

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 837

To prohibit construction of a continuous wall or fence between the United States and Mexico, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 2, 2017

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself, Mr. CORREA, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. MENG, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SOTO, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KIHUEN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. VELA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MOORE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. LEE, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WELCH, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. TONKO, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. TITUS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Homeland Security, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To prohibit construction of a continuous wall or fence between the United States and Mexico, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Build Bridges Not
5 Walls Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The existing United States-Mexico border
9 infrastructure already includes physical barriers,
10 drones, cameras, motion detectors, thermal imaging
11 sensors, ground sensors, and other surveillance tools.

12 (2) The United States already maintains ap-
13 proximately 650 miles of border fence in areas that
14 most effectively stop the unauthorized entry of peo-
15 ple, vehicles, drugs, arms, and illicit items.

16 (3) The number of U.S. Border Patrol agents
17 nearly doubled from 10,717 in 1993 to 21,370 in
18 2016.

19 (4) Most experts believe that the Trump Ad-
20 ministration’s border wall will cost between \$15 bil-
21 lion to \$25 billion, not including additional mainte-
22 nance costs.

23 (5) Harsh terrain and conditions along remote
24 parts of the United States-Mexico border make the

1 construction of a wall or fence impractical, ineffec-
2 tive, and costly.

3 (6) Former CBP Commissioner Gil Kerlikowske
4 stated that building a continuous wall is not “fea-
5 sible” or the “smartest way to use taxpayer money”.

6 (7) A continuous border wall would likely harm
7 wildlife, destroy sensitive habitat for endangered
8 species, damage the environment and the natural
9 flow of floodwaters, and lead to costly litigation with
10 landowners, the Native American community, and
11 stakeholders.

12 (8) Border security is a complex issue that de-
13 pends on effectively using resources to maintain
14 operational control of the border while also facili-
15 tating the movement of people, goods, and services.

16 (9) The American people want Congress to use
17 taxpayer dollars wisely and focus on middle-class
18 priorities, including economic development, edu-
19 cation, and health care.

20 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON CONSTRUCTION OF A UNITED**
21 **STATES-MEXICO BORDER WALL.**

22 The Executive order entitled “Border Security and
23 Immigration Enforcement Improvements” signed by the
24 President on January 25, 2017, or any other substantially
25 similar Executive order, memorandum, or other action by

1 the President to use taxpayer dollars or fees to construct
2 a continuous wall or fence between the United States and
3 Mexico, shall have no force or effect.

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