

THE SENATE OF TEXAS

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SENATOR
EDDIE LUCIO, JR.

Dear Governor Perry,

I respectfully request a proclamation adding southbound checkpoints to the call of the Eighty-Second Texas Legislature, First Called Session. As mentioned in the State of the State Address, we must continue our investment in border security. The special session affords us an opportunity to work together and pass SB 43, a bipartisan bill that strengthens the border.

Drug violence in Mexico, fueled in part by smuggled guns and cash, poses a homeland security risk to Texas, creates illicit business opportunities for domestic criminals, and fosters disquiet in Texas communities. According to a CNN story released yesterday, over 70% of the 29,284 firearms recovered from crime scenes in Mexico in 2009 and 2010 were traced to the United States. Additionally, millions of dollars in bulk cash is smuggled into Mexico each month from the United States. By disrupting the transfer of smuggled cash and firearms, Texas will be protecting Texans, while aiding Mexico as it battles transnational criminal enterprises.

The language of SB 43 is identical to Senate Bill 288 from the 82nd Regular Session. SB 288 passed the Senate unanimously and was reported out of the House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety unanimously. The language represents a collaborative effort between stakeholders to allow DPS to operate southbound checkpoints effectively, sensitively, and in partnership with local communities. Furthermore, the state budget for 2012-13 already contains a \$1.5 million appropriation for Southbound Checkpoints to DPS.

In closing, I echo your sentiments that border security is not just a hot button issue for the talk shows, but a matter of life and death. That is a truth tragically illuminated by the story of Special Agent Jaime Jorge Zapata. In February, Jaime was on assignment in Mexico for Immigration Customs and Enforcement, working to curb human trafficking. He was fatally shot by criminals in the state of San Luis Potosí while on his way home to Brownville. The gun that took his life - recovered from the crime scene - was traced to a legal purchase made in the Dallas area.

In other words, a Texas gun took the life of a Texas son working to make our border safe. In the 82nd Regular Session, lawmakers passed a memorial resolution honoring Jaime. Now it's time to pass "Jaime's Law."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eddie Lucio, Jr." in a cursive script.

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator

CC: Hon. David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor
Hon. Joseph R. Straus III, Speaker of the House
Hon. Hope Andrade, Secretary of State



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