
From: Attorney General
To: Grindler, Gary (OAG)
CC: Wilkinson, Monty (OAG)
Sent: 6/27/2011 8:14:18 AM
Subject: Re: Report on Issa's Trip to Mexico

Naive

From: Grindler, Gary (OAG)
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2011 07:43 AM
To: Attorney General
Cc: Wilkinson, Monty (OAG)
Subject: Report on Issa's Trip to Mexico

FYL

From: Hoover, William J. (ATF)
Sent: Sunday, June 26, 2011 10:14 PM
To: Axelrod, Matthew (ODAG)
Subject: Fw: Issa wheels up

DCM report re CODEL.

Billy

William J. Hoover
Deputy Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives
O) 202-648-8710.

-----Original Message-----

From: Swartz, Bruce [mailto:Bruce.Swartz@usdoj.gov]
Sent: Saturday, June 25, 2011 11:13 PM
To: Feeley, John D (Mexico City)
Cc: Breuer, Lamy A.
Subject: Re: Issa wheels up

John - thanks for all your work on this. Best, Bruce

----- Original Message -----

From: Feeley, John D (Mexico City) <FeeleyJD@state.gov>
To: Jacobson, Roberta S <JacobsonRS@state.gov>; Rooney, Matthew M <RooneyMM@state.gov>; Hoey, Colleen A <HoeyCA@state.gov>; **State/Privacy**
State/Privacy; Blumenfeld, Joshua R <BlumenfeldJR@state.gov>;

Daniel A. Restrepo

; Swartz, Bruce;
Breuer, Lanny A.; Nichols, Brian A <NicholsBA@state.gov>; Brownfield, William R
<BrownfieldWR@state.gov>

Cc: Williams, James H (Mexico City) <williamsjha@state.gov>; Mines, Keith W
(Mexico City) <mineskw@state.gov>; Gupta, Reva (Mexico City)
<GuptaR3@state.gov>; Munoz, Jennie V <MunozJV@state.gov>; Stiansen, Kiersten A
<StiansenKA2@state.gov>

Sent: Sat Jun 25 19:50:54 2011

Subject: Issa wheels up

CODEL went much better than expected. We definitely got the Chairman and members on a good day. Issa said at the outset that they were not here to further investigate F &F, that he knew we (the Mission and ATF Mexico) had been kept in the dark, and that the GoM wasn't involved.

Issa also admitted to me that the failure to ask for an FCH meeting until yesterday was his staff's screw up, not ours. More sorrow than anger.

Said the purpose was to assess bilat cooperation and see what we had done with Merida, what was still lacking, and how they could help. In house briefings went very well, with good questions from members who repeatedly stated their appreciation for how our cooperative working level relationships had improved dramatically in the last 2-3 years.

We showed how e-Trace had been used to lock up US straws and discover patterns of weapons flows. I encouraged our team to be candid about challenges regarding corruption, stovepipes in GoM, and the challenge of state/local police training, and they were.

We covered Pillar 1 investigative/takedown successes in detail and highlighted the fact that the prosecutorial side of the house has not made the same progress. Lots of fact sheets and graphs provided for takeaway.

Issa asked about weapons carriage and we offered a more restricted brief, which he did not follow up on. He stated the Zapata family doesn't really yet know what happened to their son and FBI and ICE discussed the case's progress and stated that the family has been briefed on as much as they can be w/o prejudicing the investigation. Issa seemed satisfied.

SSP did its standard, high impact, whizz bang presentation of Plataforma Mexico,

tactical police skills, aviation progress, and they flew in Merida-provided helos, all to very positive effect.

Afternoon discussion with PGR, SRE, and SEGOB covered judicial reform (Borrego) and extradition and judicial cooperation (Resendiz). No one raised F & F w/ the GoM briefers.

Issa asked us what more could they do. We responded:

-- digitize the FFL records at the national tracing data center in West Virginia (and explained how NRA has kept that from happening);

-- support the long arms demand letter and toughen arms trafficking sentences so AUSA's will take up more of these cases. (Had a good slide from a case study in which a bunch of guns were seized in US due to e-Trace info but none of the straws prosecuted. Seemed to affect them.)

-- continue to support Merida funding to build capacity and train cops, prosecutors, investigators, and judges for the long haul;

-- and keep Mexico on their radars. Discussed how we need to make Mexico a truly strategic priority for a bipartisan foreign and domestic policy, not just a problem to be addressed for a few years b/c of potential for drug spillover violence. All Members agreed and seemed to get the point.

Issa raised CIR, which he said he supports, but acknowledged it won't happen anytime soon. Gowdy from SC (a former prosecutor) asked a lot of practical questions about doing cross border investigations that lead to effective prosecutions in both countries. DoJ and LE handled all quite well.

Reyes and Cummings both made stump speeches explicitly critical of Congress, stating "we send these guys (ATF in particular) down here to do a job and then tie their hands."

No logistical hiccups, GoM briefers all seemed pleased, and I'm pretty certain we made a few more converts for continued support among US Members.

Reyes remains our personal hero just b/c he's a helluva guy who knows these issues well and acts like a member of our country team. Chaffetz, Farentgold, Desjarlais never said a word unless our control types spoke with them during breaks.

All in all a good day. Thanks to DC colleagues for your help in prepping. Let me know

if/when there are opportunities for follow up if I or members of country team are in DC.
We had numerous statements of "come by and see me" from the Members.

Unrelated

This message has been sent via BlackBerry
