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BORDER PROSECUTION UNIT

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Border Prosecution Unit Quick Facts

- Initial funding in 81st Legislature (SB 1, Art. IX, Sec. 17.04(4)), in the amount of $4,000,000 for the biennium for "prosecution resources" in aid of Border Security Operations. Administered as trusteed grant program through Criminal Justice Division of Governor's Office.
- Covers sixteen (16) prosecution offices from El Paso to Brownsville, encompassing 39 counties.
- Grant allows each DAs office to hire assistant prosecutor and/or investigator whose primary responsibility is to better handle and coordinate prosecution of border crimes.
- Actitivies coordinated through the Border Prosecution Unit Board of Directors, headed by chairman Rene Pena, District Attorney for the 81st Judicial District (Floresville) and vice-chairman Isidro Alaniz, District Attorney for the 49th Judicial District (Laredo.)
- Grant goes to the office of 34th Judicial District Attorney Jaime Esparza and administered by contract with the other fifteen (15) participating jurisdictions. Initial grant awarded in February, 2010 in amount of approximately $1.75 million; year 2 budget of approximately $2.25 million.
- Established definition of "border crime" and created performance measures.
- Working closely with Department of Public Safety to develop first-of-its-kind protocol on handling border cases. Also participating in joint training exercises with DPS and other state, local and federal law enforcement agencies.

- Particular focus on violent crime (murder, kidnapping, extortion), criminal enterprises associated with cartels and drug trade, financial crimes and human trafficking.
- Taking the lead in developing better communications with local law enforcement organizations and improving coordination between jurisdictions in handling of cases that reach across county/jurisdictional boundaries.