

April 13, 2011

Dear Port Commissioners:

Even in the unlikely event that the Border Patrol never detains a single person in Port Townsend, their greater presence here is a threat to hard-working immigrants. It is true that all immigrants may not all have the proper papers for living here, but they are not terrorists, are not committing crimes or doing harm, and many have lived here for over a decade, have brought up their children here, have served you food, cleaned PT businesses and our houses, and worked in our gardens. They are not terrorists.

I live in Cape George. Recently the BP has become a frequent visitor to our supposedly closed community. People who used to go to CG to clean and garden no longer do so because they are afraid. Even with proper documents, they don't want to be harassed, as they would be because they speak with an accent and have brown skin. I am not aware that anyone has been detained in CG, but that doesn't even matter. These people are already losing work out of fear. Young adults, good students, who have lived in this country since they were infants, are afraid to go to Peninsula College on the bus because of BP presence. Seeing armed officers in official vehicles is intimidating for anyone. Why are we adding to it by housing more BP officers in our town? What kind of town are you all allowing PT to become?

The number of agents on our peninsula grew from 4 agents 4 years ago to 24, and I believe it will soon be (if it is not there already) at 100. What are they all doing? They are pursuing hard-working members of our communities, because they cannot find any real terrorists. They have to make work for themselves and earn their salaries. A large detention facility will soon be built on our peninsula. Why does our government spend many millions of dollars building it and then many more to keep it running with a full staff when we don't have money to fund educational and health programs that actually help out the needy people instead of frightening people?

What do you think happens when the BP detains a man and impounds his vehicle? Think about it. His wife doesn't have a car so she cannot go to work or take the kids to school. In essence, the entire family is terrorized and afraid to do anything about it. Just THE PRESENCE of more BP cars and officers in our little community is threatening. This is a moral and humanitarian issue, not simply a business decision. Please don't allow this to happen. Take a stand and say "no".

Sincerely,

Kate Franco
40 Queets Place
Port Townsend, WA 98368