

107 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-2685

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
104 WEST MAGNOLIA, SUITE 206  
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225  
(360) 733-4500

2930 WETMORE AVENUE, SUITE 9F  
EVERETT, WA 98201  
(425) 252-3188

E-Mail: [Rick.Larsen@mail.house.gov](mailto:Rick.Larsen@mail.house.gov)  
<http://www.house.gov/larsen>

RICK LARSEN  
2ND DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4702

COMMITTEES:  
TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ARMED SERVICES

SMALL BUSINESS

April 24, 2008

Mr. David Aguilar  
Chief, U.S. Border Patrol  
Customs and Border Protection  
Department of Homeland Security  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Chief Aguilar:

I write to ask further questions about the United States Border Patrol's checkpoint operations at the Anacortes Ferry Terminal in Washington State. Since the commencement of your operations, I have heard from many of my constituents: some expressing support, some expressing opposition. Additionally, I have spoken with my local and Washington, D.C.-based staff, talked to local elected officials, received a briefing from your staff in D.C., and had an excellent and informative conversation with Deputy Chief Joe Guiliano, Border Patrol Blaine Sector.

I have the following questions:

1. The Border Patrol argues that these ferry checkpoints are part of a layered defense approach, and I agree that this approach is appropriate. It seems that the Border Patrol is only focusing on one layer, the ferry terminal itself. What current steps are the Border Patrol or Customs and Border Protection taking to apply additional layers of defense to water or air approaches to the San Juan Islands that would provide a true layered defense?
2. If the Border Patrol or Customs and Border Protection is not either prepared to apply a true layered approach or has no plans to do so, why not?
3. The mission of these checkpoints, as I understand it, is to fulfill a national security function, a drug interdiction function and an immigration enforcement function. Can you provide to me how the Anacortes terminal operations have succeeded in fulfilling each of these functions? Please provide to me the total number of checks you have conducted and the total number of apprehensions, detentions, arrests, and drug seizures that have achieved each of these functions.

4. Has your threat assessment of the region changed so as to necessitate these checkpoints? If necessary, I would like to receive this answer in a classified briefing. If not, what is the reason for establishing these checkpoints at this time?
5. The year-round San Juan County population is approximately 16,000. During the late spring through autumn travel and tourism season, the County receives nearly 600,000 visitors. This travel and tourism is critical to economic development and jobs for San Juan County and Fidalgo Island communities. How is the Border Patrol planning to accommodate the population influx without adversely impacting the critical economic development contribution to these communities?
6. If the Border Patrol continues this checkpoint, what actions can it take to reduce its footprint and still achieve its missions?
7. Has the Border Patrol explored other law enforcement partnerships to achieve its desired layered defense and to show accomplishments on all desired outcomes of national security, drug interdiction and immigration enforcement?
8. I have received at least one report that the Border Patrol contacted a Washington State Ferry (WSF) employee for information even though the Border Patrol has told me that it was not asking WSF employees to participate in these checkpoints in any significant way. What does Border Patrol believe is the appropriate role for WSF employees when these checkpoints are taking place?
9. What is the Border Patrol's plan to communicate on a consistent basis with the appropriate officials and agencies in Washington State: the Governor's office, the Adjutant General, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Washington State Patrol? What issues does the Border Patrol believe are important to discuss with these officials and agencies?

Thank you for your timely consideration of my questions. I will continue to work with you to find optimal balance that assures San Juan County can achieve its economic development goals and the Border Patrol can achieve its critical homeland security mission.

I look forward to your response. If you need clarification, please contact Jasper McSarrow in my Bellingham office at 360-733-4500 or Betsy Robblee in my D.C. office at 202-225-2605.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen  
U.S. Representative  
Washington State, Second District