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Tuesday, 26 July 2011 13:44

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Issa, Grassley release staff report focusing on impact of Operation Fast and Furious on Mexico

WASHINGTON – Findings in [a second staff report](#) released by Representative Darrell Issa and Senator Chuck Grassley show that ATF officials based in the United States Embassy in Mexico City were increasingly worried about the alarming rate of guns found in violent crimes in Mexico from a single ATF operation based out of the ATF's Phoenix Field Division. Issa is Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee and Grassley is Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"The consequences of arming Mexican drug cartels seem obvious. But even guns turning up at crime scenes in Mexico wasn't enough for Justice Department officials to arrest straw purchasers and shut down their trafficking operations. Tragically, it wasn't until Fast and Furious guns were found at the murder scene of a Border Patrol Agent that Justice officials finally ended this reckless and arrogant effort," said Issa.

"It's incomprehensible that officials at the Justice Department, the ATF and the U.S. attorney's office would keep their counterparts at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City in the dark about Operation Fast and Furious. Keeping key details secret while straw purchasers continued buying weapons for gun traffickers jeopardized our relationship with our southern ally and put lives at risk," Grassley said.

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The report released today outlines several important findings, including:

- There was little to no information sharing from the Phoenix Field Division, ATF Headquarters and the Justice Department to their colleagues in Mexico City. Every time Mexico City officials asked about the mysterious investigation, their U.S. based ATF counterparts in Phoenix and Washington, D.C. continued to say they were “working on it” and “everything was under control.”

- Lanny Breuer, the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Justice Department, was clearly aware of Operation Fast and Furious and touted the case during a visit to Mexico.

- ATF officials in Mexico City were incredulous that their agency would knowingly allow guns to fall into the hands of Mexican drug cartels, and they were incensed when they finally began to learn the full scope of Operation Fast and Furious and the investigative techniques used.

Issa and Grassley are leading a congressional inquiry into the ill-advised strategy known as Operation Fast and Furious.

[A copy of the report can be found here](#) .

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