March 12, 2012

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

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the bipartisan House Immigration Reform Caucus, we oppose efforts to defund the 287(g) program as proposed in your fiscal year 2013 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security. To do so would be shortsighted and undo the work and new found level of cooperation that law enforcement agencies have built throughout the United States.

The 287(g) program provides state and local law enforcement with the training to identify, process, and detain possible immigration offenders. This program extends the federal government's ability to enforce our immigration laws without the additional overhead. This program has been highly successful at not only apprehending immigration offenders but has facilitated the incarceration of dangerous criminals and has contributed to overall public safety.

Your plan to transfer resources from the 287(g) program to the Secure Communities program would put too much pressure on one aspect of an overall interior enforcement strategy. If the 9/11 Commission Report has taught us anything, it is that an overreliance on one program or agency is a recipe for failure. It is the combination of these programs and other law enforcement collaborations that has proven successful, not their independence.

Defunding the 287(g) program would negate and rollback all the gains made by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies working together. In fact, state and local law enforcement agencies are assets that the federal government should find ways to expand, not limit. Regrettably, to do otherwise is inviting failure.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We remain available to work with you to identify real solutions to enforcing our immigration laws throughout the country.

Sincerely,

Brian Bilbray  
Member of Congress

Phil Gingrey  
Member of Congress
Ed Royce  
Member of Congress

John Sullivan  
Member of Congress

Michael McCaul  
Member of Congress

Jason Chaffetz  
Member of Congress

Walter Jones  
Member of Congress

Paul Gosar  
Member of Congress

Alan Nunnelee  
Member of Congress

Dana Rohrabacher  
Member of Congress

Marsha Blackburn  
Member of Congress

Lynn Westmoreland  
Member of Congress

Kenny Marchant  
Member of Congress

Bob Goodlatte  
Member of Congress

Sue Myrick  
Member of Congress

Chip Cravaack  
Member of Congress
Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress

Trent Franks  
Member of Congress

Steve King  
Member of Congress

Steve Womack  
Member of Congress

Blake Farenthold  
Member of Congress

Rob Woodall  
Member of Congress

Ted Poe  
Member of Congress