



Congress Proposes Funding for Border Wall

Corey Olson

July 13, 2017

Republicans in Congress are looking to begin paying for President Trump's proposed border wall with Mexico...at least part of it. This week, the House Appropriations Committee filed aspending bill that includes an additional \$1.6 billion in next year's Homeland Security budget to pay for construction of the border wall. The bill matches the amount requested by the President in his 2018 budget submission. That request included funding for dozens of miles of fencing and levees in the Rio Grande Valley sector in South Texas.

While the \$1.6 billion would expand border fencing in Texas, it falls far short of completing the massive border wall the President called for during his campaign last year. "It's only going to fund at most a few dozen miles of fences and levees along the border," says David Bier, immigration policy analyst with the Cato Institute. "We're not talking about the giant, 30-foot cement wall that President Trump proposed on the campaign trail, and we're not talking about a border wall across the entire border either."

Indeed, the cost of building a complete wall along the southern border has been estimated at more than \$20 billion. Bier believes that money could be better spent to reduce illegal immigration. "It's not clear why a fence would be better suited to the task than having an agent who could actually track someone down, or a vehicle that could be used to transport that agent to the location someone's trying to cross," he says. "We have really no evidence that this (wall) is going to reduce illegal immigration compared to these alternatives."