

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Sec. Napolitano,

Even as Congress debates a comprehensive immigration reform bill that will hopefully end our nation's cycle of deportations, broken families and ineffective border crackdowns, the Department of Homeland Security continues to apprehend and detain thousands of undocumented immigrants each year. I believe Congress would be well served in this debate if it had a few useful - but seemingly unpublicized - pieces of information at its disposal.

The cost of these detentions, for instance, is surely high and getting higher each year. I respectfully request that you release the total yearly cost to DHS of detaining undocumented immigrants in private detention facilities for the past three years and break down the expenditures by state. These figures should be readily available to DHS policymakers for planning and budgeting purposes, and there is no reason Congress should not base its discussion on an accurate assessment of how much the status quo is costing us.

The way DHS decides to allocate scarce financial resources is particularly important in light of the housing project recently featured by the *Arizona Republic* and other outlets. If those reports are accurate, DHS spent approximately \$15 million to build just 21 modestly sized houses and lease 20 park-model trailer homes in the unincorporated community of Ajo, Ariz. Customs and Border Protection agents, the intended residents of these homes, certainly need affordable housing in a convenient location to serve their assigned region. But this cost seems extravagant. I respectfully request that you release any information not yet public that might explain why this expense is justified. Understandable public concern has arisen since the *Republic* ran its story, especially because most similar homes in the area sell for around \$100,000 and DHS said in a recent public statement that housing is not used as a recruitment tool to attract job applicants.

I hope and believe that DHS would be seen in a better light with all the facts available, and that Congress could make more informed decisions when armed with valuable information it currently does not have. I respectfully request that you respond to this letter no later than Sept. 9, when Congress will be back in session and the country's attention will be firmly on improving our immigration policies.

Very warmly yours,



Rep. Raul M. Grijalva

