



PENNSYLVANIA STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bill Culp
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September 1, 2005

***PSCOA calls for full investigation into U.S. Immigration
and Customs Enforcement handling of non-resident
accused of triple homicide***

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association (PSCOA) President Donald G. McNany today called for a full investigation into the circumstances that allowed triple homicide suspect Miguel Padilla, a non U.S. resident, to remain in the United States, despite having a violent criminal record.

Padilla was arrested after allegedly shooting and killing three people Sunday outside a night club. One of the people killed was U.S Marine veteran and Pennsylvania Corrections Officer Stephen Heiss. Heiss had recently joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

In letters to U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum and U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster, McNany took issue with how U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) refuses to discuss why Padilla was still permitted in the country after pleading guilty in 2002 for his involvement in a knife fight, and assaulting a police officer in 2003. (Letters are attached.)

“Only now, after the shootings, is ICE prepared to deport Padilla,” McNany wrote. “Officer Heiss was also nothing short of a hero the night he died. When he saw Padilla pull his gun, Officer Heiss, an innocent bystander, immediately threw his female companion to the ground before he was shot. She fully credits Officer Heiss with saving her life. It is our hope that you will get the answers Officer Heiss’s family and the Altoona community deserves. The ICE must answer for this tragic loss of life.”

Officer Heiss saved the life of a fellow Corrections Officer. For his actions, PSCOA is recommending him for the Corrections USA Medal of Valor.



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••• *Patrolling the Toughest Blocks in the State* •••

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September 1, 2005

Hon. Rick Santorum
United States Senate
Route 220 North
Regency Square, Suite 220
Altoona, PA 16601

Dear Sen. Santorum:

The 9,500 members of the Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association (PSCOA) share the shock and dismay felt by Altoona residents over the recent triple homicide that claimed the life of three innocent people, including one of our own, Stephen M. Heiss.

The PCSOA is calling for your office to conduct a full investigation into the circumstances that have allowed Miguel Padilla, a non U.S. resident, to remain in the United States, despite having a violent criminal record. In 2002, he plead guilty after a knife fight. While on probation in 2003, Padilla struck a police officer.

It is shocking and appalling that officials from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) refuse to discuss why Padilla was permitted to remain in the United States. Only now, after the shootings, is ICE prepared to deport Padilla.

One thing is certain, had Padilla not been allowed to remain in the United States two years ago, Stephen Heiss, Alfred Mignogna Jr., and Fred Rickabaugh would be alive today. That is truly tragic.

Officer Heiss has a long track record of public service, first serving his country as a U.S. Marine. In order to continue serving his country, he recently joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. The last three years, he has also served the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a Corrections Officer at SCI-Huntingdon.

Officer Heiss was also nothing short of hero on the night he died. When Heiss saw Padilla pull his gun, he immediately threw a female companion to the ground before he was shot. She fully credits Officer Heiss with saving her life.

It is our hope that you will get the answers Officer Heiss's family and the Altoona community deserve. The ICE must answer for this tragic loss of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don McNary".

Donald G. McNary, President

cc: Hon. Bill Shuster