



Washington State Senate

March 14, 2017

Governor Jay Inslee
201 Legislative Building
Olympia, Washington 98504

RE: 3rd Letter regarding Washington State Patrol/Armando Chavez Corona

Dear Governor Inslee,

More than two weeks ago, I wrote to express serious concerns regarding issues raised over media reports on a Washington State Patrol officer's actions in the aftermath of an accident on I-5. In a routine check of driver's licenses following the accident, the officer ran the license of Armando Chavez Corona. The check revealed Mr. Corona had been convicted of an aggravated drug felony and previously deported. The officer contacted federal immigration authorities for confirmation and details. While the officer did not arrest or detain Mr. Corona, federal authorities did arrive to the scene of the accident and detain Mr. Corona.

The Washington State Patrol launched an administrative review of the officer's actions.

It has been 33 days since Feb. 9, the day of the accident on I-5, and more than three weeks since my last letter to you on this matter, yet I have received no response. I did hear you assure the media that your office did not request the review of the patrol officer involved in this incident and that it is still state policy to cooperate with federal warrants. However, several questions remain outstanding. For your convenience, I relist them here.

1. Is it the practice of your office or that of the WSP, to launch an administrative review when a WSP officer checks on a felony record of a previously deported undocumented person? If it is not standard to launch an administrative review, what specifically about the incident involving Mr. Corona warranted a review? In addition, are administrative reviews typical if an officer checks on the felony record of a citizen?
2. If a WSP officer checks a license in the performance of his or her duties, and a felony record shows up in that license check, is it appropriate for the officer to seek more information about that felony? Under what circumstances would a WSP officer be prohibited from seeking more information about that felony or other crime?
3. If a WSP officer learns that he or she is interacting with a previously deported felon, does the officer have a duty to inform federal authorities of that felon? If not, why not?

4. If WSP is NOT permitted to inform federal authorities of a deported felon's presence, how is public safety (including the safety of immigrant communities) furthered by ignoring the felony history of an individual, and not alerting federal authorities with the power to remove them?
5. Is it good practice for a WSP officer to check on felony records of individuals they interact with in the line of duty? If not, why not?
6. Outside of immigration status issues, are there any other circumstances in which it is appropriate to discourage WSP officers from checking on felony records of those they are alerted to in the performance of their duties?
7. Gov. Inslee, you said in January that you wanted WSP "to be able to respond to criminals, which is their job." Is it your view that an officer who responds to a warning or an alert by federal authorities regarding a convicted felon here illegally is following this practice and "responding to criminals?" If not, why not?

In addition to the above list, I would like add the following:

8. Early media reports indicate that the officer involved in the Feb. 9th incident has not been disciplined in any way. Is that accurate? Were the officer's duties changed in any way?
9. It has been almost a month since an administrative review was launched into this officer's actions, yet to my knowledge there has been no announcement as to its conclusion. Is the administrative review complete? Is it typical for a "routine review" of whether an officer followed policy to take a month?
10. Are you opposed to WSP officers contacting federal immigration authorities if they find that they are in contact with an undocumented individual with a felony criminal record? If so, have you shared that with WSP and is it also their policy?

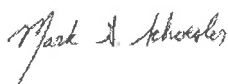
Again, we would like to remind you that this issue is not the broader, more controversial debate about appropriate federal immigration policy. As I related in my last letter, President Obama asserted, "If you're a criminal, you'll be deported" and made the highest priority of civil immigration enforcement the deportation of individuals who had entered the country illegally and who committed felonies in the U.S. My concern is WSP be able to access the information they need to assess their own safety and that of the public.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,




Senator Steve O'Ban



Senator Mark Schoesler



Senator Mike Padden



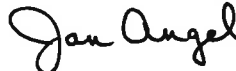
Senator Randi Becker



Senator Kirk Pearson



Senator Lynda Wilson



Senator Jan Angel