

Long's Short Report - Building a wall is a matter of national security

By: Rep. Billy Long

On January 14, a caravan of migrants left San Pedro Sula, Honduras, heading towards the U.S. southern border. This caravan was organized by Juan Carlos Molina, a fugitive who was on the run following a conviction in 2015 for breaking into a home and molesting a 12-year-old girl. Unfortunately, Democrats refuse to acknowledge these stories and would rather point fingers at Republicans saying we're immoral or we're using inaccurate facts. But since Speaker Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Schumer refuse to even sit for a briefing by the Secretary of Homeland Security, it's hard to believe anything they say is more than political talking points.

According to the White House, in 2018, our border security prevented more than 17,000 criminals and more than 1,000 gang members from entering our country. Along with thousands of violent criminals attempting to cross our border, there are thousands of others trying to cross with illegal drugs, such as heroin and fentanyl. According to recent numbers, 90 percent of wholesale heroin comes from Mexico, which has only increased over the years. In 2017, nearly 2,500 pounds of fentanyl was seized by border security, which is enough to kill every U.S. citizen.

Over the years, both Republicans and Democrats, including Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Schumer, have come together and supported building a wall along the southern border. Prior to 1992, in the San Diego Sector California, illegal immigrants would line up in mass and bum-rush the border. Several hundred would literally run past border patrol agents and continue running out in traffic right down the middle of the highway into oncoming traffic in some cases. Very few were detained because it was a brilliant plan for those wanting to enter illegally. They would simply outnumber the authorities and run until they were either captured or out of their sight.

A wall built in 1992 ended this practice, along with dropping illegal traffic by 92 percent over 23 years. Yuma, Arizona, had a similar experience. In 2005 additional walls were built and the city saw illegal traffic drop by 95 percent over 9 years. A number of cities along the southern border have put up barriers and have seen illegal traffic drop more than 90 percent. The numbers make one thing clear and that is that walls work. They aren't perfect and are not a cure-all, but they are a huge deterrent and will augment whatever other security measures are implemented. In 2014, I did an extensive tour of the southern border. I toured the San Diego Sector California, the Tucson Sector Arizona and the Rio Grande Valley Sector. I witnessed all manner of ways to enter our country illegally, along with all manner of efforts to stop those folks that try. Of everything I saw, the pre-1992 footage of people bum-rushing the border near San Diego will forever be with me.

President Trump's proposal aims to help alleviate the pressure on our overworked and understaffed border security by allocating \$5.7 billion for 234 miles of additional fencing and walls. Along with more fencing and walls, the president's proposal includes increased funding

for technology to better detect narcotics and weapons as well as funding for nearly 3,000 more border security officers and staff.

As the saying goes, you're entitled to your own opinion, but you're not entitled to your own facts. And the fact is we have a crisis at the southern border and action needs to be taken. I have always been a strong supporter of legal immigration and believe that legitimate asylum seekers should be welcome. We need for people to immigrate into our country - legally. However, running across our borders illegally is not the way to do it. It's time Democrats stop playing politics and realize this is a matter of national security.

For more information on my activities in our district and in Washington I encourage you to follow my Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Rep.Billy.Long> and my Twitter page at <https://twitter.com/USRepLong>. You can also subscribe to my weekly newsletter, "Long's Short Report," by visiting <https://longforms.house.gov/newsletter-and-email-updates-form>