



# **Durbin questions National Guard Chief on troop deployment to the border**

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, today questioned General Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard, on the Trump Administration's deployment of National Guard troops to the Southwest border. At the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee hearing, Durbin pressed General Lengyel on the financial costs of the deployment as well as the impact on readiness.

“Many of us were also taken aback when the President tweeted he was deploying the National Guard to the border. The President’s claim that we face a crisis at our Southwest border is simply not supported by any evidence. And it is particularly ironic when the President has said repeatedly that illegal border crossings are at an all-time low,” Durbin said. “I’m concerned this Administration is diverting limited Department of Defense resources to the border to carry out a deportation agenda. Instead, the Administration should rethink its proposal to dramatically cut foreign aid to Central America – aid that would help address the violence driving women, children, and others to our border.”

On April 2, 2018, Durbin and Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) wrote to Department of Defense (DoD) Secretary James Mattis requesting his legal review of DoD’s authority to use funds appropriated in the final Fiscal Year 2018 bill to construct a Southwest border wall. The letter lays out the case that DoD has no authority to build a border wall, with or without a reprogramming, because the President did not ask for, and the Congress did not provide, any funds that could be legally used for that purpose.