
NEWS FROM:

CONGRESSMAN DARRELL ISSA

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ISSA APPLAUDS DOJ RECOGNITION OF NEED TO ADD MORE PROSECUTORS FOR ALIEN SMUGGLING AND OTHER BORDER CRIMES

Vista, CA – Congressman Darrell Issa, today, applauded the decision by the Department of Justice to add 25 new Assistant United States Attorneys, who will focus exclusively on alien smuggling and other border crimes, to the five districts on the U.S./Mexico border including the Southern District of California.

“The decision to add these new U.S. Attorneys is a clear recognition by the Department of Justice that not enough resources have been allocated to prosecuting those who traffic in human beings and commit other serious border crimes,” said Congressman Issa. “This is a start, but the Department of Justice still needs to clearly articulate what resources it needs to adopt a zero-tolerance policy for prosecuting traffickers of human beings.”

Earlier this year, Congressman Issa’s office obtained a memo from a Department of Homeland Security source detailing that only 6% of those apprehended for smuggling aliens by agents from a Border Patrol Substation near San Diego in FY 2004 were prosecuted for their crime.

Last year, Congressman Issa obtained an annual authorization of \$5 million to specifically target prosecution of coyotes through 2009.

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives added \$84,835,000 from last year’s funding for U.S. Attorneys who prosecute federal statutes, including immigration statutes. Report language for H.R. 5672, the Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2007 specifies that \$4,490,000 of this increased funding is intended to address “prosecution of human smugglers referred to as ‘coyotes’ and other criminal aliens, methamphetamine traffickers, and identity thieves.” The report also outlined the expectation that the Department of Justice will “reallocate resources, if necessary, to address these priority areas.”

Congressman Issa was first alerted that those who traffic in human beings on the U.S./Mexico Border were routinely not prosecuted in December 2003. He has led the effort in Congress to bring attention to this problem and to secure resources to increase prosecutions.

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