

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 27, 2026

Markwayne Mullin  
Secretary of Department of Homeland Security (DHS)  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

We write in staunch opposition to the proposed border barrier and detection technology in Big Bend National Park, Big Bend Ranch State Park, the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, and Amistad National Recreation area as you consider public comment. This proposal threatens preservation of one of America's crown jewels, Texas' largest state park, and the state's only congressionally-designated Wild & Scenic River. Construction and maintenance of a border wall segment and the associated roads, secondary barriers, power lines, towers, and lighting will disrupt natural biodiversity, river dynamics subject to routine flash flooding, and one of the darkest night sky areas in the world.

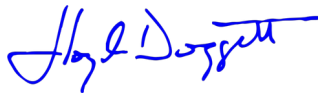
Big Bend National Park and the surrounding region have unique scenery and wildlife that Texans treasure. Rich in history and flora and fauna, Big Bend is a unique treasure in our National Parks System, and we must protect its wild character so beloved by over half a million people who visit a year and contribute greatly to the regional economy. We are concerned that DHS has already announced waivers for 28 federal environmental and regulatory laws to expedite wall construction in and around Big Bend Ranch State Park. This displays a complete disregard for conservation and protections for the natural beauty and resources within the Big Bend region. Border wall construction will create new dangers by disrupting the flow of the Rio Grande River and likely increase deadly flash flood risks. Furthermore, construction will deplete natural resources, decreasing water levels in the desert to supply water for cement production. New permanent, obtrusive physical structures may choke wildlife corridors and produce light pollution—changing the intrinsic nature of Big Bend that many Americans cherish.

Furthermore, Big Bend National Park welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, the principal support of the local and regional economy. In 2024 alone, National Park visitors contributed \$63.7 million to surrounding communities. Local small business owners continue to raise concerns about their ability to stay in business should DHS destroy Big Bend's wilderness and scenery with a wall and invasive detection technologies.

This proposal is not grounded in reality—Big Bend’s mountainous terrain, and equally rough terrain in Mexico naturally discourage border crossings. This is the hardest place in Mexico to reach the border. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) already maintains a presence in the park, and works closely, and constructively with both the National Park Service and the county sheriffs in the area on security matters. Congress regularly exempts Big Bend from federally funded border wall developments in the annual appropriations process. In fact, five West Texas county sheriffs have opposed this proposed construction and assert that current practices are effective in the region. Introducing new detection technologies and a wall will serve no purpose beyond environmental destruction.

We urge you to fully abandon construction plans for border barriers in Big Bend National Park and surrounding state and national park and protected lands, while restoring waived environmental protections. We further urge you to consult with the state and federal land managers and with local law enforcement, who know the area best, on the design and implementation of any additional detection technology, to assure that whatever is actually deployed is protective of the environment and minimally intrusive. Construction of permanent walls, new roads, towers, and lighting will only lead to destruction and is completely unnecessary and economically destructive. We must preserve Big Bend’s natural scenic beauty as well as the economy and livelihoods of the people who call West Texas home.

Sincerely,



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Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



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Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



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Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress



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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



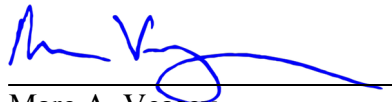
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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



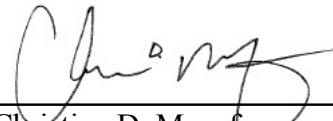
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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



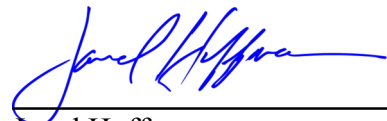
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Christian D. Menefee  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress



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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



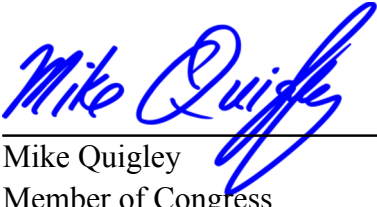
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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



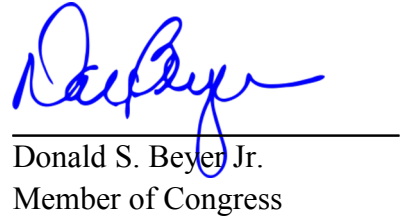
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Adelta S. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress