

October 5, 2018

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

As lieutenant governors for our respective states, we recognize the need to speak out in support of the men and women who bravely serve our nation through the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP). The protection of our nation's borders is vital to upholding the rule of law, ensuring the safety of our citizens, and protecting our national security. Unfortunately, the men and women who serve in ICE and CBP currently face an undeserved and unprecedented political assault from those on the political extreme, and our law enforcement officials deserve to know they have the support of the overwhelming majority of the American people, including our elected officials.

The United States is a nation of immigrants, and we welcome those who wish to come here legally, obey our laws, and uphold our values. At the same time, we are also a nation of laws, and we are safer because ICE and CBP work alongside state and local law enforcement to uphold those laws. Whether they are combating violent gangs, stopping the flow of deadly narcotics, or simply ensuring that those who enter our country are properly vetted, they are performing a great service to our nation.

In FY 2017, ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) arrested more than 127,000 criminal aliens, including tens of thousands who were responsible for dangerous drug and assault offenses, and thousands who were responsible for sexual assault offenses and homicides. They also made nearly 5,000 gang arrests in FY 2017, including almost 800 members of the murderous MS-13 gang. During the same time frame, ICE HSI seized 981,586 pounds of narcotics, including heroin and fentanyl. While our states struggle with a horrific opioid crisis that claimed over 64,000 lives during 2016 alone, the men and women of ICE are on the front lines against the opioid crisis. They also play critical roles in combating human traffickers and rescuing victims of child exploitation. Our states and communities are safer because of their service.

Despite their tireless work to uphold the rule of law and keep our country safe, the brave men and women who enforce our immigration laws and secure our borders have become the subject of a smear campaign by the political fringe of American society. Their calls to “Abolish ICE” have been embraced by candidates for office, including one who slandered ICE as a “terrorist organization.” Sadly, even some prominent elected officials in Washington have joined the “Abolish ICE” movement, and legislation has been introduced in Congress to do just that. We recognize that this atmosphere of hostility against ICE employees is unjustified and threatens to erode public confidence in their critical mission.

Each and every day, the men and women of ICE and CBP work to uphold our laws and make America a safer place to call home, oftentimes putting their own safety on the line to do so. As lieutenant governors, we commend their efforts and salute their service. Our states are all safer because of their service, and we will continue to speak out against those who would undermine their service for political gain. We urge all Americans from all walks of life to stand with the men and women of ICE and CBP for their courageous service to our communities, state, and nation.

Sincerely,

Tim Griffin  
Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas