

**For Immediate Release:** *April 30, 2009*

**Washington DC** - U.S. Congressman Duncan D. Hunter (R-CA) reiterated today that all nonessential cross-border traffic along the U.S.-Mexico border be suspended until the swine flu is contained. Additionally, Hunter joined other lawmakers in requesting that the Department of Homeland Security reverse its policy that prohibits Border Patrol agents from wearing protective masks when screening individuals and vehicles at ports of entry.

"At the same time the Vice President is advising Americans not to take public transportation and avoid enclosed spaces, cross-border traffic from Mexico continues to freely enter the United States," said Congressman Hunter. "The Obama Administration is also prohibiting Border Patrol agents from wearing protective equipment as they screen individuals and vehicles entering the country - a policy that puts political correctness over personal safety.

"Clearly, as indicated by the Vice President this morning, the swine flu is a serious threat to our public health. The Administration should take immediate action to suspend nonessential cross-border traffic from Mexico until this virus is contained. The Department of Homeland Security must also reverse its misguided policy that prohibits Border Patrol agents from wearing the necessary protective equipment."

"So far, the federal border response to the swine flu outbreak has been inadequate. Until this virus is contained, cross-border traffic between the U.S. and Mexico should be limited to only commercial and emergency services."

Hunter first called for cross-border restrictions earlier this week. On average, it is estimated that nearly 350,000 individuals enter the U.S. each day through California's ports of entry alone.