

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 29, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

We are writing to ask you to fully fund the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), which is currently authorized at \$950 million, in your Fiscal Year 2009 Budget proposal. As you know, SCAAP was created in the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to reimburse states and localities for the arrest, incarceration, and transportation costs associated with illegal immigrants who commit crimes in our communities (PL 103-322). Without SCAAP, state and local budgets will be further overwhelmed by costs that are more properly the federal government's responsibility.

Securing our nation's borders is the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government. With this responsibility comes the added duty of punishing undocumented individuals that endanger our communities through criminal acts. Congress has consistently legislated that the federal government must either take undocumented criminals into federal custody or reach an agreement to compensate state and local jurisdictions for their incarceration.

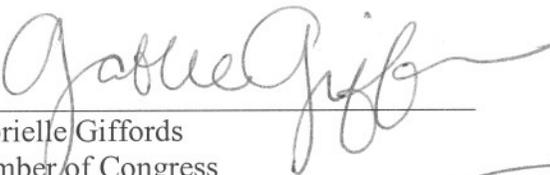
Considering the immigration challenges in America, under-funding SCAAP places a significant cost burden on state and local governments, stretching their resources and hampering their ability to protect our communities and uphold the law. Communities across the country continue to face extraordinary costs associated with incarcerating undocumented criminals. Because of the limited federal contributions, the bulk of these costs are borne by counties, some of which are among the poorest in the nation and traditionally operate with slim budgets and staffing. Given the increasing reliance on local law enforcement personnel by the homeland security and immigration enforcement communities, supporting their contribution to this mission with appropriate funds is critical.

This is particularly important in communities along the nearly 2,000 miles of southern border where states and local governments incur greater costs than other jurisdictions. Unfortunately, over the past several years, the costs to qualifying jurisdictions have exceeded reimbursement by hundreds of millions of dollars. Most counties along the U.S.-Mexico border are reimbursed as little as 9% of the costs of incarcerating undocumented criminals.

Due to major state and county budget shortfalls, every dollar reduction in SCAAP reimbursement means a dollar less that a State can spend on essential public safety services. This is unacceptable. We therefore urge you to support our state and local law enforcement by adequately funding the SCAAP program in your Fiscal Year 2009 Budget.

Please take the appropriate steps to ensure that reimbursement of these costs, especially to Border States, remains a federal priority.

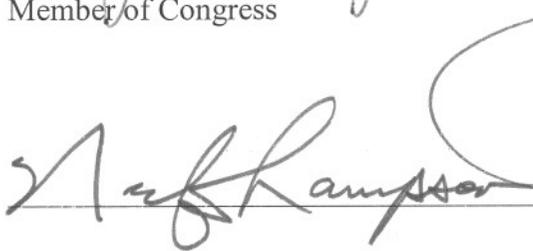
Sincerely,

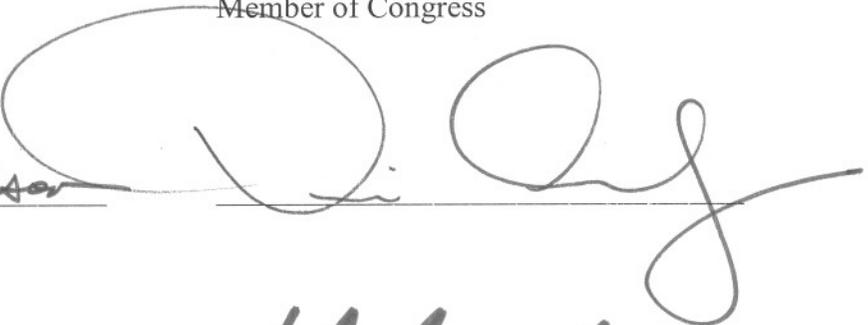


Gabrielle Giffords
Member of Congress



Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress

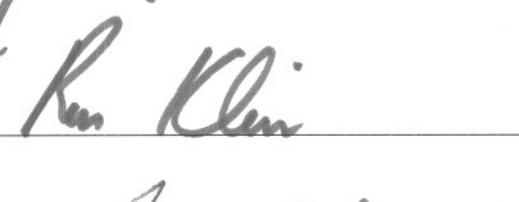


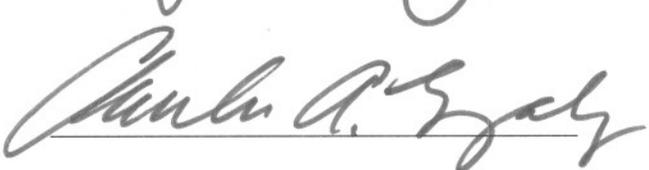




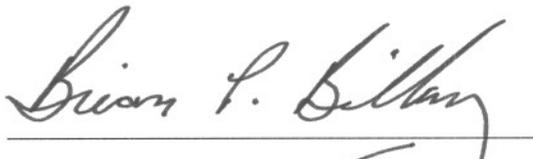






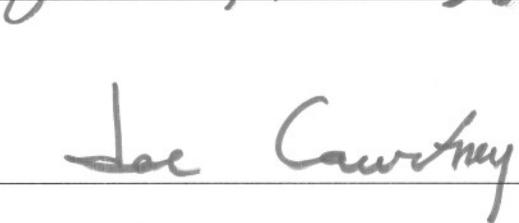












John Bann
Sam Tan

Joe Lopez

Joe Donnell

Mark LeDace

Loretta Sanchez

John Hill

Jim W

Jim Matheson

Raid M. Mijalov

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Signatories:

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Berman, Howard
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Gonzalez, Charlie
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Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva, Raul
Hall, John
Harman, Jane
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Klein, Ron
Lampson, Nicholas
Lofgren, Zoe
Mahoney, Tim
Matheson, Jim
Matsui, Doris
Moore, Dennis
Napolitano, Grace
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Schiff, Adam
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Walz, Tim
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