



November 18, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C

Dear President Obama:

We write to you today to express our concerns with the nomination process for Jeh Johnson to be the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Our organizations represent the elected sheriffs from across the country who work every day to protect our citizens and our communities from threats of every kind. We are extremely concerned that our organizations have been left out of the process to get to know the nominee better and ask him questions related to pressing issues facing sheriffs and their deputies protecting our nation's citizens every single day.

Many times over the course of the last couple of years, the Administration has asked for our organization's input, including attending many events at the White House, to provide law enforcement's perspective on how all stakeholders can collaborate to address tough issues facing our nation today, whether it be on gun policy, immigration reform, school resource officers, or mental health. Unfortunately, when it comes to the nomination process, there has been a continued pattern of making critical decisions affecting the law enforcement community without consulting with stakeholders beforehand, especially sheriffs. It is disappointing to hear about a nomination to one of the most significant law enforcement agencies after it has happened, and further disappointing to then not be able to speak with him to discuss any concerns the law enforcement community may have.

Protecting our nation's borders and enforcing immigration laws is a critical mission component of DHS, and our sheriffs and their deputies are on the frontline of this mission. Not being able to gain a better understanding from the nominee on how we can secure our borders, exchange information more efficiently among our Federal, state and local partners, and collaborate on

disaster prevention, mitigation and response could hamper our operations and our critical responsibility to serve our communities.

Although we know that his confirmation hearing has already been held and his nomination is scheduled for a vote this week, we would appreciate the opportunity to have a conversation with Mr. Johnson to discuss any issues or concerns facing our members. We strongly hope that moving forward in the nomination process for other important positions within the Federal government, including the ICE Director vacancy, that we will be afforded an opportunity to speak with nominees to introduce ourselves and make sure he or she understands the issues facing our nation's sheriffs. The Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA) and National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) are happy to assist in this process and we hope that we can work toward our common end goal of keeping our communities safe and our homeland secure.

Sincerely,



Richard W. Stanek
President, Major County Sheriffs' Association
Sheriff, Hennepin County (MN)



Michael H. Leidholt
President, National Sheriffs' Association
Sheriff, Hughes County (SD)