

MAR 30 2010



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

To participants of the March 29, 2010 stakeholder meeting:

Thank you for taking the time yesterday to meet with me and talk about ICE's priorities for civil immigration enforcement. As we discussed, both the Secretary and I remain strongly committed to prioritizing the detention and removal of criminal aliens, first and foremost.

The memorandum issued on February 22, 2010, does not capture those priorities or the spirit of reform we have worked to create for the last 10 months. We have implemented new controls to ensure guidance to the field, particularly about priorities and policies that touch vast numbers of people, is fully consistent with these priorities.

I cannot state strongly enough my opposition to quotas. ICE does not, and on my watch will not, impose quotas that propel field officers to identify and arrest any particular number of non-criminal aliens. To ensure this message is consistently applied throughout the field, I am asking my senior leadership to examine performance work plans from each field office. I also invite you to expand on the ideas you raised to use metrics to create incentives consistent with our priorities.

Likewise, as we discussed, let there be no doubt, when I say "criminal aliens" I am referring to aliens convicted of crimes. Although the technology of Secure Communities identifies aliens charged with crimes, only those aliens convicted of crimes are regarded as "criminal aliens" for purposes of our enforcement priorities and removal metrics.

Finally, I will reiterate my opposition to quotas and clearly state our priorities to each of the 24 Field Office Directors who will be in Washington, D.C. next week. I am committed to institutionalizing the significant reform underway at ICE, and look forward to working with you to address areas of mutual concern.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Morton".

John Morton  
Assistant Secretary