

This week, the House passed [H.R. 2892](#) to fund the Department of Homeland Security. I wanted to draw your attention to efforts I supported to ensure that the Customs and Border Patrol has the funding it needs to protect our borders. These successful efforts strengthened the legislation and will help secure our borders.

Since 2000, there has been a doubling of the Border Patrol agent workforce -- to more than 20,000 agents by the end of 2009 -- which has resulted in significant improvements in border security. However, the President's Fiscal Year 2010 budget request sought to add only 44 new Border Patrol agents. Fortunately, Representative Jerry Lewis (CA-41) offered an amendment to add \$34 million to US Customs and Border Protection, intending to fund in part the addition of 200 more Border Patrol agents. Additionally, Rep. Steve King (IA-05) offered an amendment to dedicate \$1 million for the removal of lookout posts that have been established along the U.S.-Mexico border. He also offered an amendment to prohibit any funds in the bill from being used to employ illegal workers. I supported all of these important amendments and I am pleased to report that the House passed them.

You may also be interested to know that the bill included a two year extension of the E-Verify Program, which is the electronic system that checks workers' immigration status against Homeland Security Department and Social Security Administration databases. This important program plays a pivotal role in ensuring that jobs go to U.S. citizens and legal residents, and helps deter illegal immigration by making it significantly more difficult for illegal aliens to get a job in our nation.

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