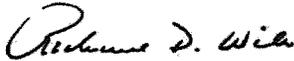
Sincerely,



TED POE
Member of Congress (TX-02)



Sheriff Cliff Harris
Pecos County, TX



Sheriff Richard Wiles
El Paso County, TX



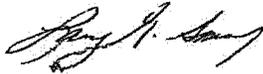
Sheriff Clint McDonald
Terrell County, TX



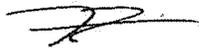
Sheriff Martin Cuellar
Webb County, TX

*Chief Deputy Bill Kotts
on behalf of*

Sheriff Rick McIvor
Jeff Davis County, TX



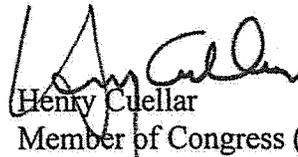
Sheriff Larry G. Spence
Willacy County, TX



Sheriff Rene Fuentes
Starr County, TX



Sheriff Clarence Dupnik
Pima County, AZ



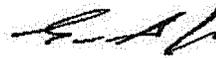
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress (TX-28)



Sheriff Tomas Herrera
Maverick County, TX



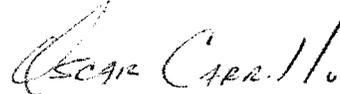
Sheriff L.K. "Buddy" Burgess
Kinney County, TX



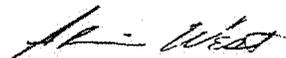
Sheriff Erasmo Alarcon, Jr.
Jim Hogg County, TX



Sheriff Todd Garrison
Dona Ana County, NM



Sheriff Oscar Carrillo
Culberson County, TX



Sheriff Arvin West
Hudspeth County, TX



Sheriff Ronny Dodson
Brewster County, TX



Sheriff Joe Frank Martinez
Val Verde County, TX