

Congressional Testimony – A Review of the Department of Homeland Security's Policies and Procedures for the Apprehension, Detention and Release of Non-Citizens Unlawfully Present in the United States

February 25, 2015 –

Delivered by Michael Ronnebeck for the Ronnebeck Family

Good morning Distinguished Committee members,

My name is Michael Ronnebeck.

I am here on behalf of the Ronnebeck Family.

I'd like to tell you about my nephew, Grant Ronnebeck.

Grant was a 21 year old son, brother, nephew, and grandson. He was a bright young man, with an infectious smile and love of life. He had a positive outlook on life, and everyone he met knew it.

As a 21 year old American, he was just starting out in life; starting out to realize his dreams, starting to follow his heart in matters of career choices, and just discovering his life choices. His desire was to work his way up at the job he loved, working for the QuikTrip Corporation as he had for the previous 5 years, or possibly later to become a member of the law enforcement community.

He loved 4-wheeling in the desert around his home near Mesa, Arizona, and spending time with friends and family watching the Broncos play during the football season. He was a pretty typical young American man, but to us he was a very special family and community member.

At 4:00 a.m. on January 22, 2015, while working the overnight shift at his Quiktrip store, Grant assisted a man buying cigarettes. The man dumped a jar of coins on the counter and demanded cigarettes. Grant tried explaining that he needed to count the coins before he could give the man the cigarettes. The man then pulled a gun, and stated "you're not gonna take my money", and "you're not gonna give me my cigarettes." Grant immediately offered up the cigarettes to the man, who shot him in the face, killing him. Seemingly unaffected, the man then stepped over Grant's body, grabbed a couple of packs of cigarettes, and then left the store.

After a 30 minute high speed chase through the streets of Mesa and Phoenix, Arizona, the man was taken into custody. Inside his car were the cigarettes, at least two handguns, and the shell casings from the 9mm handgun believed to have been used to kill Grant.

Apolinar Altamirano, the alleged murderer, is an illegal immigrant. According to a news article detailing his 2012 arrest, he is a self-proclaimed member of the Mexican mafia, and says he has ties to the Sinaloa drug cartel.

The news article states that in August of 2012, he was arrested with two others after kidnapping, sexually assaulting, and burglarizing a woman in her apartment. He took a plea deal, and pled guilty to a charge of felony burglary for that incident. He was sentenced to two years of probation and turned over to the Immigration and Customs

Enforcement Agency due to his undocumented status in the United States. He never served any time in custody.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency released the now convicted felon Altamirano on bond pending a deportation hearing.

In the two years since then, while awaiting his deportation hearing, Altamirano has had two orders of protection filed against him, including one from a woman who claimed he threatened to kill her, and pointed a gun at her boyfriend.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency was notified of the protection orders by a Mesa Superior Court judge.

Altamirano was still allowed to be free in our Country.

Your peer, Rep Matt Salmon (AZ-05) said it clearly in a Colleague letter to you.

"I believe there is simply no excuse for ICE to be releasing individuals like this back onto our streets to endanger and kill hardworking Americans."

I have to agree with Mr Salmon's assessment.

My family also agrees with Mr. Salmon.

ICE should be doing its job for the American people, with the American People's safety and security first and foremost in mind.

It is my family's greatest desire that Grant Ronnebeck's legacy will be more than a fading obituary, a cemetery plot, or a fond memory. Instead, we want Grant's death to be a force for change and reform in the immigration policies of this great nation.

In closing, I am asking you, our elected scholars, lawyers, and community leaders, to make these changes; to rise above your political differences, to set aside your personal interests, and to use your resources to make sensible immigration reform a reality in the coming months, so that tragedies like this might not ever occur again.

Biography – Michael Ronnebeck

Michael Ronnebeck is a 52 year old United States citizen who currently resides in Sacramento California. He attended Hillsdale High School in San Mateo, California, and studied Administration of Justice at San Jose State University in San Jose, California

Michael has worked in the Retail Loss Prevention Profession for the past 30+ years for companies such as Neiman Marcus, and Target Corporation and has been involved in thousands of criminal apprehensions and investigations.
He is also an aspiring Photographer.

Michael is testifying today for his nephew, Grant Ronnebeck (March 28, 1993-January 22, 2015)
And on behalf of his immediate family.

Michael has two sisters, Judy Ronnebeck, and Karen Morreira.
Judy is a retired member of the Law Enforcement Community who lives in Escondido California
Karen is a Banking manager who lives in Flower Mound Texas

Michael has two brothers, Steven and Eric.
Steven is a retail manager and is Grant's father. He lives in Mesa, Arizona. He is also father to Grants younger brother, Tyler Ronnebeck
Eric is a blogger, and writer living in Seattle Washington.

Michael's mother is Barbara Jones, who is a loving mother and grandmother living in Escondido California.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)(5)

Name: Michael Ronnebeck

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2012. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

None -

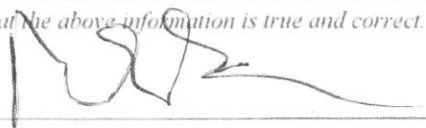
2. Please list any entity you are testifying on behalf of and briefly describe your relationship with these entities.

None -

3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received since October 1, 2012, by the entity(ies) you listed above. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

None -

I certify that the above information is true and correct.

Signature: 

Date: 2/22/2015



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Let's End "Catch and Release"

Stop President Obama From "Playing Russian Roulette With Public Safety"

Dear Colleague:

Nearly two weeks ago, a disgusting and senseless tragedy occurred in my district as a result of this Administration's current policy of "catch and release." In the early morning hours of January 22, 2015, an illegal immigrant with a criminal record and a history of violence, entered a convenience store and dumped a jar full of change on the counter and demanded a pack of cigarettes. Suddenly, this individual shouted "You're not gonna take my money!" and pointed a gun at the young, 21 year old store clerk.

As the clerk carefully handed the gunman the pack of cigarettes, he was shot to death where he stood. Adding further insult, the gunman stepped over the body of the young clerk and stole two more packs of cigarettes, before jumping into a car and leading local police on a dangerous, 25 mile chase through densely populated areas.

Unfortunately, this tragic story is not an isolated incident. Just a few months ago, I highlighted yet another incident where two California deputy sheriffs were shot and killed by an illegal immigrant who had been incarcerated four times in Maricopa County (my home county) jails, and deported twice by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Shockingly, these violent individuals do not roam our streets due to our lack of knowledge about them. In fact, they do so in spite of it. In a recent statement by ICE, the agency acknowledged that Maricopa County Superior Court had notified the agency about this individual's status and criminal history, but that he had been released pending the outcome of his case in immigration court.

Furthermore, as of October 2014, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) reported that 35.4% of illegal immigrants arrested within the county and given detainers, or holds by ICE, are repeat offenders. Charges against these illegal immigrants have included kidnapping, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, armed robbery, sexual abuse, and child molestation.

The law is not a joke. I believe there is simply no excuse for ICE to be releasing individuals like this back onto our streets to endanger and kill hardworking Americans.

Having met and spoken with many of our brave men and women in law enforcement, I remain confident in their resolve and ability to do the difficult job of apprehending many of these dangerous individuals. Unfortunately, their bravery and loyalty continues to be betrayed by our broken policies, including that of "catch and release."

I ask that you join me in calling for real reforms to this Administration's interior enforcement strategy and in calling for an end to "catch and release." If you have any questions, please contact Greg Safsten (greg.safsten@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Matt Salmon, MC