

MICHAEL C. BURGESS, M.D.
26TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

WASHINGTON OFFICE
229 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-7772
www.house.gov/burgess

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4326

COMMITTEE:
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEES
HEALTH
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
CONGRESSIONAL HEALTH CARE CAUCUS,
CHAIRMAN

April 17, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
108 Federal Office Building
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding a recent Department of Homeland Security (DHS) report entitled, "Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment." This report claims to provide law enforcement officials with the tools to help them deter, prevent, preempt, or respond to terrorist attacks against the United States. I understand the purpose of shared intelligence, however, I am concerned that by broadly characterizing those who support a conservative ideology with terrorism the DHS may have mischaracterized and offended several million Americans and placed them at risk of profiling by law enforcement officials.

This report states, "The Economic downturn and the election of the first African American president present unique drivers for rightwing radicalization and recruitment." The report goes on to connect associations with right-leaning ideology with the Oklahoma City bombing, the murder of law enforcement officials, bank robbery, attacks on infrastructure, and racism and bigotry in general.

This report claims that "high unemployment leads to alienation, increasing an individual's susceptibility to extremist ideas." This report appears to claim that high unemployment among Caucasians, Christians, Second Amendment supporters, and Armed Forces Veterans has a causal relationship with radicalism and violence against the state. I call into question this underlying assumption and baseless claim. The implication that veterans returning home from serving our country are at risk of becoming domestic terrorists or assassins is sensational at best and is dishonorable and disrespectful to their service.

Profiling based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, or life experiences is always wrong. I believe the Department of Homeland Security owes an apology to the Americans that are offended by this report, especially the men and women of our Armed Forces. Furthermore, the Department should rescind this report so those local, state, and

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1660 SOUTH STEMMONS FREEWAY
SUITE 230
LEWISVILLE, TX 75067
(972) 434-9700

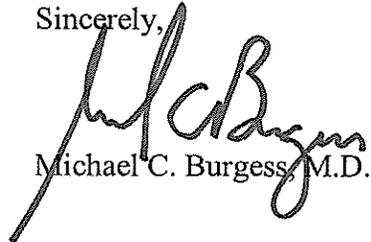
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1100 CIRCLE DRIVE
SUITE 200
FORT WORTH, TX 76119
(817) 531-8454

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Page 2

federal law enforcement officials who received it are not compelled to profile individuals as terrorists simply because they associate themselves with conservative organizations.

I urge you to enact these recommendations on behalf of the constituents of the 26th District of Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Burgess". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then loops back under the name.

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.