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## Press Release

# Statement by Gov. Rick Perry on Immigration and Border Security

**April 29, 2010**

AUSTIN – Gov. Rick Perry today issued the following statement regarding border security, the recent debate over immigration policy in Washington and what has been implemented in Arizona:

“Texas has a rich history with Mexico, our largest trading partner, and we share more than 1,200 miles of border, more than any other state. As the debate on immigration reform intensifies, the focus must remain on border security and the federal government’s failure to adequately protect our borders. Securing our border is a federal responsibility, but it is a Texas problem, and it must be addressed before comprehensive immigration reform is discussed.

“Recently, there has been much debate over immigration policy in Washington and what has been implemented in Arizona. I fully recognize and support a state’s right and obligation to protect its citizens, but I have concerns with portions of the law passed in Arizona and believe it would not be the right direction for Texas.

“For example, some aspects of the law turn law enforcement officers into immigration officials by requiring them to determine immigration status during any lawful contact with a suspected alien, taking them away from their existing law enforcement duties, which are critical to keeping citizens safe. Our focus must continue to be on the criminal elements involved with conducting criminal acts against Texans and their property. I will continue to work with the legislative leadership to develop strategies that are appropriate for Texas.

“Securing the border has to be a top priority, which is why I have a standing request with the federal government for 1,000 Title 32 National Guardsmen who can support civilian law enforcement efforts to enhance border security in Texas. I have also requested predator drones be based in and operate over the Texas-Mexico border to provide essential information about criminal activity to law enforcement on the ground.

“Until the federal government brings the necessary resources to bear, we will continue to commit state funding and resources for additional border security efforts in order to protect our communities and legitimate cross border trade and travel, while enforcing the laws already on the books.”