

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

September 26, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In an effort to enhance Texas/Mexico border security, I commissioned two retired military generals to provide a strategic perspective on securing our nation's southern border along the Rio Grande River.

The independent study "Texas Border Security: A Strategic Military Assessment" (enclosed), co-authored by retired General Barry McCaffrey, former Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy under President Bill Clinton, and retired Major-General Robert Scales offers a military perspective on how to best incorporate strategic, operational and tactical measures to combat the increasingly hostile drug cartel members along the Rio Grande River. It also provides sobering evidence of cartel criminals gaining footholds on Texas soil.

This threat is real. Farmers and ranchers in South Texas have reported destruction of property, intimidation and even direct attacks by drug cartels operating out of Mexico. I have contacted your office; Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano; and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director John Morton, about this increasing threat to no avail. Secretary Napolitano has stated that the border is safer than ever. You have suggested Texas build a moat to address the problem. I still have not heard from Director John Morton. With all due respect, Mr. President, objective evidence demonstrates the Texas border needs help, and needs it now. The many cries from landowners and myself seem to not be enough to warrant federal attention, which is why Texas engaged these military experts to evaluate our border issue and verify or refute the information Texas policy makers are hearing daily.

While progress has been made in some of our Texas cities, many areas continue to suffer tremendously. Further, Texas has 64 percent of the land border with Mexico yet we only have 44 percent of the Border Patrol agents assigned to the southwestern border. I am asking for an immediate doubling of the Border Patrol agents in Texas to get us closer to the resources we need for a secure border.



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Securing our border is an issue that transcends party differences and should be afforded a priority of its own. The sovereignty of our nation and the future survival of agriculture in our border region are at stake. Americans know what it is like to be dependent on foreign oil; we cannot become dependent on foreign food.

I ask again that you please reconsider the allocation of sufficient federal resources to help counter the threat to our national security and our Texas citizens.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Staples". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent initial "T".

Todd Staples
Texas Commissioner of Agriculture

Enclosure