

**December 16, 2011**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This week, U.S. Congressmen Ted Poe (TX-02) and Jason Altmire (PA-04) along with other Members of Congress, sent a letter to President Barack Obama, urging him not to reduce the presence of the National Guard on the U.S.-Mexico border. The letter responded to reports that the Administration plans to withdraw half of the National Guard troops currently in the region.

**"It has recently come to our attention that your administration plans to reduce the presence of National Guard troops deployed along the U.S.-Mexico border in the coming year,"** the Congressmen wrote in the letter. **"We have grave concerns about this proposed shift in policy and we urge you to extend the current deployment of 1,200 National Guard troops on the southern border past December 31, 2011."**

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently reported that the U.S. Border Patrol only has operational control of 44 percent of the southern U.S. border. This number is unacceptable and illustrates the need for the continued presence of the National Guard on the border.

In June, Congressmen Poe and Altmire offered an amendment to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) appropriations bill to re-allocate \$10 million from the Office of the Under Secretary for Management of DHS to the Border Security, Fencing, Infrastructure and Technology account to improve the mobile communications between Border Patrol, law enforcement and residents. During a visit to the U.S. –Mexico border, the Congressmen noted the lack of sufficient communications technology infrastructure to support the work of border patrol agents to protect the surrounding communities.

A copy of the letter sent to the White House is available by [clicking here](#) .