

Professional Alien Smuggling Is On The Rise!

Dear Colleague:

Professional alien smuggling is on the rise. After recent years of Congress providing increased resources for INS to employ additional Border Patrol agents, special agents, and detention and deportation officers, it has become more difficult for illegal aliens to enter into the United States. This enforcement buildup has caused illegal aliens to rely on professional alien smugglers as their means to unlawfully enter the United States. Smuggled aliens often endure inhumane treatment at the hands of professional smugglers. HR 993 is designed to deter and punish professional alien smugglers.

As the reliance on professional smuggling rises, so have the incidents of cruel treatment. For example, recent media reports describe Mexican alien smugglers who abandon aliens in the desert, without food or water, to avoid apprehension. Chinese alien smugglers charge exorbitant fees **B** as much as \$50,000 per alien **B** which the aliens must pay over long periods of indentured servitude, often in sweatshop conditions in places like New York City's Chinatown.

In many cases, these smugglers coerce indebted aliens into drug trafficking, prostitution, and other illegal activities. In 1999, a professor from Florida was convicted of illegally smuggling a 15-year old Honduran boy into the United States in return for sexual favors. Just last month in California, 27 Asian women testified to being offered \$40,000 to be smuggled in to the United States illegally and made to work as prostitutes throughout the United States to pay off the debt. Aliens who fail to cooperate with smugglers suffer severe penalties.

This legislation enhances the sentencing guidelines for alien smuggling, increases sentences for those who cause serious bodily injury or threaten loss of life, and increases sentences for repeat offenders.

To cosponsor this legislation please contact Taylor Ford or Josh Bailey in my office at 5-2176.

Sincerely,

Ric Keller
Member of Congress