

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol, S-131
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol, S-131
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman and Ranking Member:

For more than a decade, the National Guard Bureau in coordination with state governors have provided vital no-cost investigative support, drug demand reduction, narco-terrorism, and officer safety training to thousands of local, state and federal law enforcement officials, community-based prevention professionals, and first responders through regional counterdrug training centers and state plans. However, these plans and centers are now in jeopardy because of the uncertainty of the Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriations process.

In the words of one local police chief, “no other facility provides the level of physical sophistication and expert training personnel” as do the National Guard members who operate this program. Law enforcement officials across the country continue to support this program, and have raised concerns because they understand the acute effect that closure of these facilities will have on their communities.

Historically, Congress has appropriated adequate resources to support these activities. Much of this funding was requested in Presidential budget submissions. Every year over the course of the past decade, the President has requested funding for the regional counterdrug centers and state counterdrug plans. As you are aware, however, the President’s budget request is not infallible. To ensure that these programs were able to fulfill their missions, Congress has wisely provided additional annual funding to the National Guard to fill financial gaps incurred by the operation and maintenance of the program and its facilities.

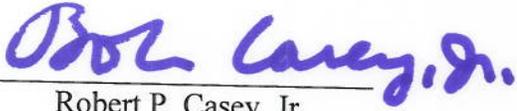
As in previous years, the funding requested in the President’s Fiscal Year 2011 and 2012 budget submission would not allow these programs to be sustained. According to the National Guard Bureau, without an increase in funding, the thirteen state plans and the five regional counterdrug training centers will be forced to close. Currently, there is a budget shortfall of nearly \$50 million between what was provided to the National Guard to implement these programs in Fiscal Year 2010 versus what was requested in the President’s Fiscal Year 2011 budget.

As the 112th Congress continues to examine the Fiscal Year 2011 and 2012 budget, we respectfully request that the Committee consider consolidating the funding for these activities.

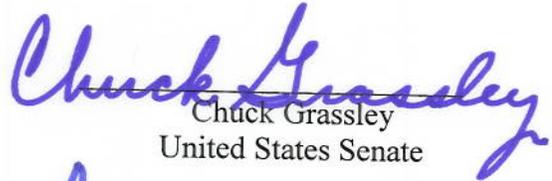
Furthermore, understanding the increased fiscal constraints under which the Appropriations Committee and the Congress must currently operate, we also respectfully request that you provide as much funding as possible for National Guard counterdrug activities.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may be of any assistance.

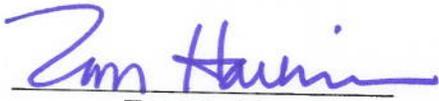
Sincerely,



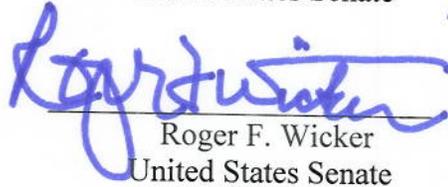
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United State Senate



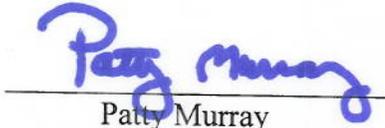
Chuck Grassley
United States Senate



Tom Harkin
United State Senate



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senate



Patty Murray
United States Senate



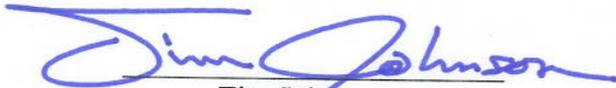
Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate



Mark Begich
United States Senate



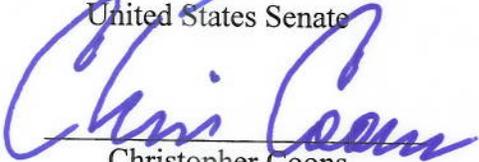
Bernard Sanders
United States Senate



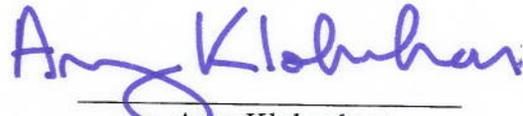
Tim Johnson
United States Senate



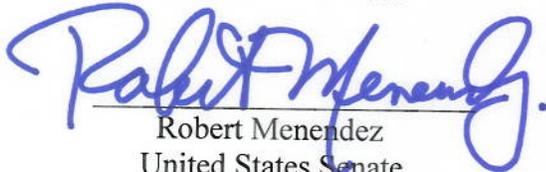
Ron Wyden
United States Senate



Christopher Coons
United States Senate



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate



Robert Menendez
United States Senate