

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 7, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
United States Department of State
2201 C. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We are concerned that your department's plan to aggressively promote American weapons exports without a proper tracking system for end users will continue to result in weapon transfers to Mexico that arm security forces with ties to criminal organizations or that have committed serious human rights violations. We call on you to implement a comprehensive and transparent tracking system that ensures these weapons do not end up stolen, lost or placed in unauthorized hands, and request information pertaining to current exports.

The legal export of weapons and explosives from the United States to Mexico reached more than \$122 million between 2015 and 2017, more than 12 times the amount of those exports between 2002-2004.¹ Legally exported weapons from the U.S. have already been used in violence, disappearances and massacres against civil society. The local police who attacked and disappeared 43 Ayotzinapa students in September 2014 were armed with AR-6530 rifles supplied by Colt Defense Industries.² The Mexican Army has disclosed that more than 20,000 firearms obtained by Mexican local and federal police went missing or were stolen since 2006.³ These examples demonstrate the urgent need to ensure U.S. weapons do not land in the wrong hands.

We are concerned that an export license for the U.S. gun producer Sig Sauer to sell up to \$266 million worth of firearms to the Mexican military, issued by the State Department in 2015, may reinforce the newly expanded role of the Mexican military in civilian law enforcement, or result in arming police or military units that are colluding with organized crime and have committed serious abuses. We request information from the State Department on how you will ensure this does not occur.

Firearm export controls should be subject to more rigorous oversight, tracking and accountability. This should include a policy to consult the Department's existing INVEST database of alleged human rights violations by foreign security units, designed for use in implementing the Leahy Law, for license applications to export arms to foreign police and military units, and ensuring that such applications name all prospective end user units, not

¹ Mexican Commission for the Defense of Human Rights and Stop U.S. Arms to Mexico, Gross Human Rights Violations: The Legal and Illegal Gun Trade to Mexico, August 2018, <http://stopusarmstomexico.org/gross-human-rights-abuses-the-legal-and-illegal-gun-trade-to-mexico/>.

² American Friends Service Committee, Where the Guns Go: U.S. Policy and the Crisis of Violence in Mexico, 2016.

³ Mexican Commission for the Defense of Human Rights and Stop U.S. Arms to Mexico, Gross Human Rights Violations: The Legal and Illegal Gun Trade to Mexico, August 2018, <http://stopusarmstomexico.org/gross-human-rights-abuses-the-legal-and-illegal-gun-trade-to-mexico/>.

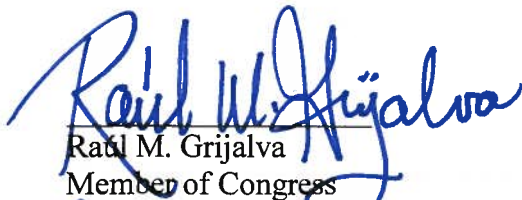
for use in implementing the Leahy Law, for license applications to export arms to foreign police and military units, and ensuring that such applications name all prospective end user units, not only central distribution units. Traditionally, the State Department has been tasked with reviewing and granting export licensing. Transitioning that task to the Commerce Department limits the ability to verify all prospective end user units, not only central distribution units.

We request that your department conduct an analysis to determine whether U.S.-manufactured firearms in the possession of Mexican police in Guerrero, Veracruz, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, and Michoacán states were exported pursuant to a license that named these police as end users; if not, what steps is the Department is taking to address this issue.

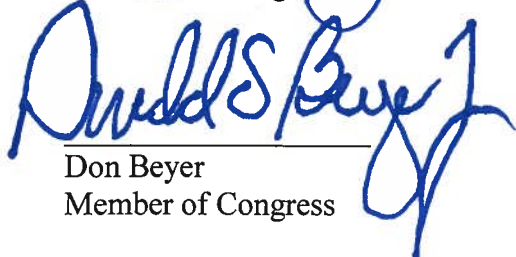
Criminal organizations and human rights violators in Mexico and elsewhere should not be benefitting from a lax U.S. firearms export policy that puts civilians at risk. Every life lost is a tragedy and we must do everything within our power to ensure U.S. policies are not needlessly endangering lives around the world.

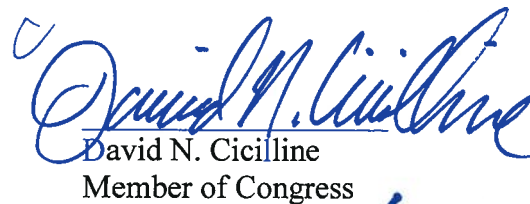
We look forward to your response.

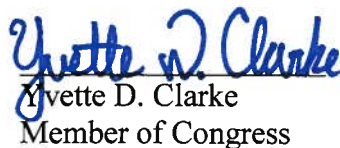
Sincerely,

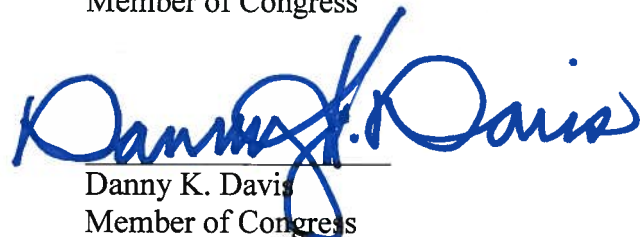

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

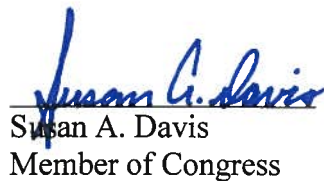

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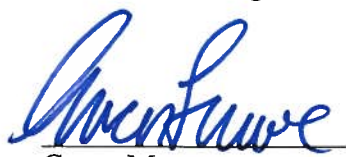

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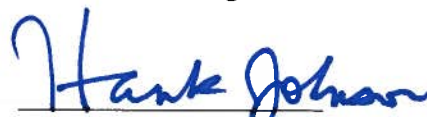

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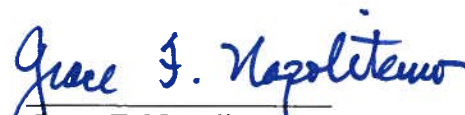

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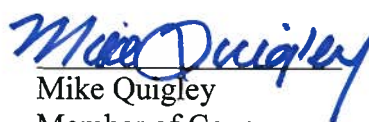

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