

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2014

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Abbott:

We are deeply disturbed by the recent press reports and photos of armed and masked militia groups purportedly patrolling our Texas border in response to the arrival of unaccompanied children from Central America to our state.

These unsettling images of men in fatigues carrying automatic weapons along the border are the ugly hostilities that could be given credence by our state's leadership's silence. Pointing rifles and pistols at children crossing the border is certainly not the solution to this humanitarian situation. The militia leader described their procedure for securing the border: "You see an illegal. You point your gun dead at him, right between his eyes, and you say, 'Get back across the border or you will be shot.'"

These lawless militias could worsen an already difficult situation by promoting violence against minors who are seeking refuge and fleeing violent situations in their home countries. Furthermore, the actions of these militia groups perpetuate the stigma that the border is a war zone, which is certainly not the case, and only continues to hurt the economic potential of an important area of our state.

As you may know, Customs and Border Protection has stated that it does not "endorse or support any private group or organization from taking matters into their own hands, as it could have disastrous personal and public safety consequences." Yet, the State of Texas has yet to condemn the lawless and hostile actions of these groups.

We hope that you agree with us that these militant and potentially volatile groups patrolling the border are not in the best interest of Texas. As the highest ranking executive with law enforcement responsibility, we hereby request that you denounce the actions of these militia groups and clarify the jurisdiction these militia groups have to patrol alongside local law enforcement and Border Patrol agents.

We look forward to your prompt and thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Member of Congress

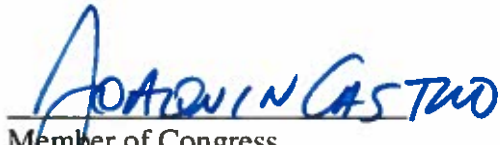

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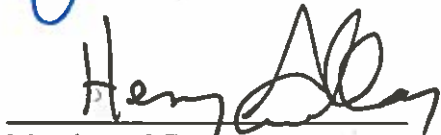

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