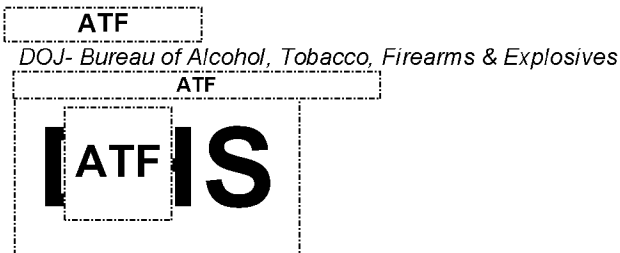

From: Weich, Ron (SMO)
To: Burton, Faith (SMO); Reich, Steven (ODAG); Axelrod, Matthew (ODAG); Schmalzer, Tracy (SMO); Ramirez, Monica (ODAG); Wilkinson, Monty (OAG)
CC: Wade, Jill C (SMO)
Sent: 7/13/2011 2:58:53 PM
Subject: FW: fyi....

From: ATF
Sent: Wednesday, July 13, 2011 2:58 PM
To: Weich, Ron (SMO); Wade, Jill C (SMO)
Subject: FW: fyi....



NOTICE: This e-mail message and any attached files are intended solely for the use of the addressee(s) named above in connection with official business. This communication may contain Sensitive But Unclassified information that may be statutorily or otherwise prohibited from being released without appropriate approval. Any review, use, or dissemination of this e-mail message and any attached file(s) in any form outside of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives or the Department of Justice without express authorization is strictly prohibited.

From: ATF
Sent: Wednesday, July 13, 2011 2:58 PM
To: Melson, Kenneth E.; Hoover, William J.
Cc: Sarnacki, Jeffrey P.; ATF; Thomasson, Scot L.; Office of Legislative Affairs; O'Brien, Virginia T.; Chait, Mark R.; Torres, Julie M; McDermond, James E.
Subject: fyi....

July 12, 2011

The Honorable John Morton
Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Department of Homeland Security
500 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Director Morton:

We are concerned about recent reports that suggest similarities between "Operation Castaway," a firearms trafficking investigation led by the Tampa Field Offices of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and

Explosives (ATF) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and “Operation Fast and Furious,” an ATF program that provided firearms to Mexican drug trafficking organizations. Specifically, reports indicate that firearms under “Operation Castaway” may have been provided to dangerous criminal gangs in Honduras, including MS-13.

If true, these reports raise serious questions about the leadership of the ICE and ATF Tampa Field Offices. We support ICE’s efforts to disrupt criminal syndicates that traffic in firearms, drugs, and other illicit substances. However, when those efforts serve to fuel the operations of criminal enterprises through the provision of firearms, they must be stopped and those responsible must be held accountable. In an effort to address this issue, we would appreciate your response to the following questions.

1. What role did ICE agents and leadership play in “Operation Castaway?”
2. Can you confirm whether “Operation Castaway” included a gun walking scheme that allowed weapons to be trafficked to Honduras? If so, have any of these firearms ended up in the possession of the notorious MS-13 gang?
3. How many guns have been allowed to pass into Honduras and how many have since been accounted for?
4. Were these weapons subject to any special monitoring processes once they left the United States?
5. Is “Operation Castaway” still ongoing? If so, are you, in coordination with the ATF, planning to terminate the program?

We find it extremely troubling that the United States government would willfully allow weapons to be acquired by dangerous criminal and drug trafficking organizations, in direct contravention of our strategic and national interests. We look forward to receiving your responses to these questions in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

Gus Bilirakis, U.S. Representative, Florida, 9th District

Michael McCaul, U.S. Representative, Texas, 10th District

Candice Miller, U.S. Representative, Michigan, 10th District

