

U.S. Congresswoman

Ginny Brown-Waite*Representing Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Levy,
Marion, Pasco, Polk, and Sumter Counties***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 24, 2008

REP. BROWN-WAITE CALLS FOR FEDERAL INVESTIGATION OF EVENTS SURROUNDING THE RECENT HORRIFIC ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIME SPREE

Illegal Immigrant Arrested and Released Now Charged with Brutal Crimes Including Multiple Rapes, Kidnapping and Grand Theft

(Washington, D.C.) – Following recent news reports of an illegal immigrant who was repeatedly detained and released from custody and then going on to commit horrific crimes, **U.S. Representative Ginny Brown-Waite (FL-05)** today called for a full federal investigation of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's department, as well as a complete review of the interactions between area law enforcement and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Rep. Brown-Waite's demand for a federal investigation will focus on the interactions (or lack thereof) between Hillsborough County law enforcement and ICE surrounding the arrests and releases of alleged serial rapist and illegal immigrant Rigoberto Moron Martinez, as well as his accomplices Jose Walle and Vicente Reyes-Carbajal.

"What is it going to take for America to wake up and realize that illegal immigrants who commit crimes should not be back on our streets, but should be sent back to their home countries?" questioned Rep. Brown-Waite. "In this case the lives of several Florida woman have been permanently scarred by these brutal rapes; events that could have been avoided if Hillsborough County had followed the law, reported this illegal immigrant to federal authorities, and held him for trial and deportation. It is clear to me that we need a federal investigation of the events surrounding the arrest and release of this man, and if warranted, new leadership at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's office."

A member of the Homeland Security Committee in Congress, Rep. Brown-Waite has worked with her local sheriffs to see that they have the resources and training needed to identify potential illegal immigrants during the course of the duties. She has also worked to ensure that each county law enforcement unit has the tools required to work directly with ICE to process illegal immigrants for federal processing and deportation. In a survey of all eight county Sheriff Departments completed earlier this year, Rep. Brown-Waite was told by seven of her eight county Sheriffs that their resources were sufficient and that they were actively working with ICE. Citrus County Sheriff Jeff Dawsey was the only Sheriff who failed to respond to the Congresswoman's questions.

"Having sat through hearing after hearing in Committee, I knew that local law enforcement needed help to set up proper communication channels with federal immigration authorities," continued Rep. Brown-Waite. "That is why I asked each of my Sheriffs specific questions, questions that were designed to ensure they had the tools necessary to keep events like this one from happening. I have been told by seven of my eight counties that they have solid procedures and lines of communications in place to deal with processing potential criminal illegal immigrants. I hope that Citrus County has similar procedures and policies in place as the other seven counties, but without a response from Sheriff Dawsey, at this point I just don't know if they do or not.

"Unfortunately for the lives of the women raped by this illegal immigrant ringleader and his two accomplices, it appears that some area law enforcement officials may not have the proper training and tools to work with ICE and federal authorities. Hopefully a federal investigation will identify the areas where Hillsborough County, St. Petersburg and ICE dropped the ball with identifying and deporting this man, and we can all work together to find ways to ensure that it won't happen again."

In her letter to the county sheriff departments, Rep. Brown-Waite asked the following questions:

- 1) Do officers ask if the suspect is here legally?
- 2) Do officers ask all suspects about citizenship/immigration status even if a suspect speaks English (to avoid "racial-profiling")?
- 3) Can officers use the suspect's inability to speak English as grounds to look into immigration status?
- 4) Do officers ask for proof of legal status?
- 5) If police determine the suspect is here illegally, what actions do they take?
- 6) Do police ever check to see if a suspected illegal immigrant is registered to vote? (Registering to vote and indicating legal status while an illegal alien is grounds for deportation.)
- 7) Do police notify ICE of an arrest when suspect admits he/she is here illegally?
- 8) Do you know if your county jail notifies ICE of illegal immigrants being housed there?
- 9) If numbers 7) or 8) are true, has ICE been diligent in following up on information?
- 10) Does ICE visit jails regularly to check on immigration status? If so, how effective are these visits?

Rep. Brown-Waite is available for comment today if you would like to speak to her about her call for an investigation.

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