

National Border Patrol Council Local 1613



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE DISSEMINATION

Local 1613 Questions Congressman Issa's Comments Concerning Border Patrol Checkpoints

San Diego, CA - Imagine the manager of the San Diego Padres requiring outfielders to remain in one location in the outfield while playing. The other teams would immediately figure out the weakness in the Padres' strategy. Although outfielders might catch a few balls in the first innings, eventually, they would only catch balls hit right to them. Now, instead of telling the Padres' manager to stop restricting the outfielders' movement in the field, imagine the owner of the Padres concluding the outfielders were ineffective and no longer needed in the outfield. In an effort to improve the team, the owner tells the manager to move all outfielders to the infield to strengthen their efforts and improve their chances of catching the ball.

Isn't this idea ridiculous? It is and this concept is what happened with the United States Border Patrol. In 1996, Immigration and Naturalization Service and Border Patrol policies restricted other checkpoint enforcement operations. Agents were no longer permitted to patrol day-labor sites, transportation hubs, and other areas where illegal aliens regularly gathered. Patrolling the side roads while the checkpoints were operational was also terminated. These enforcement activities are within the authority of the Border Patrol and increased the effectiveness of the checkpoints. At the same time, Congressman Packard concluded Border Patrol checkpoints on I-5 and I-15 would be more effective if they were operated seven (7) days a week, twenty-four (24) hours a day and incorporated language into the appropriations bill which required the I-5 and I-15 checkpoints to operate 24/7. Consequently, all of these negative events caused apprehensions to plummet.

Congressman Darrell Issa recently said, "Closing the Temecula and San Clemente checkpoints would improve the Border Patrol's chances of catching undocumented immigrants and seizing illegal drugs." Officials of National Border Patrol Council, Local 1613 strongly disagree with this statement. Local 1613 officials previously informed Congressman Issa of a misuse of resources within the Border Patrol and the checkpoints on I-5 and I-15.

Closing the checkpoints and moving 200 agents from these checkpoints to the border is not the solution for reducing the number of illegal entrants. As long as people around the world know that once they circumvent the infield, there is an unmanned outfield and they will score a hit and make it to home base in the United States without any fear of being caught. There is no doubt the terrorists are exploiting this vulnerability. The Border Patrol must maintain an outfield that is free to play their legal positions; otherwise, Border Patrol Agents assigned to checkpoints will continue to catch only the few people who hit the ball directly to them and the checkpoints will never be successful.

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