

News from Congressman David Price (NC-04)

<http://price.house.gov>

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

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Price Introduces Border Security Funding Supplemental; Calls on Senate to End Obstruction of Critical Investments

Washington, D.C. – Late Tuesday, Rep. David Price (D-NC), Chairman of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, introduced a border security supplemental funding bill to send 1,700 new Customs and Border Patrol agents and officers to the Southwest border to address ongoing threats from Mexican drug cartels and improve the operations at our ports of entry.

With turf battles among criminal organizations on the Mexican side leading to intensifying violence, the border security supplemental funding bill would give DHS and the Department of Justice additional resources, building on the current border enforcement surge. Total funding in the bill is \$701 million, with \$201 million of that total offset by cuts elsewhere in the DHS and DOJ budgets.

“With cartels fighting the Mexican government and amongst themselves for drug, alien and weapons trafficking routes, we have to prevent any threat of spillover violence and shut down illicit smuggling operations,” Rep. Price said. “Funding is urgently needed to expand the number of border patrol agents and officers, improve our border surveillance efforts, and beef up anti-smuggling investigations.”

The border funding was originally approved by the House earlier this month, along with emergency funds to curtail teacher layoffs, as part of the war and disaster supplemental funding bill. But these funds were removed by the Senate Republicans last week when they refused to allow the addition of border funds to the war funding bill. The funds were requested by the President as an emergency need earlier this summer.

“Senate Republicans are playing political games with this issue, which does nothing to help our border communities, local law enforcement and federal agencies dealing with this problem,” Rep. Price said. “We were all sent to Congress to do something constructive rather than simply stand in the way because you’re of a different political party than the President. I hope Republicans will decide to stand with us and with border communities, and vote for this bill.”

Price recognized the work of border state members in Congress in helping to shape this legislation and pushing for it to be resurrected after the Senate removed the funding. “Under the leadership of dedicated border state representatives like Gabrielle Giffords, Ciro Rodriguez, Silvestre Reyes, Harry Teague and others, the House now has an opportunity to directly address our border security challenges. Their commitment to the security of the region is what brings this bill to the floor today.”

Investments included in Rep. Price’s border security bill:

- 1,200 new Border Patrol agents, to ensure we sustain current levels on the Southwest border and build up capacity needed for when the National Guard is withdrawn next year.

- An additional 500 CBP Officers for the Southwest Border. This is critical for enforcement against smuggling, and to maintain smooth operations at our ports, where trade volumes are increasing in Arizona, Texas and California.
- Integrity programs to combat intense efforts by the cartels to compromise and corrupt law enforcement officers on whom our border security and law enforcement efforts depend.
- Three new forward operating bases and better tactical communications, enabling the Border Patrol to close enforcement gaps that can be exploited by cartels and smugglers.
- Four new Border Enforcement Security Task Forces on the border to build up a permanent ICE presence in joint counterdrug efforts in the region, as well as surge operations of the ICE Criminal Alien Program and related criminal alien removal efforts.
- \$50 million for the Stonegarden grant program to expand support for State and local law joint law enforcement efforts on the border.
- Two additional Predator unmanned aircraft systems to ensure better coverage of the Southwest Border, in particular to support the increased emphasis on the Texas border.

Within the Department of Justice, the bill provides funds for a comprehensive strategy that will:

- Surge DEA agents, ATF agents, Deputy Marshals, FBI agents and US Attorneys to high crime areas in the Southwest Border region, and provide related detention and incarceration support;
- Provide assistance to Mexican law enforcement authorities through ballistic analysis, DNA analysis, information sharing and technical assistance; and
- Add attorneys, immigration judges and detention and incarceration support to handle criminal aliens referred by the Department of Homeland Security.

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