

Just as an example, I tried multiple times to get an answer for how loud it would be when an airplane flies over us. This is critical information since overflights will be happening up to 600 times a day. All the FAA would tell me were 24-hour noise averages, which tell me nothing. Noise averages mean nothing to us. A room could be silent for 23 hours and have a 140-decibel rock concert for an hour, and the noise average would be something around a whisper. This is just one example of the FAA providing incomplete or misleading information.

In addition, every document the FAA has sent to my office, from the original proposal to the record of decision, has been extremely complicated and vague. I've been living in New York my entire life, and I was unable to interpret the maps of where the planes would be flying over my district. If my staff and I, who are knowledgeable about the region, are unable to decipher the maps, how is the general public supposed to know where the airplanes will be flying over their homes? The answer is that they will not, and that's just what the FAA wants.

It would be easy for the FAA to publish good maps of the area. They could use maps that are labeled with names of cities, streets and bodies of water. They could draw lines of these maps signaling precisely where the planes would be flying and at what altitude, but they chose not to do so. They chose instead to provide strangely colored maps with very few labels, so it was nearly impossible to figure out where

the planes would be routed. It is this type of complex and misleading information that makes me and my constituents distrust the FAA.

And finally, let me say the agency has deliberately manipulated information that it is giving out to be public. For example, my office sent in over 25 pages of comments from over 60 constituents. We also sent in a petition signed by nearly 100 local residents, and finally, we sent 237 pages of a transcript from a public town hall meeting I held in Rockland, which was attended by well over 1,000 people. Dozens of people spoke, not one of whom supported the plan. But the spokesperson for the FAA was quoted in the newspaper claiming they had only received five comments from affected people. Five. This is dishonest. This is unacceptable from an agency that is supposed to represent all of the people in the country.

Mr. Speaker, when the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill came to the House for a vote, I strongly supported an amendment to eliminate funding for this airspace redesign proposal. I did this, not only to express my dislike for the proposal, but also to send a message to the FAA that they cannot treat Americans this way. And I will continue fighting this.

And finally, let me say to my colleagues, this may only right now concern the northeast corridor, but if the FAA can get away with running roughshod over Members of Congress, over constituents, over Americans, they can do it in any region of the country. We need to fight this. This is wrong. If it

can happen in the northeast, it will happen all over America. We must fight this plan, and I will continue to fight it.

REVISIONS TO ALLOCATION FOR HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 306 (b) of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the budget allocations and aggregates for the House Committee on Education and Labor for fiscal years 2007, 2008, and the period of 2008 through 2012. These revisions represent adjustments to the Committee on Education and Labor's allocations and aggregates for the purposes of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended, and in response to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2669, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. Corresponding tables are attached.

Under section 211 of S. Con. Res. 21, these adjustments to the budget allocations and aggregates apply while the conference report accompanying H.R. 2669 is under consideration and will take effect upon enactment of the measure. For purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended, revised allocations made under section 211 of S. Con. Res. 21 are to be considered as allocations included in the budget resolution.

DIRECT SPENDING LEGISLATION—AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR RESOLUTION CHANGES
(Fiscal years, in millions of dollars)

House Committee	2007		2008		2008–2012 Total	
	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays
Current allocation:						
Education and Labor	13	4	-150	-145	-750	-742
Change in College Cost Reduction and Access Act (H.R. 2669):						
Education and Labor	-4,890	-4,890	-176	-842	5,754	4,888
Revised allocation:						
Education and Labor	-4,877	-4,886	-326	-987	5,004	4,146

BUDGET AGGREGATES

(On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars)

	Fiscal Year 2007	Fiscal Year 2008 ¹	Fiscal Years 2008–2012
Current Aggregates: ²			
Budget Authority	2,255,570	2,350,357	n.a.
Outlays	2,268,649	2,353,992	n.a.
Revenues	1,900,340	2,015,841	11,137,671
Change in College Cost Reduction and Access Act (H.R. 2669):			
Budget Authority	-4,890	-176	n.a.
Outlays	-4,890	-842	n.a.
Revenues	0	0	0
Revised Aggregates:			
Budget Authority	2,250,680	2,350,181	n.a.
Outlays	2,263,759	2,353,150	n.a.
Revenues	1,900,340	2,015,841	11,137,671

n.a. = Not applicable because annual appropriations Acts for fiscal years 2009 through 2012 will not be considered until future sessions of Congress.
¹ Pending action by the House Appropriations Committee on spending covered by section 207(d)(1)(E) (overseas deployments and related activities), resolution assumptions are not included in the current aggregates.
² Excludes emergency amounts exempt from enforcement in the budget resolution.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1615

THE TEXAS/MEXICO BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, last week I got to go down to the west Texas town of El Paso, that town that Marty Robbins sang that famous ballad about. It was one of my several trips to the Texas/Mexico border since I've been in Congress, now almost a dozen times down along the Rio Grande River.

The Texas border with Mexico, the river border, is 1,248 miles long. That doesn't mean much, but it's the same

distance from New York City to Kansas City. And I spent last week in two of those counties, the furthest west county, El Paso County, and the second county to the east, Hudspeth County.

I met with the Sheriff's Department in El Paso County, and Sheriff Leo Samaniego and his chief deputy, Jimmy Apodaca and Public Information Officer Rick Clancy, all El Paso natives, took me around the area of El Paso city and the County of El Paso. I'd like to describe the scene that I saw there.

In El Paso, El Paso is a community of about 500,000 people. Across the Rio Grande River is Juarez, Mexico, a community of over 2 million individuals. Juarez, unlike some border towns, is a thriving area. The economy is booming. And across the city of El Paso, on the Rio Grande River, there is an 18-mile fence. And let me describe that fence between Mexico and the United States. The Rio Grande River is to the south. The next thing you see is green

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

space, it's primarily dirt, for about 200 yards. And then there is a fence, a fence that protects the canal that runs on the northern side of the Rio Grande River. You see, the canal has more water in it sometimes than the Rio Grande River does. And it's a manmade canal. It's full of water most of the time. So there's a fence on each side of the canal.

Then there is a road that the Border Patrol patrols, and then there is yet one more fence before the highway there in the city of El Paso. And this fence has been there for some time. And along that 18-mile stretch in the city of El Paso about every quarter of a mile on the road, the Border Patrol road, there is a Border Patrol vehicle. And we saw numerous of those vehicles while I was there those several days. And it seems to me that area is very well protected, and no one crosses into the United States because of those three fences, the canal, and the presence of the Border Patrol.

Before the fence was there, the border was basically wide open and people came right across into El Paso and dodged traffic there on the main streets. According to the sheriff's department, since the fence has been built in the city of El Paso, crime in El Paso has dropped 60 percent. So the Border Patrol, working with the local law enforcement, seems to do a good job of keeping people, especially criminals who want to come in and commit crime in El Paso city and flee back to Juarez, from coming into the town. The situation is somewhat different as you move on further down the river.

Before I mention that, I would like to mention a couple of things that I did observe. In the mornings we went out to the several crossings into the United States, the legal crossings, and observed people coming in from Mexico to the United States. At about 6:15 in the morning, very early, was when these photographs were taken. Now, these photographs were taken by the Rio Grande River, and turning around, these photographs are taken of students going into El Paso city. And you will notice they have on school uniforms. This individual is even carrying a set of golf clubs that he brought from home, I suspect, to go to school. Here are some kids down here earlier in the morning, and they also have their backpacks, their school uniforms, and they are headed into the United States.

How do we know they were school students? Well, many of them were wearing the T-shirts of the colors of the elementary school, purple and blue and green and red, or gray. And hundreds of these kids cross the border into the United States every day from Mexico to go to school in the United States. At the end of the day, all of these kids, some of them escorted by their parents, cross back over into Juarez, Mexico, to go home. And this is a daily occurrence when school is in session.

It seems to me that the United States is funding the education of for-

eign nationals that not only don't live here; they live somewhere else and come to our schools all at the expense of taxpayers in the United States. People who pay their taxes, live here legally, whether citizens or not, fund the education system for people in some other nation on a daily basis.

I went to some of the local high schools and noticed how some of the students would drive up in their vehicles and they would have Mexican license plates on their vehicles. Two apparently had crossed the border that morning, coming into the United States, going to American high schools, and turning around at the end of the day and going back home. It seems to me that this ought not to be.

The sheriff's department tells me that about 40 percent of the El Paso school system is made up of citizens from Mexico that come across each day into the United States. Statistics are hard to find. The El Paso school district seems to disagree with that.

And you will notice these aren't poor kids coming over. These are kids that are just basically middle-class kids coming to the United States. And we took numerous photographs of those kids. Here are some of those just for your benefit.

But as we moved out of the city of El Paso, which, like I said, seemed to be a secure place for basically illegal traffic coming in except for maybe situations like where the ports of entry are not screened or protected very well by the border protectors, there seems to be no presence of the Border Patrol outside the city of El Paso throughout the rest of the county. Let me try to explain that area.

This is a map of a partial area of the towns and locales that I went to last week as a guest of the sheriff's department. You will notice up here in the far western portion of Texas that borders Mexico is the city of El Paso, this yellow area here. The city of El Paso, like I said, has that 18-mile fence. As soon as you get out of the city of El Paso and go down to the county line of El Paso, things are a lot different and the presence of the Border Patrol was a lot different, in my opinion.

First of all, of course, there is no fence that was built like the one that I just described. As soon as you get out of the city of El Paso, there's no fence of any type.

So I traveled along with the sheriff's department of El Paso County to these different small little towns along the border, border towns. Fabens, Texas, we all heard about Fabens, Texas, where the Border Patrol officers got arrested and convicted for trying to apprehend a drug smuggler. That's a different story for another time. And these other small towns all along the border.

The way the situation is on the border and how I will describe it is to make it clear on how easy it is to cross into the United States. Of course, there's the Rio Grande River. Depend-

ing on where you go, there is sometimes not even water in the Rio Grande River. And as soon as you cross the Rio Grande into the United States, there is a Texas highway, Highway 20, that runs the length of El Paso County and part of the next county, Hudspeth County. That road is about 3 miles from the border. And then you go an additional 2 miles along the border, this entire area here, and there is Interstate 10 that travels all the way from Florida through Texas to California. So it is about 5 miles from the border to Interstate Highway 10.

The area is flat. The area has brush, and it's low brush and it's thick brush, very easy to hide in that area. And at night you can see above that brush for miles. You can see from the Rio Grande River all the way to the interstate where all of the vehicles are traveling up and down the interstate.

So we visited these little small villages in El Paso County and talked to some of the individuals that were there, that lived there, that have lived there, their families, for generations. And this was probably the most, shall I say, expressive bunch of people that I have ever met. These farmers and ranchers that live on the Rio Grande River on the Texas side, the American side, and what they are going through and their property has been tampered with because the Federal Government doesn't secure the border. These ranchers, these villagers, they all live right on the Rio Grande River. They live between the river and Interstate 10. Some of them live south of Highway 20, right on the river. And I met with one of those locals, and he said that he felt like our own government has deserted the ranchers and farmers in the rural areas of our country. He said he waits sometimes a long time for the Border Patrol to show up when they are called.

And here is the reason for that: it would seem to me the Border Patrol ought to patrol the border, which is the Rio Grande River. The Border Patrol, it seems to me, ought to be on the border to protect the border. But most of the time they are not on the border. They are on Interstate 10, which is 5 miles from the border, driving up and down that area. Well, if people get to Interstate 10, they are already in the United States. And if they can cross into the United States, it's very easy to get picked up on Interstate 10 or even Highway 20 here and dispersed into the United States.

So what happens is, because of this policy of keeping the Border Patrol on Interstate 10 for the most part, you leave these ranchers, these farmers, and these people who live in these small villages and towns in no-man's land. And I visited in many of these small villages and these very small homes on the American side, and I was shocked to see the bars on the windows and how the people have tried to protect their property from just the criminal element that crosses into the

United States because they are, in their opinion, without adequate protection.

We need to enforce the border on the border, not have a policy that puts the Border Patrol 5 miles from the border on Interstate 10. And, of course, that is what the farmers and the ranchers said as well.

It was interesting to hear from these farmers and ranchers, and they would talk to me. They all met together in one of their farmhouses and talked for several, several hours on this tremendous issue. And they said that they see everybody coming across, that the days and times have changed. It used to be that this border was basically fairly open. I mean by that there would be crossings on both sides, Americans into Mexico, Mexicans into the United States. There would be landowners on both sides who would do business with each other. But those days are over. The people coming over now, according to these farmers and ranchers, are criminals. Not all of them, but many of them are. And they destroy their property. They destroy the vehicles that they have. They steal their property.

And we have heard much about a virtual fence. A virtual fence. What is a virtual fence? It means there is no fence, but there are cameras that watch the border. And I will give you an example of how the virtual fence works along this area. There are cameras, and some of those are maintained and monitored. And on three different occasions, I saw through a vision in heat sensor cameras illegals coming into the United States across the border. The Border Patrol was notified to come to those areas and pick up these people bringing in whatever, drugs, or just coming into the United States.

In one instance the Border Patrol took 45 minutes to get to the location. They were being directed by the person watching the camera to where the illegals had crossed, and they were within 30 feet of them and still couldn't see them because, you see, that brush is so thick. And they were hiding 30 feet away, and finally the Border Patrol left that area. And those particular three individuals that were hiding in the brush had on baggy clothes, the kind that drug smugglers bring in when they pack their bodies with drugs to smuggle into the United States.

Let me mention this about the Border Patrol. I think the Border Patrol agents that work on our border do as good a job as our government will let them do. They are fine people. But they have to follow the policies of somebody else, I think probably people here in Washington, DC, maybe folks that have never even been to the border. So they do what they are told to do, and they patrol the area they are told to patrol. It would seem to me that we ought to have our Border Patrol working more hand in hand with the locals, the sheriff's department, and patrolling closer to the border.

But the virtual fence, it's virtual all right. People are still able to cross in through that virtual fence.

It is interesting that the sheriffs and the deputy sheriffs that work out there, they are a little different than the Border Patrol. Like I said, nothing against the Border Patrol. We need them. We need more of them. We need more boots on the ground, probably more boots on the ground than we do other things. But the sheriffs' deputies and the sheriffs, they all grew up there. They all are from there. They know the people who ought to be there and the people who are from some other place. So we certainly need to use them as well.

The farmers, what do they grow down there in southwest Texas anyway? They used to grow cotton. They don't do that anymore. But this whole area here has pecan orchards, and you will drive down by the Rio Grande River, once again south of Interstate 10, and you will see pecan orchards. Pecan orchards, that's what they grow. But they are orchards that have to be irrigated. And the problem the farmers have is that so many people are crossing across their orchards that they are tearing up their crops. They say on an average they have, each one of them, four to five groups of anywhere from 30 to 50 people a day crossing their farm orchards, in many cases tearing up the property.

But let me tell you some of the experiences that they have had. One farmer noticed that there were some illegal people coming across his land. He goes out and he apprehends them, holds them for the Border Patrol. It turned out that these two individuals apparently were from Honduras. They are called OTMs in the vernacular, "other than Mexicans," because, you see, everybody is crossing in. We shouldn't just say things about Mexico. It's not just illegals from Mexico; it's from many other countries, including Honduras.

□ 1630

So he holds them for the Border Patrol. The Border Patrol comes and arrests these two individuals, takes them out of his custody, takes them over and turns them into the immigration services. One thing leads to another and they are released on their own recognition to come back for the immigration hearing sometime later. You see, that's what happens to many OTMs. If you are "other than Mexican," you're not held, detained and deported. You're held for a while, and because there are not enough detention facilities, they're released on their word to come back for their immigration hearing, deportation hearing, shall I say. It would not surprise us that most of those people never come back for that hearing.

But anyway, these two individuals are apprehended; they're released from custody. And guess what? Two days later, this farmer had his pecan orchard burned to the ground. I wonder

who did that? You see, it's ironic and silly to arrest these people from other countries, no matter where they are, hold them and release them back into the community, especially when they commit crimes, and most of them never appear back at that court hearing.

There are farmers and ranchers down there that don't want to leave their land. But I will tell you this, they are mad, they are angry, and as many of them said, they are disappointed that, in their opinion, and I will quote one of them, that the American Government has written off the rural farmer along the border. Because of whatever reason, there is no security in their opinion. Rural America has been given away by outlawry by our government, and this ought not to be.

So after we went through with the sheriff's deputies in El Paso County, wonderful people, we went over to Hudspeth County, which is the adjoining county. Most Americans have never heard of Hudspeth County. Let me describe it for you. It's 5,000 square miles. It's the size of Delaware and Rhode Island put together, and it's just one county in Texas. It has 100 miles that borders the Rio Grand River, so it has 100 miles of border.

On patrol in Hudspeth County is Sheriff Arvin West, and what a right-thinking American he is. He has 12 deputies to patrol this whole area. In other words, on any given shift, any time of the day, there are three deputies that patrol the entire county that borders Mexico. Now, you notice, Mr. Speaker, part of Interstate 10 is very close to the border, 5 miles, along with Highway 20, which is 3 miles from the border. And then about halfway down at Sierra Blanca, the road changes and it goes on off through Houston to Florida.

But this area here, of course, is an area that we went through. The sheriff's deputies, Sheriff Arvin West and his individuals that work for him, took me through that area. And we traveled right on the border. There is a dirt road on the American side.

Let me mention this: you see this road over here, Highway 2, Mexican Highway 2. Of course you see it runs along the border as well on the other side. And so there's a dirt road right on the border. And we traveled down this dirt road, sandy road, the river is right next to us. And we traveled for 30 miles on this road, took about 3 hours, before we saw one Border Patrol agent. It surprises me that we weren't that quiet going down that area, and the first time we saw a Border Patrol agent was 30 miles down river where we had been traveling.

But let me tell you about Arvin West. Arvin West, sheriff of this county, makes \$36,000 a year. His 12 deputies, who are all patriots, who most of them are Hispanic, make \$26,000 a year. But to a person, they are determined to secure their border because of the crime problem in the United States for failure to secure the border.

You see, they have to patrol all these little towns here, Fort Hancock and McNary and Sierra Blanca. These are all their little small towns that are in their county. And these towns have crime problems because of that crime coming from Mexico. So they want the border secure.

And let me say this at this point: this is an issue about border security, this is not an issue of immigration. That's a totally different issue. Border security is the issue, and we must, as a Nation, secure our border. And these sheriffs that live along here, the border sheriffs, each one of them believes the border should be secure because of the crime that is being committed.

But we traveled down this area. And I'd like to show you or mention a couple of things that I observed. Going down the river, we stopped. This is at night, in the middle of no place. And we came across a trolley that was built across the river; now that's what I call it. It had a steel cable running from one side of the river to the other with a bucket in it, or a trolley. And apparently people can go back and forth across that trolley into one country or the other. And that disturbed me to some extent. But we then traveled down and saw something else that I think was a little more disturbing.

This photograph here, Mr. Speaker, is a foot bridge taken on the American side, obviously, over into Mexico. You notice it's a steel foot bridge. It has rails on it. It probably would meet OSHA standards. And the only thing that goes across there are people. But you notice, of course, Mr. Speaker, how the land is trampled down on the Mexican side, how there is trash over here, and on this side there is land trampled down as well. There is in Hudspeth County. And there are 10 of these in the area. Who built them? They're still trying to find that out. Is it guarded? It is patrolled? Are people there watching to see if people come into the United States? No. These foot bridges exist for the sole purpose of letting people, apparently, cross into the United States. If they serve some other purpose, I don't know what that is.

But that disturbs me to some extent. Here we have in El Paso basically three fences and a canal trying to protect the United States from people coming in illegally. And we just moved to the county next to it and we see these things that are built to allow foot traffic to come into the United States. This ought not to be.

And of course once they come into the United States, they can see the interstate, which is just 5 miles away, and make their way up to the interstate, get picked up by someone flashing their lights at them, and move on down wherever they wish to go into the far most areas of the United States. This is a bridge that is a convenience for people who wish to cross into the United States illegally.

On down the river and up the river there are many places where the river

is low and there are washouts, where water has come from either Mexico or the United States to go into the Rio Grande River. And these are perfect places that are used by drug smugglers to smuggle drugs into the United States from Mexico. Once again, once they cross into the United States, they make their way, under routes that they have planned, to the interstate and move those drugs east, west and north.

But it was interesting to see that there were places where the roadbed, or shall I say the riverbed looked like it had been filled in, where some vehicle had come in, Caterpillar tractor, and had smoothed down the river so that vehicles crossing into the United States wouldn't get stuck in the mud.

Now, I asked the sheriff's department about that, and they said, well, sure, every once in a while there would be a Caterpillar tractor parked on the Mexican side just sitting there. And they're sitting near these areas where drug smugglers come in, and the next day that Caterpillar bulldozer has come down there to the river bank, made a road for drug smugglers to bring drugs into the United States. And I asked Sheriff West, well, what do you do about that? He said, as soon as we see those, of course we're not down there 24 hours a day, neither is the Border Patrol, we tear up the river way so that those vehicles can't come into the United States. But a few days later, once again some bulldozer has come in and laid the river smoother and drier so that vehicles can come into the United States, sitting there waiting to move the illegal narcotics into our country.

You know, drug trafficking is a major reason we ought to secure the border. Those people who come here to do us harm is another reason to secure the border, whether those are just basic outlaws or whether those are people who wish to set up cells at the right time to do this nation damage. And in little area here that I'm talking about, well, it's a big area that I'm talking about, makes it easy for them to come into the United States.

Now, Sheriff West doesn't have much of a budget. In fact, he has such a small budget that he really doesn't have any vehicles. It's hard for me to understand how a sheriff's department can operate without vehicles, but here's what he does and many of the other sheriffs along the Texas-Mexico border. When they capture a drug dealer, they confiscate his vehicle, and by law they're allowed to keep that vehicle after they go through the proper channels to seize it. So most of his vehicles have come to the sheriff's department with the best of the drug dealers. And so they're driving drug dealer vehicles, SUVs, very nice vehicles that they have confiscated from drug dealers. And those are the vehicles, the patrol vehicles, most of them trucks, pick-up trucks or SUVs so they can patrol up and down this entire county. They've even seized an 18-wheeler and put the sheriff's logo on it.

You know, I admire people like Sheriff West, the sheriffs along the border who will do what they need to do to secure the dignity of the United States.

The sheriff's department also mentioned to me about something we've heard about here in Congress, I've never seen it myself, but we hear reports about the Mexican military coming into the United States for different reasons, all those reasons are probably no good, and whether that's true or not.

On this road, on Interstate 10, there is basically nothing on Interstate 10 except vehicles, mostly trucks, but there is a massive truck stop on Interstate 10. And it is not uncommon, according to the sheriff's department here in Hudspeth County, to see the Mexican military wearing their uniforms going into this truck stop for whatever purpose they have. It's interesting that they say, of course, that it's not unusual for drugs to be accompanied by the Mexican military into portions of the United States.

So if we have the military from another country coming across our borders without our permission, I would hope that that would disturb Homeland Security to some extent, that they would prevent that from happening, or at least quit denying that it occurs.

So apparently to me it seems we have moved the U.S. border from the Rio Grande River to Interstate 10, 5 miles inward. We have left all this area as no-man's land. You live there at your own risk of drug dealers and criminals coming across, and this ought not to be.

It's unfortunate that this situation occurs, but it is the duty of our country, of course, to make sure it doesn't occur any longer. The failure of the Federal Government to secure the border allows everybody to come in here. We get the good, we get the bad, and we get the ugly, and we're getting a lot of bad and ugly because this border is not secure. So we secure our border. We do what we need to do. We have to have the moral will to secure the border. If we did, the border would be secure. We secure the borders of other nations. We secure the Korean border. Why don't we secure the American border? We secure the borders of other nations throughout the world. Why don't we secure the American border?

Third World countries protect their borders better than we do. Why? Because of all of those political reasons and all of those people that have political agendas keep our government from doing what it ought to do, and the first duty of government is to secure the nation. And I would hope Homeland Security would go down to the border and see it the way it really is.

Mr. Speaker, we hear about violence on the border. I heard a lot about it down there. We don't get too many news reports about the violence on the Texas-Mexico border or anywhere else along the southern border with Mexico, but I would like to read a dispatch

from the Hudspeth County Sheriff's Office on September 5, which was 2 days ago. This dispatch reads: At approximately 9:56 a.m., the U.S. Border Patrol at Fort Hancock Station, there's Fort Hancock, that's a little bitty place with just a handful of people living there, the U.S. Border Patrol at Fort Hancock Station called the Hudspeth County Sheriff's Office requesting assistance from the sheriff's office and highway patrol with a vehicle that was being pursued on Interstate 10. It was westbound at the 68 mile marker. So the vehicle was going this direction, headed west. The vehicle had crossed into the United States from Mexico and was loaded with approximately 800 pounds of marijuana. The vehicle was a 2005 GMC Yukon, light gold in color. The pursuit went into El Paso County, the next county over, and then turned back eastbound toward Tornillo, Texas. Hudspeth County Deputy Keith Hughes, stationed in Fort Hancock, Texas, joined in the pursuit. Deputy Hughes was able to negotiate his way to the front of the pursuing law enforcement vehicles.

The driver of the Yukon exited Interstate 10 and drove south on Acala Road toward the United States and Mexican border. Right in here, this little road. The United States Border Patrol set up road spikes on Acala Road. The driver of the Yukon hit the spikes, but continued traveling through Acala Road and Texas 20 in Hudspeth County.

Upon crossing Texas 20, the driver of the Yukon exited the vehicle and ran south to the United States and Mexican border. Deputy Hughes and the U.S. Border Patrol began a foot pursuit. The driver was captured by pursuing officers. During the foot pursuit, automatic gunfire was heard from the direction of the United States and Mexican border. Sheriff Arvin West ordered the area south of the capture site to be cleared of any persons in danger, and to seek out and find the person or persons responsible for the gunfire.

Once there were sufficient sheriff deputies on the scene, Chief Deputy Mike Doyle organized and led the deputies to the border area for the search.

□ 1645

After a thorough search of the border area south of the capture site, it was determined that the automatic gunfire came from the Mexican side of the United States-Mexico border. The Hudspeth County Sheriff's Office conducted a search of the border area alone because the agents of the United States Border Patrol were ordered not to engage at the border. And that is a dispatch that I didn't see printed in any newspaper in the United States about the violence, the drug dealers and the drug cartels along our southern border.

Mr. Speaker, it is a serious situation on the Rio Grande River. Like I said earlier, this is not an immigration issue at all. This is an issue about whether this country will secure its

borders. I wonder whether a Nation that won't secure its borders deserves to exist as a Nation. It is the duty of our government to enforce the existing law. We have pontificated in this House ever since I have been in Congress about more laws on immigration, border security, comprehensive immigration reform. Why don't we just enforce the laws we already have? It is still against the law to come into the United States without permission, regardless of the reason. People from other countries don't believe we will enforce the rule of law in this country.

Otherwise, they wouldn't keep coming in the United States. And many times when they are captured, nothing happens. Our government has the duty to protect the people in this country from violence of criminals coming from other nations. Our country has the duty to protect citizens throughout the country from criminals coming from other places who we call terrorists. The next terrorist who is going to come to the United States probably is not going to fly over here and get off the airplane here at Reagan, and look around and see what damage they are going to do. They don't have to do that. They don't have to go through TSA screening. All they have to do is come across either our northern or southern border.

Mr. Speaker, our Federal Government has the duty to keep the Mexican military out of our Nation. It has no business being here for any purpose.

Mr. Speaker, many years ago, Marty Robbins wrote a song, a ballad about the west Texas town of El Paso and about how a cowboy lost his life because he was seeking the love of a Mexican lady by the name of Feleena. That ballad basically talks about the Wild West along the border and how it was violent at a time. Some things have changed along the Texas-Mexico border. There is some security. There are prosperous cities on both sides of the border. But there are other communities. These are small communities. These are small villages where real people live, too. Many live in fear of their life because our border is open. Times have changed because the type of people coming into the United States have changed. They are not all coming over here looking for work. Some of them are coming over here looking for mischief. They find that mischief. Much of that mischief is down there on the border where Americans live and legal immigrants live that are persecuted by criminals who come in to the United States.

So violence does continue on our border. It is imperative that we understand that and admit it so we can do something about it. Denying the truth is not a solution, but being openminded and realizing that, Mr. Speaker, I have only talked about two counties along the Texas-Mexico border, El Paso County and Hudspeth County. This border, like I said, is 1,250 miles long from El Paso all the way down to Brownsville. I have traveled almost the entire

length of it as a guest of the sheriffs along the border. The situation is bad along that entire area. As you travel west through Arizona and through California, you find the same problems along the border, according to those sheriffs who live there and who grew up there.

So the obligation of our government is to do something to protect the dignity and the sovereignty of the United States and make folks understand that our government will protect them, their families and their property and keep them safe from intruders who come into the United States no matter what the reason, because, you see, it is still against the law to enter the United States without the permission of the United States.

We need to mean it. We need to do something about it. We need to put more Border Patrol agents on the border. We need to use the National Guard, and if necessary, a fence in appropriate areas. It won't work everywhere. But it will work in some places. Where it is erected, it has worked.

We need to do whatever it takes to make sure that the United States is a sovereign Nation and we do not lose this country to other folks who come over here and are trying to take it away from Americans and legal immigrants.

With that, Mr. Speaker, that is just the way it is.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order speech of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is vacated for today.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BOYD (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of a family emergency.

Mr. ELLSWORTH (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official travel.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of a death in the family.

Mr. PEARCE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of official business.

Mr. REICHERT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ENGEL) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)