

December 19, 2006

The Honorable Robert Gates  
Department of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing in regards to the steps the federal government has taken to combat the flood of illegal drugs across the border. As you know, it is estimated that 60 percent of the illicit drugs that enter the United States pass through the Southwest border. Given this fact, we are very pleased the Fiscal Year 2007 Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations bill recently signed into law provides \$20 million in new and additional money to the National Guard Counter-Drug Program and an additional \$5.2 million specifically directed towards counter-drug efforts along the Southwestern border. These new, targeted funds should help to stem the influx of drug trafficking across the border.

Illicit drug trafficking isn't the only threat – drug cartels use terrorism to further their trade and terrorist organizations in turn use the drug trade to finance their own operations. A recent report by the House Homeland Security Committee documents the growing risk from coordination between the drug cartels, human smuggling networks and criminal gangs who operate on the streets of the United States and within our prisons. With this clear and dangerous connection, it is more important than ever to establish a strong working relationship between the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security and the governors of the Southwest border states.

The National Guard plays a key role in bolstering border security by providing surveillance systems and intelligence and providing training to local law enforcement. As part of our cooperative efforts, the National Guard's Counter-Drug Program is one area funded by Congress through the DOD that supports both border security and the various local, state and federal law enforcement agencies that work to stop the illegal narcotics that flow into and through our states for destinations nationwide. In the fight against

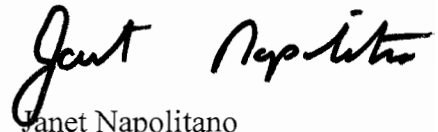
illegal drugs and terrorism, the National Guard's Counter-Drug Program provides an essential defense for our nation as a whole.

We appreciate your efforts in supporting the National Guard Counter-Drug program. As commander-in-chief of our state National Guard units, we ask that you recognize the special funding needs of the National Guard Counter-Drug program in our border states. Specifically, we request that you allocate as much of the new \$20 million as possible to National Guard units in our four states. In addition, we would like to set up a meeting of relevant personnel from DOD and our offices in the next few weeks to discuss this matter further. Please have your staff contact Mr. Brian De Vallance at 202-220-1396 to facilitate such a meeting with staff from our Washington, DC offices.

Sincerely,



Bill Richardson  
Governor



Janet Napolitano  
Governor



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor