

TREY GOWDY

4TH DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA

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AND GOVERNMENT REFORMSUBCOMMITTEE:
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4004

October 14, 2011

Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you know, the House Committees on Judiciary and Oversight and Government Reform are seeking answers relevant to what was ostensibly a gun interdiction investigation commonly referred to as "Fast and Furious". The exchange below is from an interview conducted by "Univision" reporter Jorge Ramos with you on March 22, 2011. In this interview you make clear you did not authorize "Fast and Furious" and further make clear Attorney General Eric Holder did not authorize "Fast and Furious".

Were this simply an investigation flawed in its execution with guns "walking" away from law enforcement surveillance, guns crossing the border into Mexico, and "Fast and Furious" guns found at crime scenes both in Mexico and the United States, this congressional inquiry would be relevant and material.

However, in addition to being flawed in its execution, "Fast and Furious" was wholly flawed in its conception. Simply put, this investigation never would have met the objectives testified to (the disruption, dismemberment, and destruction of Mexican Drug Cartels). Consequently, it is not only significant when the Department of Justice learned of "problems" with this investigation, it is significant when the Department of Justice learned about the mere pendency, initiation, and attempted implementation of this ill-conceived investigation.

In connection with the exchange provided below, during Attorney General Holder's testimony in May of 2011, he stated that he learned of "Fast and Furious" a "few weeks ago". Would you inform us how you knew in March of 2011, 1 month prior to his testimony, that Attorney General Holder did not "authorize" this investigation?

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To that end, if you knew the Attorney General did not authorize "Fast and Furious" how did you learn that and when did you learn that? If you knew Attorney General Holder did not authorize it, inherent in that response is knowledge of who did authorize it. That information would be most helpful to the committee as we seek answers to this tragically ill-conceived and tragically ill-executed investigation.

Reporter:

THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT COMPLAINS THAT THEY WERE NOT INFORMED ABOUT THE "FAST AND FURIOUS" OPERATION. DID YOU AUTHORIZE THIS OPERATION AND WAS PRESIDENT CALDERON PROPERLY INFORMED ABOUT IT?

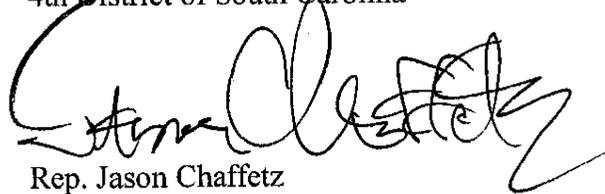
President Obama:

Well, first of all I did not authorize it. Eric Holder, the Attorney General, did not authorize it. He's been very clear that our policy is to catch gunrunners and put them into jail. So what he's done is he's assigned an I.G., an inspector general, to investigate what exactly happened . . .

Sincerely,



Rep. Trey Gowdy
4th District of South Carolina



Rep. Jason Chaffetz
3rd District of Utah