



FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Headquarters

Office of Criminal Investigations
7500 Standish Place, Room 250N
Rockville, MD 20855

DIRECTOR

November 3, 2008

Colonel John Czernis
Director
Florida Highway Patrol
290 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Colonel Czernis:

On behalf of the FDA's Office of Criminal Investigations, I would like to commend the dedication and professionalism of the Florida Highway Patrol in response to the tragic murder of Customs and Border Protection Special Agent Donald Pettit on August 5, 2008. This horrific act of violence was magnified by the fact that his twelve-year-old daughter was present at the time he was shot.

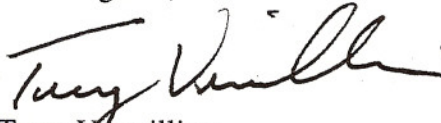
Don served as a valued member of the FDA's Office of Criminal Investigations for over thirteen years prior to his transfer to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in January 2008. He was a commensurate law enforcement officer, devoted family man and a friend to all who knew him.

The law enforcement community of South Florida worked a relentless thirty-six hour investigation that resulted in the identification and apprehension of Agent Pettit's killer.

The overall management of the investigation and multi-agency response along with the tireless efforts and professionalism of the many investigators, officers and employees were instrumental in the timely resolution of the investigation, the apprehension of the suspect and the continued protection of the public. The OCI agents from our Miami Field Office felt it was their duty as well as an honor to participate in such a cohesive, focused, and outstanding law enforcement response to this tragic event.

Your office's response and teamwork reconfirmed the unity of the South Florida law enforcement family. We mourn the loss of Don Pettit; however, we draw strength from the reassurance your presence gives us in the furtherance of our profession and the camaraderie of its members.

Best Regards,



Terry Vermillion