

September 11, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Majority Leader Reid:

As Governor of a border state, I have long advocated that the Federal government live up to its obligation to secure the border. However, in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform, the Federal government must, at a minimum, compensate states like Arizona that bear a disproportionate burden from the failure to maintain operational control of the U.S. – Mexico border. One such burden placed on Border States and communities is the strain on emergency services and the skyrocketing costs of uncompensated care for undocumented immigrants. As you know, medical personnel are legally and ethically bound to serve anyone who needs emergency services, regardless of the person's citizenship status or ability to pay. Section 1011 funding, which is scheduled to expire at the end of this fiscal year, is essential to offsetting these additional costs incurred by medical care providers. I ask that Congress immediately reauthorize and continue this critical program.

Section 1011 funding, created as part of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, offers financial relief for healthcare providers and hospitals, in states like Arizona, struggling to cover the unpaid bills left by undocumented immigrants seeking emergency healthcare. Unfortunately, funding for Section 1011 expires on September 30, 2008. Without a timely reauthorization, the healthcare system in Arizona will lose approximately \$32 million dollars per year. Failure to offset these costs will result in additional tension in our health care safety net through overburdened emergency departments and additional costs passed on throughout the health care system.

As Congress returns from summer recess and considers its FY 2009 funding priorities, I ask that you immediately move to reauthorize Section 1011 funding. Additionally, until the federal government passes comprehensive immigration reform, I encourage you to support and renew programs such as Section 1011 that lessen the strain of our immigration crisis on border states.

Yours truly,

Janet Napolitano

cc: Arizona Delegation