



## OFFICES OF THE GOVERNORS

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April 22, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U. S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Minority Leader  
U. S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, Madam Speaker and Mr. Boehner,

The National Drug Intelligence Center recognizes cross-border drug trafficking organizations as the "most pervasive threat facing the southwest region." As border governors, we can testify to the truth of that statement, and we are writing to ask for your help to overcome this tremendous challenge to the health and safety of our fellow Americans.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano recently announced the Obama administration's plan to address the rising level of violence we are experiencing along our nation's southwest border. While there are no easy solutions, it is abundantly clear that additional resources are needed – and needed now.

Congress will begin to debate the Fiscal Year 2009 emergency supplemental budget and shortly thereafter, the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of Defense budget. We request that you fully fund the National Guard Counter-Drug Program to add additional personnel to the four southwest border states and ensure that this funding remains sufficient to reach a significant decline in border drug trafficking and violence.

By funding the National Guard Counter-Drug Program in the southwest border states, you will allow federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to fulfill the federal government's commitment to reduce the demand for illegal drugs in our nation. We are confident that the flow of illegal drugs and associated violence can be best addressed by increasing the capacity of the Counter-Drug Program authorized by Section 112, Title 32, of the United States Code. Over the last 20 years, this law has empowered the states, through the National Guard, to support federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations in counter-drug interdiction, drug demand reduction and narcoterrorism activities. In Fiscal Year 2008, National Guard Counter-Drug support led to \$28 billion in drugs taken off the streets and nearly \$226 million in cash seized.

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As the National Guard programs already exist, they can easily expand to accommodate additional personnel on the job. Expanding the Counter-Drug Program provides a good opportunity to minimize perceptions that anyone is militarizing the border by enabling National Guard personnel already familiar with drug trafficking to use their expertise and skills to support the direct services underway by law enforcement. These personnel are not employed in any form of combat or maneuver role.

Increasing the number of National Guard personnel to support these southwestern border law enforcement agencies is a priority, but we also need to maintain, and in some areas increase, the support to local law enforcement throughout the rest of our states where cross-border drug trafficking organizations are known to exist. Currently, there is more demand for support from local, state and federal authorities than our National Guard programs can actually meet.

Thank you in advance for considering our request. We stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor of California



Janice K. Brewer  
Governor of Arizona



Bill Richardson  
Governor of New Mexico



Rick Perry  
Governor of Texas

cc: The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
The Honorable Thad Cochran  
The Honorable Carl Levin  
The Honorable John McCain  
The Honorable Dave Obey  
The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
The Honorable Ike Skelton  
The Honorable John M. McHugh