TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

October 15, 2013

The Honorable Ted Cruz
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cruz:

I commend Congress for the current stand against Obamacare. The many costs, both financial and otherwise, of government-run healthcare are overwhelming for Texas families.

As this standoff continues, I call your attention today to one of the few government functions that should be prioritized. In the fray regarding the current shutdown, there are many questions about what are the essential functions of the government. Border security is absolutely at the top of this list.

Securing our borders against anyone seeking to break our laws or do harm to Americans is of the highest importance and a principle responsibility of government. The southwest U.S. Border is the target of transnational criminal organizations that bring violence, intimidation and other terroristic tactics to our country, and the results often land right here in Texas. I urge you to visit www.ProtectYourTexasBorder.com for evidence of the impact that the porous border is having on Texans and their families.

According to a media report by *The Monitor*, today is payday for Border Patrol agents in Texas, and many, if not all, will see a reduced pay check, despite the fact that they have continued to work through the current funding lapse.

I submit to you that there are few higher priorities for the role of government, and I request your urgent leadership to immediately extend funding authorization for Border Patrol agents along the southwest U.S. Border. Our local, state and federal law enforcement agents are doing outstanding work with the resources they have. We cannot let our federal government turn its back on their efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Staples

Todd Staples

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