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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

October 17, 2024

Michael G. Whitaker
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Whitaker:

According to an internal Border Patrol memo first reported by NBC News¹, roughly 150 Remote Video Surveillance Systems—nearly one-third of these types of cameras in use along the U.S.-Mexico border—are inoperable and have been for some time. The memo indicates that the Federal Aviation Administration is responsible for service and repairs to these systems.

The RVSS program is designed to enable the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) to survey large areas without having to commit hundreds of agents in vehicles, thus improving the safety of agents. It is unacceptable that this technology Border Patrol relies on to secure the border and stop the flow of illegal narcotics into our country sits unused.

I request responses to the following questions by October 30th:

1. Can the FAA confirm the scope of the issue? How many RVSS cameras are affected?
2. Is the FAA working with contractors to run or to repair these cameras? What is FAA doing to ensure these contractors are compliant with CBP's Information System Security Policies and Procedures Handbook?
3. What is FAA's timeline to fix these cameras? When will the RVSS cameras be fully functional?
4. Why are so many of these systems broken or malfunctioning?
5. What are the communications between the FAA and CBP on the state of these cameras?
6. What additional resources might the FAA need to ensure technology along our border can be serviced in a timely manner?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Stanton".

Greg Stanton
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.nbcnews.com/investigations/30-cameras-border-patrols-main-surveillance-system-are-broken-memo-say-rcna175281>