Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 8, 2013

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano,

We are deeply concerned that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is using sequestration as a vehicle to further the Administration's disregard for enforcing our immigration laws. Specifically, we are troubled by recent reports that DHS has released hundreds of illegal immigrants, rather than finding cost savings elsewhere in the agency.

Your agency's decision to release "low-risk" illegal immigrants back into the public under the guise of saving money is extraordinary, unprecedented and dangerous. We understand that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), like all federal agencies, must find cost savings in order to comply with their new budget allocation. However, it is frankly irresponsible that your agency chose releasing detained immigrants as its first effort to control spending.

The inability of DHS to prioritize resources for potential cuts suggests this decision was either politically motivated to further the Administration's amnesty goals or, at best, demonstrates agency incompetence.

Even more troubling are reports of dangerous criminals being released through this unilateral decision. According to a February 26 *New York Times* article, one illegal immigrant released was also convicted of simple assault, simple battery and child abuse. Allowing individuals like this, who should be deported, to roam the streets of our neighborhoods unnecessarily exposes law-abiding citizens to risk.

Given the public safety and national security concerns this decision raises, we respectfully request you halt any further action to release detained illegal immigrants. Also, please respond to the following questions, regarding individuals already released, pending release, or anticipated to be released:

- The number of detainees released and the geographic location of where the releases took place;
- Any plans for future releases, and the geographic location of where those releases will take place;

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- The name of the DHS official who authorized the review of detained illegal immigrants for release;
- The criteria used to determine who is eligible for release;
- The number of reviewed detainees denied release and the specific reasons for such denials;
- A list identifying cuts to the DHS budget implemented prior to the release of the detainees, the budget savings achieved, and why these savings were insufficient;
- The budget savings achieved through the release of illegal immigrants, and a description of the analysis conducted to weigh cost savings vs. public safety concerns;
- How DHS is tracking illegal immigrants released under this plan, and whether they will be ordered back to detention centers if funding becomes available.

Thank you in advance for your timely attention to this matter. We eagerly look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Matt Salmon
Member of Congress

Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress

John Kline
Member of Congress

Ed Royce
Member of Congress

J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress

John Mica
Member of Congress

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

Paul Gosar
Member of Congress

David Schweikert
Member of Congress

John Campbell
Member of Congress

John Culberson
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Rob Bishop
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Phil Roe
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Doug LaMalfa
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Steve Stockman
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Michael Grimm
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Walter B. Jones
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Sam Graves
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Ken Calvert
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Mike Pompeo
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Lynn A. Westmoreland
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Bill Posey
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Michelle Bachmann
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Alan Nunnelee
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Steve Daines
Member of Congress

Michael Burgess
Member of Congress

Tom McClintock
Member of Congress

Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress

Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress

Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress

C. W. Bill Young
Member of Congress

Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress

K. Michael Conaway
Member of Congress

Jim Bridenstine
Member of Congress

John Duncan
Member of Congress

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable John Morton