



Report: Trump wall to sap \$222 mil. from OR, WA drug interdiction, military construction

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February 22, 2019

SALEM, Ore. — A new report says President Donald Trump's plan to fund a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border could cost Oregon and Washington around \$222 million in Defense Department funding for military construction and anti-drug trafficking efforts.

Last Friday, Trump declared a national emergency and announced a nearly \$8 billion wall funding plan. The website Governing says the project jeopardizes about \$6 billion in funding for states.

The plan will use \$1.375 billion from Congress's Homeland Security appropriations bill and two items from Trump's own executive actions including \$600 million from the Treasury Department's drug forfeiture fund and \$2.5 billion from the Defense Department's drug interdiction program. An additional \$3.6 billion will come from the Defense Department's military construction budget, which Trump gets because he declared a national emergency.

"At this time, no decisions have been made regarding specific projects," a Defense Department spokesperson told KATU Thursday.

Governing predicts Trump's plan will take around \$12.7 million in funding from projects in Oregon and about \$209 million from projects in Washington. Around 87 percent of the money drawn from Oregon will be from military construction, Governing says. In Washington, the website says around 99 percent of the money drawn will come from military construction. In both states the rest of the money will come from drug interdiction, Governing says.

On Thursday, KATU spoke with Mark Cancian, a senior adviser for the bipartisan Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank. He worked in the Office of Management and Budget in the White House for seven years under Presidents Bush and Obama looking at Defense Department investments.

Cancian said the Defense Department allots about \$900 million a year for its drug interdiction program with about a third of the money going to the National Guard.

"The other two-thirds goes for national programs," Cancian said. "For example, liaison with foreign governments for counter-drug efforts, particularly I think with foreign militaries."

The National Guard's Counterdrug Program provided about \$200 million last year across 50 states, the territories and the District of Columbia, according to Governing.

Officials say the counterdrug program helps coordinate interagency efforts to fight drug trafficking. Last year the National Guard says it helped law enforcement agencies confiscate nearly \$11.2 billion of illicit drugs. The National Guard also says its analysts contributed to the disruption or dismantlement of more than 4,500 drug trafficking groups and helped prevent more than 3.3 million pounds of illicit drugs from reaching American communities.

In a 2015 video posted on the National Guard's YouTube channel, Lt. Col. Todd Patnesky, chief of the counterdrug program, said, "The unique skill sets and assets that we bring to the counterdrug fight uniquely solidifies National Guard Counterdrug as a critical component in the whole government concept of fighting transnational crime organizations and securing our nation's borders."

Cancian said military construction includes just about any project on a base including housing construction. He also said the construction funding Trump wants to draw from is considered unobligated.

"Unobligated funds means that Congress has appropriated the money, but the Department of Defense has not yet signed a contract to do the project," Cancian explained.

Meanwhile, attorneys general from 16 states including Oregon blasted Trump's plan to fund a wall, saying its funding threatens public safety elsewhere. They filed a lawsuit Monday claiming the president's actions violate the constitution and called them unnecessary.

"The loss of funding to conduct drug interdiction and counter-narcotic activity ... would threaten the public safety of all Oregonians," the lawsuit says. "The diversion of military construction funds will harm Oregon."

On Thursday, a KATU reporter asked the Army Corps of Engineers about another part of the lawsuit that says, "Any diversion of funds from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects in Oregon would harm Oregon's environment and could cause flooding and other dangers to the health and safety of Oregonians."

An Army Corps of Engineers spokesman referred the KATU reporter to the Defense Department, which did not immediately respond to an email seeking clarification.

Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson declined to join the lawsuit filed by other states, saying on social media:

"My legal team has been researching and preparing for the president's national emergency announcement for weeks. That said, I will not be challenging President Trump's national emergency until we confirm that budget appropriations intended for Washington State will be rerouted to fund the wall."

Meanwhile, Tara Lee, a spokeswoman for Gov. Jay Inslee, D-Washington, sent KATU the following email Thursday regarding possible impacts of Trump's wall funding plan in Washington:

"This is what we've compiled, obviously things could change. Clearly, we are not speaking for the Department of Defense or any other agency. This is based on our staff review, only.

The list of potential projects cut by the President's emergency. Implications are:

- Navy construction project at Bangor is the pier project to enhance force protection measures for resident and transiting submarine force. This affects both ballistic and fast attack sub force.
- All of the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) stuff relates to the electronic warfare fleet. NASWI is one of the only EW stations in the nation. JBLM is the fuel storage facility. McChord is the home to 62nd air wing and the 446th air wing. Together they operate 50 C-17 Globemaster aircraft that provide airlift for operational forces. The fuel storage facility is an integral component in having sufficient fuel reserve for the unit to conduct its operational missions. These units do everything from the Antarctic missions to rapid deployment for troops, to humanitarian missions around the world."

The U.S. Border Patrol says it apprehended 396,579 people at the southwest border in fiscal year 2018. That's less than a quarter of the 1,643,679 people apprehended in the year apprehensions peaked in fiscal year 2000.

Using U.S. Border Patrol statistics USA Today says 90 percent of heroin seized along the border, 88 percent of cocaine, 87 percent of methamphetamine, and 80 percent of fentanyl in the first 11 months of fiscal year 2018 was caught in smuggling attempts at legal crossing points.

Four academic studies show that illegal immigration does not increase the prevalence of violent crime or drug and alcohol problems. The studies were conducted by researchers at the University of Wisconsin, Purdue University, the Libertarian Cato Institute and the University of Texas among other institutions.

In January, Oregon's Department of Corrections said 910 of Oregon's inmates (6.2 percent) were on a hold from ICE, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. And the DOC said 50.2 percent of them were in prison for sex crimes including sex abuse (200 cases), rape (175 cases) and sodomy (101 cases). The agency said 132 illegal immigrants are in prison for homicide.

The latest statistics from the Pew Research Center, a non-partisan think tank, show there are about 130,000 undocumented immigrants in Oregon. The group says they make up 3.2 percent of the state's population and that their numbers peaked nationwide in 2007.