



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

June 13, 2012

The Honorable John T. Morton
Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Director Morton:

I have received troubling feedback from farmers in California about an increase in I-9 worksite audits that have been initiated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) against agricultural employers over the past few weeks. As we approach California's peak harvest season, I am very concerned that the timing of these audits will result in significant harm to the agricultural industry and the state's overall economy. Therefore, I respectfully request that you redirect your agency's enforcement efforts to focus on immigration law violations that involve serious violent crimes.

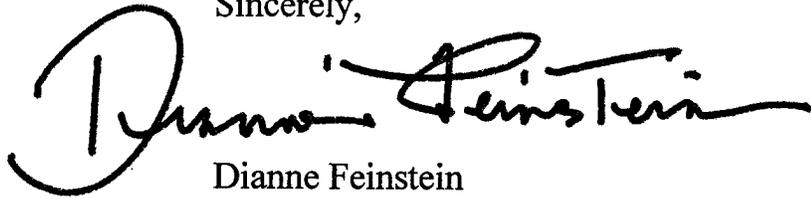
This year, the ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) directorate has successfully worked with local law enforcement authorities in California to target and dismantle transnational criminal organizations. These efforts have led to criminal probes and convictions against individuals involved in cross-border crimes such as human trafficking and drug smuggling. Despite this progress, transnational criminal organizations continue to thrive in many California communities which are in dire need of additional ICE resources. To illustrate this point, I have attached a letter from the Sheriff of Fresno County that highlights the need for ICE to increase its efforts to combat human and drug trafficking and other serious crimes in the county.

I believe in strong yet sensible enforcement of our Nation's immigration laws. However, given the unique workforce challenges currently faced by agricultural employers and the harmful impact of I-9 audits on this sector, I believe

that your agency's limited resources should be targeted to address violations of the law that involve serious violent crimes.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Attachment

DF: ka



Margaret Mims
Sheriff
Fresno County Sheriff's Office

June 4, 2012

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein,

Thank you again for visiting the Valley on April 11, 2012. It was so wonderful to be able to share some time with you. As we discussed during lunch that day, Fresno County District Attorney Elizabeth Egan and I are seeing problems here in Fresno County brought on by cartels from Mexico. These cartels have led to an increase in drug and human trafficking, which have had a deleterious impact in our rural communities. Our investigations have led us to believe that much of this trafficking originates from out of state and out of country.

Some of the most severe problems take place in areas where unemployment is high. This is due to the fact that unemployed people are much more vulnerable to be taken advantage of. One step that we can take to help solve this problem is to redirect the resources of Immigration and Customs Enforcement staff from conducting I-9 audits on work sites to help solve the trafficking issue. I believe the benefits of this action would be two-fold; it would commit more support to the serious trafficking issues and would also help families in these communities from losing their source of income.

Any support that you can help provide in dealing with this serious issue would be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for your concerns on this issue. If you or your staff would like to discuss this issue, feel free to call me at 559-488-3121.

Sincerely,

Margaret Mims, Sheriff

Dedicated to Protect & Serve

Law Enforcement Administration Building / 2200 Fresno Street / P.O. Box 1788 / Fresno, California 93717 / (559) 488-3121
Equal Employment Opportunity • Affirmative Action • Disabled Employer