March 25, 2015

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, and Science
House Appropriations Committee
H-309, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chaka Fattah
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, and Science
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Culberson and Ranking Members Lowey and Fattah:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2016 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill, we urge you to appropriate adequate resources to the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) at a level appropriate to effectively execute the program’s purpose.

As you know, SCAAP is a grant program that reimburses states and local governments for the cost of incarcerating undocumented immigrants convicted of crimes. By law, the federal government is ultimately responsible for immigration enforcement, including the incarceration of undocumented criminal offenders. When this is not possible, the law requires the federal government to compensate state and local governments for their incarceration costs.

Although appropriations levels for SCAAP have decreased dramatically in recent years, the costs incurred by states to fulfill what is essentially a federal function have increased. We cannot afford to reduce resources for this vital program, which already falls far short of what states and local governments actually spend to incarcerate undocumented criminal offenders. Reducing federal SCAAP reimbursements forces state and local law enforcement agencies to absorb a greater portion of the costs of a federal responsibility.

We recognize the challenges of the current fiscal environment and thank you for your effort and dutiful consideration of FY 2016 appropriations priorities. We respectfully ask that that the
benefits of SCAAP to our local jurisdictions be carefully considered and that the program be appropriated at a level consistent with its federally mandated responsibility.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Martha McSally
Member of Congress

Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

Loretta Sánchez
Member of Congress

Gerald Connolly
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress
Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress  

Randy Weber  
Member of Congress  

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress  

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress  

Roger Williams  
Member of Congress  

Sam Farr  
Member of Congress  

Dana Rohrabacher  
Member of Congress  

Will Hurd  
Member of Congress  

Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress  

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress  

Albio Sires  
Member of Congress  

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress  

Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress  

Lois Capps  
Member of Congress  

Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress  

Raul Ruiz, MD  
Member of Congress
Pete Olson  
Member of Congress

Paul Cook  
Member of Congress

Mo Brooks  
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui  
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress

Karen Bass  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Xavier Becerra  
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress

Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress