



Congressman Pedro R. Pierluisi  
Statement as Prepared For Delivery  
Press Conference of Former Prosecutors Regarding Holder Contempt Vote and Gun Trafficking  
House Triangle  
*June 27, 2012*

Good afternoon.

Like my colleagues, I am deeply saddened by the death of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. As the former Attorney General of Puerto Rico, and as someone who lost his own brother in a violent crime, I understand the pain that Agent Terry's family is feeling and empathize with their desire to learn everything they can about the facts surrounding his death.

Moreover, I appreciate the importance of vigorous congressional oversight of the executive branch. Democrats in Congress conduct such oversight, and we recognize our Republican colleagues are entitled to do the same.

However, by scheduling a vote tomorrow to hold Attorney General Holder in contempt of Congress, the House majority has crossed the line that separates acceptable oversight activities from improper conduct that ignores settled law, the established precedent governing the relationship between the legislative and executive branches, and the facts of this case.

With their actions, the majority also sets a new precedent that I suspect they will come to regret. History teaches that the sharp-elbow tactics used by some today may be used against them tomorrow.

Finally, in Mr. Holder, the majority has chosen as its target an honorable and accomplished public servant who deserves far better treatment than he has received. For those of us who trust and respect the Attorney General, these sentiments have only grown deeper upon witnessing the way he has conducted himself in the face of this onslaught.

All of us recognize that the Fast and Furious operation was fundamentally flawed in design and implementation. It allowed guns to reach the hands of dangerous criminals in Mexico, and several of those guns were found at the scene where Agent Terry lost his life.

But can any reasonable person contend that, if Fast and Furious never existed, Mexican drug cartels would have been unable to obtain the weapons they have used to kill tens of thousands of human beings? The fact is this: Mexico is flooded with guns, and most of those guns come from the United States.

So, instead of proceeding with this unwarranted and ultimately pointless contempt vote, Congress should concentrate on the real problem, which is tightening our laws—in a manner consistent with the Second Amendment and Supreme Court case law—to keep guns out of the hands of criminals in this country and Mexico. There are some commonsense measures we can

and should take. Because the majority is playing political games that do nothing to make us safer, I am here today to join the chorus of voices calling for responsible leadership and action.

Thank you.