

GUS M. BILIRAKIS
9TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN, TASK FORCE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SENIOR FRESHMAN WHIP



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0900
September 5, 2007

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The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528-0001

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

I am writing to formally request a briefing on the issues surrounding the University of South Florida students who were recently arrested and indicated on federal explosives charges.

I appreciated your testimony at today's hearing of the House Homeland Security Committee on closing potential security gaps in our homeland defenses. I agree with your assessment that we are safer now than we were on 9/11, though much more work remains to be done to further bolster our nation's homeland security. I look forward to working with you on these efforts.

I am especially interested in the case involving these students and the larger homeland security issues it raises. As you may recall from my questions during the hearing, I believe we must more closely examine the backgrounds of those seeking student visas and then carefully monitor their activities once they have entered the country to ensure that they have come here for legitimate academic purposes. We also must ensure that there is appropriate coordination and sharing of information between the various federal agencies responsible for the admission and monitoring of foreign students and the schools that they are attending.

I would appreciate your efforts to facilitate a briefing on this case and the related issues it raises for me with the appropriate Department officials at the soonest possible time. I would hope that this briefing will allow for a more thorough and candid discussion of this matter than was possible at our hearing today.

Please contact my Legislative Director, Jerry White, at (202) 225-5755 if your staff has any questions or needs any information pertaining to this request.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gus M. Bilirakis".

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

GB:jw