



Congressman John Shimkus: Walls Work

by John Shimkus

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WASHINGTON D.C. - The morning after President Trump's Oval Office Address last week, I went to the floor of the House to urge my colleagues to get to work on fully reopening the government and securing the border.

[WATCH: Shimkus Calls on Congress to Act on Border Security](#)

Here's the bottom line: **Walls work.** That's not just my opinion. And that's not just President Trump's opinion. That's the expert opinion of the Department of Homeland Security and the Border Patrol. In fact, even [President Obama's Border Patrol chief has urged President Trump to "stay the course"](#) in this fight to secure the border.

We know walls work because we've seen them work. Sections of the border where fencing and walls have already been built have seen significant decreases in illegal crossings. For example:

- barriers near San Diego (built in 1992) reduced illegal crossings 92% over the past 23 years;
- barriers near El Paso (built in 1993) reduced illegal crossings 72% in one year and 95% over 22 years;
- barriers near Tucson (built in 2000) reduced illegal crossings 90% over 15 years; and
- barriers near Yuma (built in 2005) reduced illegal crossings 95% over 9 years.

Existing barriers like those listed above cover 654 miles of our 2,000 mile Southern border. Those sections weren't called "immoral" by the Democrats who supported them before, so why now are the 234 miles of additional barriers sought by President Trump and Republicans suddenly so controversial?

Maybe it's because leading Democrats and their allies in the media have portrayed this debate as being simply about a wall and nothing else. That's just silly. The reality is the Trump Administration has also requested — and I agree Congress should provide — additional resources to hire more Border Patrol agents, more ICE personnel, and more immigration judges, as well as more tools to deter and detect narcotics, weapons, and other materials crossing our borders.

In his address last week, President Trump reminded us that we don't build walls because we hate the people on the other side, but because we love the people on the inside. He's right. America is an extraordinarily compassionate country, and Americans are a generous people. That's why we welcome legal immigrants and, after careful vetting, those legitimately fleeing war and oppression as refugees. We only ask that those who come here respect our laws and contribute to our society — just as we expect any natural born American citizen to do as well.

Lastly but certainly not least, I'm thinking of our loyal and hardworking federal employees who are caught in the middle of this debate and the challenge we face in Washington. As with other lapses in appropriations, those federal workers will receive their pay when the government is fully reopened. For their sake, and for the safety of our country and the integrity of our borders, it's time for Congress to get to work.