

*Washington, D.C. (June 21, 2012) – Today, Rep. Jan Schakowsky released the following statement today after Republicans on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee voted to hold Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt of Congress:*

“From the moment ‘Fast and Furious’ – a gun-walking program begun by the Bush Administration that allowed thousands of guns to be bought by weapons traffickers – came to light, the Obama Administration and Attorney General Eric Holder took quick steps to end the policy and have worked in good faith to assist an investigation into the matter by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Not only did Attorney General Holder order the Inspector General to investigate the gun-walking program, he provided the House Oversight Committee with over 8,000 pages of documents and testified in nine different hearings. He also tried to offer House Oversight Chairman Darrell Issa access to additional documents regarding the ‘Fast and Furious’ initiative – an offer that was rejected.

This effort to hold the Attorney General in contempt has nothing to do with trying to get to the bottom of the ‘Fast and Furious’ program and everything to do with scoring political points in an election year. It is especially unfortunate that the loss of Customs and Border Protection Agent Brian Terry, who was killed in a gunfight in Arizona in December 2010, has been exploited and used by Republicans to wage a political fight.

At the end of the day, the Speaker, Representative Issa and House Republicans refused to accept take 'yes' for an answer. Instead of focusing on jobs, preventing the doubling of student loan rates, and growing our economy, Republicans have chosen to spend time on a program that is no longer operating and expedite a vote on the floor designed solely to embarrass the President of the United States and the Attorney General. This is the kind of political theatre Americans are sick of."

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