



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE  
SEVENTH DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

COL. KRISTE KIBBEY ETUE  
DIRECTOR

July 17, 2018

Committee Members  
Northwest Michigan Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust

*Delivered via email*

Dear NWMIA ALPACT Members,

I am hopeful this message will address questions and concerns about a traffic stop that occurred in Grand Traverse County on July 5, 2018, as well as the Michigan State Police's (MSP) relationship with the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). Due to the amount of attention this situation has garnered in previous email messages, I do not feel I can wait until the August meeting of NWMIA ALPACT to address your concerns. In this message, I will attempt to clarify the actions of the troopers during this traffic stop, as well as share with you MSP's policy on immigration enforcement.

The traffic stop in question was initiated by a trooper assigned to the Seventh District Hometown Security Team. The stop was made on M-72 near Lautner Road on July 5, 2018. Below are the facts of the stop, which have been corroborated by the in-car video and audio:

- A 48-year-old man driving a 2000 Honda SUV was stopped for violation of Michigan Vehicle Code Section 257.707 – Defective Exhaust.
- There were two other passengers in the vehicle: an adult male and an adult female.
- The trooper was working alone at the time of the stop.
- None of the three occupants of the vehicle spoke or adequately understood English.
- The reason for the traffic stop was explained to the driver and the vehicle's defective exhaust was discussed with him, to the extent possible given the language barrier.
- The two other persons in the vehicle produced identification issued by the Mexican government when asked by the trooper for their ID.
- Because of the language barrier, the trooper called for another trooper, who was working with a USCBP agent nearby, to come to his location to assist with identification and communication.
- With the assistance of the USCBP agent, the following facts were determined:
  - The driver possessed a valid Michigan driver's license and was a legal resident of Traverse City.
  - The female passenger was a Mexican national and was in the United States illegally (illegal alien).
  - The male passenger is a Mexican national and was in the United States in violation of the terms of his United States tourist visa.
- The USCBP agent decided not to arrest either of the two Mexican nationals nor detain them any further than what was required to confirm their immigration status and complete the traffic stop.
- All identifications and documents produced were returned to the persons who supplied them.
- The driver was given a verbal warning for the vehicle's defective exhaust and all three subjects were told they were free to leave, and they drove off.
- There were no USCBP vehicles, with or without markings, on the scene of this traffic stop. The USCBP agent who responded was riding with a trooper in an MSP-marked patrol vehicle with proper authorization.

- As stated in the email that brought this issue to our attention, all law enforcement officers involved in this traffic stop conducted themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

MSP department policy prohibits members from stopping, questioning, detaining, or arresting anyone solely on the suspicion of being an illegal alien or to question a person's immigration status or alienage. This has been the long-standing policy of the MSP. Should you wish to review this policy, you can find it publicly available on our website ([Official Order 14: Arrests, Extradition, and Prisoners](#)).

The MSP values our partnership with all our law enforcement partners at the federal, tribal, state, and local level. The MSP routinely collaborates with USCBP agents on a variety of enforcement activities throughout the state. USCBP agents provide much needed support to the MSP during investigations involving international narcotics trafficking and in the fight to combat human trafficking. Many of these investigations involve suspects and victims who are illegal aliens who lack proper identification and do not speak English, making identification and communication very difficult without the assistance and expertise of USCBP agents.

Given our existing relationship and active participation in NWMI ALPACT, I am disappointed there was not an effort to obtain the facts from the MSP before sharing unsubstantiated information about this incident. Distributing one-sided allegations and spreading misinformation impedes the goals of NWMI ALPACT to build trust and strengthen police and community relationships.

I am grateful for the opportunity to address this matter and I hope this information eases your concerns and answers any questions you may have regarding this incident. Either I or another representative from MSP Seventh District Headquarters will attend the next NWMI ALPACT meeting to address any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Caldwell, Captain  
Seventh District Commander