

Congressman Childers Returns from U.S.-Mexico Border

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Childers Comes Home with Greater Understanding of Challenges Facing U.S. Border Security

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Washington, DC - Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) yesterday returned from the U.S.-Mexico border. This weekend, the Congressman traveled to El Paso and San Diego, where he met with representatives of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to gain first-hand information about the importance and challenges of successful U.S. border security. During his trip, the Congressman gained in-depth knowledge of U.S. border control efforts, and had the opportunity to speak with Border Patrol members, observe check point operations, and visit fence construction sites.

"Immigration control is a serious problem affecting national security and our economy, and more needs to be done to improve border regulation," said Congressman Childers. "This was a very enlightening trip, and an incredible opportunity to gain a first-hand, in-depth understanding of U.S. border security operations. I am extremely impressed with our border agents and support their continued efforts to protect American interests.

"I will continue to work hard to ensure that North Mississippi wages and tax dollars go into North Mississippians' pockets when they need it most, and am committed to being one of the 435 members of Congress who steps up to the plate to crack down on illegal immigration."

During a press conference call on Saturday, Congressman Childers discussed his travels, including extensive conversations with Border Patrol members. In El Paso, the Congressman spoke with head Border Patrol agents, who laid out the following three-prong approach to protecting the U.S. border:

Increase the number of border patrol personnel. Thousands of agents who have been approved to work at the border are currently waiting on the ground because Congress has yet to authorize their funding.

Improve technology. Border agents need better, more up-to-date surveillance equipment, including cameras, computers, and software.

Expand infrastructure on the border. To successfully protect the border, both stationary and moveable fences need to be built. A stationary fence is critical to controlling entry-points and high-traffic areas, while a moveable fence is necessary to crack down on drug traffickers who use ATVs and off-road vehicles that can get past stationary structures.

"After having spoken with lead Border Patrol agents, I have become a strong proponent of this three-prong approach to enforcing our borders," said Congressman Childers. "While the fence is necessary and effective, it is not a comprehensive answer. A plan that calls for more agents, upgraded technology, and expanded infrastructure addresses the many challenges involved in protecting our borders, and I strongly support taking these necessary steps."

Congressman Childers has also urged that the following action be taken during previous discussions pertaining to border security and immigration control:

- Gain control of the border not only as a matter of immigration policy, but also as a matter of national security.
- Crackdown on businesses and corporations that exploit illegal workers.
- Stop giving illegal immigrants government benefits.
- Send illegal immigrants who are convicted criminals back home for good. The Congressman is an opponent of amnesty for illegal immigrants.

Since taking office in May, Congressman Childers has initiated and supported legislative efforts to prevent the employment of illegal immigrants. The Congressman recently introduced legislation to ensure that employment funding authorized by the National Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act (H.R. 3999) goes directly to American citizens. The Childers Amendment, which prohibits these funds from being used for the employment of illegal aliens, won overwhelming bipartisan support in the House last month by a vote of 416-1.

The Congressman has also signed on as an original cosponsor of the Employee Verification Amendment Act (H.R. 6633), which reauthorizes the DHS Basic Pilot electronic eligibility verification program, also known as E-Verify, for an additional five years. E-Verify is an internet-based system that can be used to verify the employment eligibility of newly-hired employees by checking an employee's Social Security number and citizenship status against the Social Security database.

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