## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS

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## Natural Resources Republicans Confirm Another Brutal Murder that Took Place on Federal Lands Near Southern Border

**WASHINGTON D.C.** – Following a recent <u>string</u> of <u>violence</u> on federal lands along our Southern Border, Natural Resources Committee Republicans today received documents confirming that yet another brutal murder took place on federal lands. Pima County Sheriff's Department documents verify that the murder of Mario Rivera-Rivera, whose body was discovered last November, occurred 25 yards from the US-Mexico border in the Organ Pipe National Monument.

In a seemingly execution style murder, the body of Mario Rivera-Rivera was described in police reports with "duct tape wrapped around his head, covering the forehead, the nose, and the upper lip area...both hands were behind his back...wrapped with duct tape...a gunshot wound on the right ear, which exited in the front of his face."

Federal lands along the border have become <u>increasingly dangerous</u> due to the enforcement of environmental restrictions that prohibit the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) from accessing these areas. As a result, these federal lands have become highways for criminals, drug smugglers and human traffickers. In fact, Organ Pipe National Monument has become so unsafe that the National Parks Service has an entire <u>webpage</u> dedicated to safety issues due to border violence.

"It is an outrage that our federal lands have turned into an interstate for drug smugglers, thieves, murderers and rapists. These national parks, monuments and public lands should be treasures for all to enjoy, not playgrounds for violent criminals. Visitors to these areas should not have to fear for their safety, yet it's well documented that much of these federal lands are unsafe for tourists and federal land managers to enter. No one would stand for this violence and lawlessness at Yellowstone or Yosemite National Parks, yet the Federal Government continues to take an 'out of sight, out of mind' position to our public lands on the Southern Border. U.S. Border Patrol needs to have operational control of our borders to ensure public safety, national security and environmental integrity," said Congressman Rob Bishop (R-UT), Ranking Republican on the House Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands and Chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus.

House Republicans, led by Rep. Bishop, have introduced legislation (<u>H.R. 5016</u>) that would give USBP operational control of the border and ensure that the U.S. Department of Interior does not impede or restrict Border Patrol from effectively doing their to job to secure the border.

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