

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has proposed sending as many as 6,000 National Guard troops to the U.S./Mexico Border to “improve border security,”

WHEREAS, the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 prohibits the U.S. military from patrolling within U.S. borders,

WHEREAS, soldiers are trained for war and their training pre-supposes an enemy combatant that is not afforded due process and other protections guaranteed by our constitution,

WHEREAS, the residents of the U.S./Mexico Border are not “enemy combatants,” and our communities should not be militarized,

WHEREAS, Ezequiel Hernandez – a goatherder, a teenager, a U.S. citizen – was shot and killed on U.S. soil by a U.S. Marine on May 20, 1997. The Marines were sent to the border to improve border security and instead they killed a boy,

WHEREAS, the proposal threatens the safety and well being of the residents of our border communities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That the Mayor and City Council of the City of El Paso oppose President Bush’s proposal and any other proposal that militarizes the border. Further, be it resolved that we instead demand comprehensive immigration reform.

ADOPTED THIS 23 DAY OF May 2006

CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Charlie McNabb
City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It has come to our attention that you are considering making an announcement in the near future about the stationing of 10,000 National Guard troops on our nation's southern border. While we agree that more resources are needed to secure our borders and ports of entry, such a major deployment of our forces raises a number of questions that we believe must be answered before proceeding.

We write to ask that you provide additional information to Congress and the American people on your proposal to direct military forces to assume a role for which they were neither trained nor recruited.

Specifically, questions that we have about a potential mass deployment of troops to the Southwest border include:

- Which troops will be deployed and how will this deployment affect the ongoing commitment of 24,000 Army National Guard troops in Iraq and Afghanistan? How will this affect the 24-month call-up restriction?
- Under what authority will troops be deployed?
- What is the projected cost of a troop deployment to the Southern border, and have funds been identified for allocation to this new mission?
- What are the rules of engagement under which these troops will serve?
- Which agency will lead the operations? Will military troops be under the control of the civilian leadership of the Border Patrol which has the primary responsibility for securing our nation's borders?
- What provisions have been made for the detention of persons in the border region by military members?
- What plans have been made to ensure that interoperable communications are available to allow military and civilian law enforcement personnel to communicate?

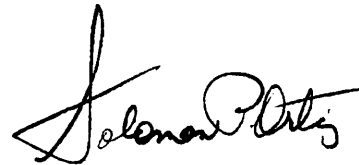
- Will Air Force or the other military branches provide air support? Has the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for aerial surveillance been coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration and will UAV aircraft including the Air Force's Predator be available to support this troop deployment in light of the shortage of these air vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan?

Mr. President, these are serious questions that must be answered before we consider a major deployment of forces to participate in law enforcement activities on our borders. We urge you to carefully consider whether it is in the best interest of our nation to add yet another mission to the agenda of our over-stretched military.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to learning more about your plans.


Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

Sincerely,


Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2006

The Honorable Paul McHale
Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary McHale:

It has come to our attention that the Department of Defense has been tasked with studying a White House proposal to station 10,000 National Guard troops on our nation's southern border. As you and your staff consider this matter, we urge you to carefully consider several issues.

At a time when Army National Guard troops are stretched thin with deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and with the hurricane season nearing, a White House proposal to add yet another major responsibility to these already over-taxed forces seems unwise. Further, as we learned from a previous tragic incident in Redford, Texas in 1997 when 18 year old Esequiel Hernandez was killed by a Marine patrolling the border region, it is critical that training for military members assisting with Border Patrol efforts be extensive and occur prior to deployment to the region. We are concerned that this training, in addition to the time spent serving on the border, is not feasible as an additional mission for Army National Guard troops in light of other commitments.

We are concerned that the White House has been consulting only with Republican members and has not been consulting with senior Members of the Armed Services Committee. Senior Members of the committees of jurisdiction understand the strain that such a deployment would place on our nation's military forces, and some of these Members also have extensive experience in border issues. Now that DoD has been tasked to study this issue, we urge you to consult with our committee in a bi-partisan fashion to ensure that all the issues and implications of such a controversial proposal for mass deployment of troops on the border have been fully considered.

We have written to the President to urge him to provide information about his proposal for using military troops on the border to Congress and the American people. The questions we have asked the President to answer include:

- Which troops will be deployed and how will this deployment affect the ongoing commitment of 24,000 Army National Guard troops in Iraq and Afghanistan? How will this affect the 24-month call-up restriction?
- Under what authority will troops be deployed?

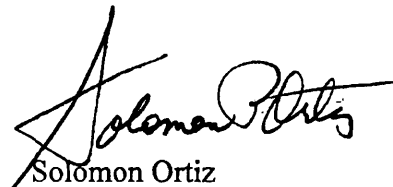
- What is the projected cost of a troop deployment to the Southern border, and have funds been identified for allocation to this new mission?
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- What provisions have been made for the detention of persons in the border region by military members?
- What plans have been made to ensure that interoperable communications are available to allow military and civilian law enforcement personnel to communicate?
- Will Air Force or the other military branches provide air support? Has the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for aerial surveillance been coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration and will UAV aircraft including the Air Force's Predator be available to support this troop deployment in light of the shortage of these air vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan?

As you consider the implications of a major deployment of National Guard forces to police the Southwest Border, we urge you to carefully consider the concerns we have raised. We look forward to learning more about your plans.

Sincerely,



Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress



Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress

SILVESTRE REYES
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TERRORISM, HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, ANALYSIS
AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE



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May 15, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

After hearing numerous reports in the last several days that you may direct our military to play a major role in controlling our southern border, and knowing that you are preparing to address the nation tonight on immigration, I am writing to express my grave concern about the potential ramifications of such a decision.

Since the late 1980's, law enforcement agencies along the border have received military-unique support from Joint Task Force Six (now Joint Task Force North) on a limited basis, and except for the incident that occurred in 1997, this support has been well received and successful. However, I have always opposed using our military for border enforcement itself, and now is certainly not the time for an expanded military role or presence on our nation's southern border.

I have been troubled by developments in Latin America over the last few years. We have seen an emerging resentment that can be described as either "anti-American" or "anti-American foreign policy." As you are aware, a number of Latin American countries have elected presidents who ran on anti-American platforms, and other candidates are currently running on similar platforms. The presidents of Venezuela and Cuba continue their attacks against you and the United States as well as their support of those candidates who endorse anti-American policies.

Mexico's presidential elections are six weeks away, and I am very concerned that decisions you make today and announce tonight could sway Mexicans toward electing an anti-American administration. Militarization of our southern border has always been a contentious political issue for Mexico and across Latin America. Mexican media may create a frenzy of anti-American feelings that could have very detrimental and long-term implications for our country if that sentiment translates into the election of a Mexican administration courted by Venezuela and Cuba. If that happens, illegal immigration will be the least of our problems. Mexico is not our enemy, and there is much at stake for both our countries with respect to security, commerce, and culture.

Mr. President, urge Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that includes three provisions: border security, a guest worker program, and earned legalization, but please do not militarize our southern border. I have worked on border issues for almost forty years, including serving for 26 ½ years in the U.S. Border Patrol as an agent and Sector Chief, and would be pleased to offer my assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Silvestre Reyes', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress