**AILA Advocacy – August 2013**

The Houston Section is focusing its attention on the following Texas Representatives:

* **Congressman Ted Poe – 2nd District**
* **Congressman Michael McCaul – 10th District**
* **Congressman Pete Olson – 22nd District**
* **Congressman Randy Weber – 14th District**
* **Congressman Kevin Brady – 8th District**

**Congressman Ted Poe – 2nd District of Texas**

<http://poe.house.gov/index.php>

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| **Border Security/Illegal Immigration**  |

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| Border security and immigration must go hand and hand. Protecting our border will help keep us all safe and will help prevent the drug cartels from preying upon and terrorizing our communities. I regularly travel to the Texas/Mexico border and have seen firsthand the destruction that the drug cartels cause to our communities and the pain they inflict on families. To help protect the border, I introduced H.R. 152, the National Guard Border Enforcement Act last Congress. This bill would require the Secretary of Defense to deploy 10,000 National Guard troops, upon the request of a Border State Governor, to the US border and to keep them there until operational control of the border is achieved.  The time for excuses is over; we need action.   In addition, I’ve introduced the Send Equipment for National Defense (SEND) Act, which would make 10% of eligible returning equipment from Iraq available to federal and state law enforcement agencies for border security purposes. With the drawdown in Iraq, we’ve seen an influx of surplus military equipment returning to the U.S. It’s time to make this already paid-for equipment available to border law enforcement officials, who are too often outmanned, outgunned and out-equipped by the drug cartels.I support immigration – legal immigration – but our immigration system is broken and has been for decades. It’s time for Congress to enact a permanent fix that is both workable and reasonable. The process must be reformed and streamlined. The purposeless visa lottery system should be set aside and visas should be awarded to those who benefit our nation. We have a deep need for high-skilled labor, but while we work to enact a long term plan for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education here at home, we should stop discouraging foreign workers who are American-educated and American-employed from taking what they’ve learned, going back home and competing against us. And, we also must acknowledge the contributions of a legal immigrant workforce.I am against attempts by the Executive Branch to act unilaterally and to avoid enforcing the law. The Constitution does not give the Executive Branch the authority to choose which laws it will enforce and which ones it will ignore.   As Vice-Chairman of the Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee and Chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus, I will continue to advocate for a responsible, fair and permanent solution to our broken immigration system – one that includes enforcement and reform of our nation’s immigration laws, helps to keep people safe, and helps protect our border. For more information on the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, please visit [here](http://judiciary.house.gov/about/subcommittee.html). For more information on the Immigration Reform Caucus, please visit[here](http://poe.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8920&Itemid=198)**.** To sign up for my e-newsletter, please visit [here](http://poe.congressnewsletter.net/mail/util.cfm?mailaction=profile). |

**Congressman Michael McCaul – 10th District of Texas**

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By appointment

**Border Security**

As the Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, it is my duty to oversee the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ensure that America’s borders are secure.

Over the last several years, Congress has provided billions of dollars to secure the borders, but without an end goal in mind, much of the spending has been done in an ad hoc fashion.  To secure America’s borders, a national strategy and reliable metrics to measure border security effectiveness are essential.

**Border Security Results Act**

During the 113th Congress, I introduced [H.R. 1417](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c113:H.R.1417:), the bipartisan [*Border Security Results Act*](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c113:H.R.1417:), which requires DHS to develop a strategy to gain operational control of the borders and develop verifiable metrics to measure progress. Ten years after the creation of DHS, I believe that both are long overdue. [H.R. 1417](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c113:H.R.1417:) requires the development of metrics to inform border security progress and directs DHS to develop a strategy and implementation plan to gain operational control of the border within two years, setting a standard of 90% effectiveness at apprehending illegal border crossers and interdicting illicit contraband. Achieving this standard must be based on a solid understanding of illegal border crossings and trafficking of contraband.

My bill furthermore requires the Secretary to gain situational awareness through the use of sophisticated technologies and other means, giving our border agents the ability to predict changes in illegal activity. Additionally, DHS must develop a series of verifiable metrics to gauge border security progress.  Lastly, this bill includes a series of verification provisions by outside experts to ensure that Congress is getting an independent assessment of the state of border security.

Rather than continue the resources first approach, this bill’s emphasis on effectiveness and results will ensure DHS is on the path to gain operational control of the border.

**11/15/12 - A Line in the Sand: Confronting Crime, Violence and Terror at the Southwest Border**

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[Download: *A Line in the Sand: Countering Crime, Violence and Terror at the Southwest Border*](http://mccaul.house.gov/uploads/Final%20PDF%20Line%20in%20the%20Sand.pdf)

When the Homeland Security Subcommittee I chaired in 2006 authored the report ***A Line in the Sand: Confronting the Threat at the Southwest Border***, exposing the rise of the Mexican drug cartels, no one could have predicted the enormity of the bloodshed to come.  In 2008, nearly 6,000 people in Mexico were murdered by these cartels.  That’s more than the number of soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.



[Download: *A Line in the Sand: Confronting the Threat at the Southwest Border*](http://www.house.gov/sites/members/tx10_mccaul/pdf/Investigaions-Border-Report.pdf)

As I predicted in 2006, we indeed have a war on our southern border.  Cartels are controlling the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S., and weapons and cash into Mexico.  They kill anyone that gets in their way – including police officers and elected officials. It is a multi-billion dollar business.  As the violence increasingly spills onto U.S. soil, it is imperative that we substantially increase the resources of our Border Patrol and Border Sheriffs.

America's borders are also our nation's last line of defense in the War on Terror and they must be secured.  Evidence in our 2006 report that terrorists want to exploit our porous borders to gain entry into the United States still exists today.  It is for that reason alone America must make securing our borders the top priority.  America has a right and, more importantly, a responsibility to determine who enters our nation and for what reasons. While reform of our legal immigration system is needed, I believe we must first secure our borders to stem the flow of illegal traffic before we begin debate on a temporary guest worker program.

We must also work to better enforce our current immigration laws.  We must expedite the deportation of illegal immigrants who commit other crimes in our communities.  I continue to work to improve the relationship between Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and local law enforcement across our district.  Greater resources are needed to provide voluntary training to police and sheriff’s departments so that they can detain illegal immigrants and start the deportation process.

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**Stopping Illegal Immigration from http://olsonforcongress.com/issues**

If you don’t know who is coming into your country, how can you know they don’t intend to do you harm?

I believe in strengthening our borders with fences, increased surveillance, increased man power, detention facilities, and an increased commitment to FULLY enforce our laws – no excuses, no delays, and no second chances for those who break our laws. Amnesty is not an option.

We must also step up enforcement in the vast interior portion of our country. Houston has already seen the violence that can be brought to our streets by human smugglers, drug traffickers, and illegal immigrant gangs. We shouldn’t have gun battles in our neighborhoods between these gangs and police officers being shot by criminal illegal immigrants.

And I will continue to support the valiant work of our border patrol and border sheriffs. It is a travesty that the good men and women who are manning the front lines on our border should ever have to fear prosecution for protecting our sovereign soil. That is why we must have a Department of Homeland Security that will clarify the “rules of engagement” so those who protect our border are empowered and emboldened to do this good work.

**Congressman Randy Weber – 14th District**

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**IMMIGRATION REFORM IS NOT A RACE**

Jul 12, 2013

Press Release

**Washington, D.C.** – On Wednesday, House Republicans held a conference wide meeting to discuss the topic of immigration reform. Congressman Weber (R-Friendswood) made the following statement:

“While I appreciate House Leadership meeting with the House Republican Conference to discuss immigration reform, I do not believe a two-hour meeting is sufficient. I am calling for a weekend conference to allow us an opportunity to exhaustively discuss the matter.

Immigration reform is just as complex as the President’s health care law, and we need to make sure that we get this right. We cannot afford a repeat of the 1986 amnesty bill. We have to remember, this is not a race. The American people deserve a secure border, and for their elected officials to do their job correctly. I am committed to spending all the time and energy necessary to get this right on behalf of law-abiding Americans”

**WE MUST SECURE OUR BORDERS FIRST**

Jun 18, 2013

Press Release

**Washington, D.C. -** Today, Speaker Boehner announced that he would not bring immigration reform to the floor for the vote if there were not a majority of Republicans supporting the legislation. Congressman Randy Weber (R-Friendswood) made the following statement:

“What the Senate has proposed for comprehensive immigration reform is a thinly veiled amnesty bill. Our priority should be focused on securing our borders and enforcing the laws that are currently on the books. This is why, I was one of the seventy who signed and advocated for the Hastert letter, encouraging leadership to hold an exhaustive discussion on immigration reform within the Republican Conference.”

**Congressman Kevin Brady – 8th District**

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**Border Security**

**Border Security**

America’s borders are broken. There is no more simple way to say it. We must shut the back door of illegal immigration, so the front door of legal immigration can remain open. Securing the border, insisting companies hire only legal workers, rejecting amnesty and rewarding those who play by the rules are necessary before Congress considers a temporary guest worker program.

* **Secure our Border**. I supported the [Secure Fence Act](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ367.109) of 2006 and continue to fight to ensure full funding for border security, through fencing, electronic sensors and a more robust Border Patrol presence.
* **Stop Illegal Hiring**. America can take a large step in the right direction by simply stopping businesses from hiring illegal workers and giving honest employers the tools they need to hire legal workers. That’s why I have supporting the verfication of employees through modern technology. Bills I have championed created a database that employers can quickly and accurately tap to make sure their employees are able to work legally in the United States. Once an effective employment verification system is in place, enforcement becomes easier and those that may cross the border illegally have less of an incentive to do so.
* **Reject Amnesty**. I have always been, and remain, adamantly opposed to any legislation that grants amnesty to illegal aliens.
* **Protect our Border Patrol**. Law enforcement officers have incredibly tough jobs protecting our safety. We shouldn’t make it harder on them. That’s why I was deeply troubled that two border patrol agents, Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean, were sentenced to 11 and 12 years in prison for misusing their weapons in the line of duty. There’s no doubt these two men committed a crime, but the minimum sentences these men received were too harsh. The sentencing law was originally created to punish criminals using weapons during the commission of a crime, not against armed law enforcement officers making split-second decisions while pursuing criminals evading arrest.

To help right this wrong and protect other border patrol agents from enhanced penalties designed for everyday criminals, I introduced, [H.R. 6367](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_bills&docid=f:h6367ih.pdf), to create a narrowly defined exception for law enforcement officers, using a seven-part test in the criminal code that defines punishment for crimes involving firearms. If satisfied, it would prevent law enforcement officers who have been sentenced in a crime from having their sentences enhanced because they used their firearm while on duty and in pursuit of a criminal they believed to be violent and dangerous.

The legislation gained early support from the Federal Hispanic Law Enforcement Officers Association and Friends of the Border Patrol. I, and 74 other Members of Congress, wrote a [letter](http://kevinbrady.house.gov/bush.pdf) to President Bush asking him to commute the sentences of former Border Patrol agents Ramos and Compean, which he did before leaving office.

* **Investigate Fast & Furious.** Iam a sponsor of a bill calling for a U.S. House vote of of 'No Confidence' over U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder's handling of Fast & Furious, an ill-fated operation that “allowed thousands of weapons of various types to be illegally sold and or transferred from the United States to violent drug cartels and known criminals in Mexico and elsewhere.” The resolution also points out that due to “failure to properly control, monitor, or establish Operation Fast and Furious, it is likely Mexican nationals were killed or wounded by weapons sold through this scheme,” and that “evidence further suggests that such guns have been used in the United States, and may be involved in the death of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry.”

There is no question that our country has been made better by the law abiding people who came to this country seeking to assimilate into our culture and to make a better future for their family. As we work to solve our illegal immigration problems, we should always remain true to our values, respect the rule of law, and be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.