

DARRELL E. ISSA, CALIFORNIA  
CHAIRMAN

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

DAN BURTON, INDIANA  
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA  
TODD RUSSELL FLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA  
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO  
PATRICK McHENRY, NORTH CAROLINA  
JIM JORDAN, OHIO  
JASON CHAFFETZ, UTAH  
CONNIE MACK, FLORIDA  
TIM WALBERG, MICHIGAN  
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA  
JUSTIN AMASH, MICHIGAN  
ANN MARIE BUERKLE, NEW YORK  
PAUL A. GOSAR, D.D.S., ARIZONA  
RAUL R. LABRADOR, IDAHO  
PATRICK MEEHAN, PENNSYLVANIA  
SCOTT DesJARLAIS, M.D., TENNESSEE  
JOE WALSH, ILLINOIS  
TREY GOWDY, SOUTH CAROLINA  
DENNIS A. ROSS, FLORIDA  
FRANK C. GUINTA, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BLAKE FARENTHOLD, TEXAS  
MIKE KELLY, PENNSYLVANIA

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (232) 225-6074  
FACSIMILE (202) 225-3874  
MINORITY (202) 225-5051

<http://oversight.house.gov>

EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK  
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO  
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS  
WM. LACY CLAY, MISSOURI  
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, MASSACHUSETTS  
JIM COOPER, TENNESSEE  
GERALD E. CONNOLLY, VIRGINIA  
MIKE OUGLEY, ILLINOIS  
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS  
BRUCE L. BRALEY, IOWA  
PETER WELCH, VERMONT  
JOHN A. YARMUTH, KENTUCKY  
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY, CONNECTICUT  
JACKIE SPEIER, CALIFORNIA

LAWRENCE J. BRADY  
STAFF DIRECTOR

April 20, 2011

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

Late on Friday April 15th, the Department of Justice (DOJ) notified the Committee of its apprehension regarding the safety and security of a witness it described as a "cooperating witness" in a pending federal criminal investigation. According to information provided by the Department, you believe the Committee may attempt to contact this witness as part of our investigation into the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives' (ATF) Project Gunrunner and Operation Fast and Furious.

When it comes to the safety of potential witnesses, we are as concerned as you. Please take every measure necessary to ensure the safety of any witness that the Department believes to be in danger. The Department has expertise when it comes to providing security, and we hope you will take this matter seriously. The Department owes all of its cooperating witnesses a duty of care.

Congress cannot abdicate its constitutional responsibility to engage in Executive Branch oversight based on notifications of potential threats to cooperating witnesses. Placing such obstacles to legitimate congressional inquiries could easily be interpreted as an attempt to obstruct our investigation. I trust you will do everything in your power to ensure the safety of all witnesses without interfering with our right to contact them.

Sincerely,



Darrell Issa  
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Minority Member,  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary

DOJ-FF-26378