



Date: Thursday, July 29, 2010

Jilka visits US/Mexico border to discuss border security with local, federal officials

SALINA, Kan. — First district congressional candidate Alan Jilka is scheduled to return today from a four-day swing to the U.S./Mexico border where he visited with local and federal officials to discuss border security. The trip originated after Jilka reached out to Juarez, Mexico, Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz, a fellow Notre Dame alumnus.

"The U.S./Mexico border relationship is incredibly complex with tremendous implications on America's economic future and national security," Jilka said in a phone call from the Texas border. "With the tremendous amount of drug-related violence on the border, Congress must act to secure the border region, and to enact comprehensive immigration reform that protects citizens and the economy."

"Border security is also an economic issue. Any legislation must take into consideration that the U.S. and Mexico conduct over \$53 billion in trade at the Juarez/El Paso border crossing alone. It is in our nation's best economic interest that the border remain an open trade zone, and that we do not let Mexico become a failed state."

Jilka visited the site where on July 15, a Sinaloa drug gang lured federal law enforcement officers to a street in downtown Juarez and detonated a car bomb, killing three police officers and injuring eleven bystanders. US officials with the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives reported that 22 pounds of explosives were used in the making of the bomb.

"The citizens of Juarez are terrified. It is heartbreaking to hear a child tell you how frightened they are to walk to school each day," Jilka said. "The border is a war zone."

Earlier Monday, Jilka met with representatives from the office of Congressman Silvestre Reyes. Reyes served as the chief Border Patrol Agent of the El Paso Patrol Sector for 26 years before being elected to Congress. He also met with El Paso, Texas, Mayor John Cook, who pointed out that although his city has

received more than 30,000 refugees from Juarez in the last two years, El Paso remains one of the safest cities in America with just one reported murder all of last year. Juarez last year reported more than 3,000 murders.

On Tuesday, Jilka traveled to Arizona to meet with the Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup, Nogales, Ariz., Chief of Police Jeffrey Kirkham, and with representatives from the office of Congressman Raul Grijalva. On Wednesday he met with representatives from the office of Gabrielle Giffords. Both Grijalva's and Giffords' districts border Mexico.

"The Arizona officials will tell you that their state economy is dependent upon immigrant labor, but that we cannot let the drug war spill over the border," Jilka said. "The violence has gotten to the point that Arizonans have passed a state law in an attempt to force the Federal government to enforce its own federal laws.

"Our country needs immigrant labor. The mayor of El Paso told me that he didn't raise his children to pluck chickens, but chickens need plucking and people need work to feed their families. It reminded me to appreciate and respect the dignity of all labor."

The media is welcome to download photos from Alan's trip at the Web site:



Photos contain a cutline and available for newspaper publication.

For additional information about Jilka, please visit his Web site: jilkaforcongress.com or call 785-833-2022.

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