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**Senator Lucio and Congressman Vela receive  
briefing, tour on U.S.-Mexico Border Issues by  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

**Brownsville** – Today, Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D- Brownsville) and Congressman Filemon Vela (D- U.S. Dist. 34, Texas) received a briefing and tour by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security regarding ongoing efforts to secure the border.

For Senator Lucio, the briefing was an extraordinary opportunity to better understand the most current safety concerns for the people of South Texas.

"Throughout my time in the Senate I have strived to be an advocate for law enforcement along the border, especially due to heightened tension in northern Mexico due to international criminal enterprise. It is my belief that if we are to have a secure border region, we need to ensure that meaningful dialogue takes place between the U.S. Congress and local law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and elected officials on the border," Sen. Lucio said. "I want to thank Congressman Vela and his staff for inviting me to take part in this important fact-finding day. I want to also thank Homeland Security for sharing their wealth of experience and knowledge with me."

"This was an important briefing that got us up to speed on what the Department of Homeland Security and its federal agencies are doing to secure the U.S. border and ensure we keep organized criminal activities, drug smuggling and other illicit activities out of our country," Vela said. "In the next few months, as I begin my service on the House Homeland Security Committee, I will work with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to ensure we provide them with the needed manpower, resources and technology to secure the border."

The briefing began at 8 a.m. this morning with a meet and greet at the Brownsville Border Patrol Station in Olmito, Texas. Throughout the day, the Senator and Congressman Vela were briefed by several Homeland Security agencies on security, port of entry, and coastal and maritime issues impacting the Rio Grande Valley Sector. Agencies represented included U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Coast Guard. The Senator and Congressman also participated in an tour of the Valley's border region conducted by Homeland Security.

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