



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JOE STRAUS
SPEAKER

May 27, 2014

Colonel Steven McCraw
Director
Texas Department of Public Safety
5805 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78752-0001

Dear Colonel McCraw:

For some time now, you and my office have discussed ways to improve security along the Texas-Mexico border. I appreciate the time and effort that you have devoted to ensuring the safety of our fellow Texans.

There has been considerable public discussion in recent weeks about implementing another "surge" of state resources to enhance security along the border. You, and members of the Public Safety Commission, have broad authority to deploy Department of Public Safety troopers and equipment to the border as threats and situations warrant. You have done so in past border surge operations, including last fall's Operation Strong Safety. These operations resulted from intelligence and assessments developed by professional law enforcement at the Department; I would expect any future operations would be based on similar assessments.

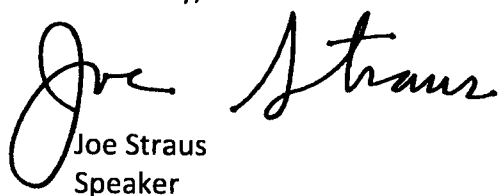
If you and the Commission deem it necessary to launch another surge operation, I believe answers are due to a few important questions. First, does DPS have sufficient resources to address the current situation? If not, what will be the cost of an operation, and how long will the state incur that cost? How would this operation affect other law enforcement operations around the state? It would also be helpful for the Texas House to know which resources will be deployed to the border that aren't there already. Finally, in light of previous DPS surge operations, at what point will we have sufficient resources along the border, and how do we measure success?

The Texas House has repeatedly proven its commitment to the safety of the border region. In fact, during my time as Speaker, our investment in border security has increased from \$110 million every two years to \$343 million, providing additional manpower, weapons, vehicles and technology. The House is ready to do what's necessary to protect our fellow Texans. However, the House also wants to use taxpayer dollars in a prudent and cost-effective way. That's why

it's important that you provide a full and candid assessment of why current resources are insufficient and how additional spending is going to provide a level of security that we currently lack. The House also needs to see that you are using existing resources properly.

The Texas House appreciates – and shares – your commitment to public safety. I look forward to working with you further to improve the security of our state.

Sincerely,



Joe Straus
Speaker

JRS/je