

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

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## Groups Call for Passage of Republican Legislation to Enhance Border Security on Federal Lands

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today the House National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on H.R. [1505](#), the *National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act*, legislation introduced by Subcommittee Chairman Rob Bishop (UT-01) to enhance border security on federal lands. H.R. 1505 would ensure the Border Patrol, not federal land managers, have operational control of our borders and are not prohibited from doing their jobs due to bureaucratic red tape.

*“Too many of our public lands along the southern U.S. border are overrun with criminal activity, including drug trafficking and human smuggling. Policies created with the intent of protecting the environment have accomplished the exact opposite. In fact, the very environmental regulations that are supposed to protect our public lands are enabling severe environmental degradation. The land is being harmed and our national security is threatened, and the status quo will remain until we give the Border Patrol the access they need to do their jobs. This legislation will remedy the Border Patrol’s checkerboard access, ensuring they are able to maintain a routine presence throughout the entire border region. This is an essential first step toward achieving full operational control of the border,”* **said Chairman Bishop.**

### **What They’re Saying about H.R. 1505:**

#### **National Association of Former Border Patrol Officers**

“This bill is brilliant in its simplicity and is written in such a manner that anyone can understand that its purpose is to send a resounding message that the people of the United States are serious about establishing complete border security.”

#### **National Border Patrol Council, Local 2544, Tucson, Arizona**

“For years, the federal government has used environmental regulations to block access for our Border Patrol agents to the over 20 million acres of federal land along the U.S./Mexican Border. Time and time again our Agents are unable to access these areas, whether for vehicle patrol or to place much needed surveillance equipment. This lack of access has resulted in an increase in criminal activities such as drug smuggling and human trafficking. It has also handicapped and endangered the Border Patrol Agents who are expected to secure these areas day in and day out. H.R. 1505 will give our Agents the tools they need to properly secure the border and protect themselves from criminals intent on doing harm.”

**Gary Trasher - Arizona Cattle Growers Association, Public Lands Council and National Cattlemen's Beef Association**

"It is an important piece of legislation needed to protect the sovereignty and security of the border region, its federal lands and refuges, as well as ultimately the nation's security."

**Motorcycle Industry Council**

"This bill will provide security for the thousands of riders who use or members' products on public lands near the border...there is a real threat to those who lawfully recreate on public lands near the border....thank for introducing H.R. 1505 to help secure our border and to help ensure the safety of our riders."

**Jena Baker McNeill, Senior Policy Analyst, The Heritage Foundation**

"Without full access to border lands for the Border Patrol, no amount of manpower, weapons, or other technology will help get control of the border...Wouldn't it make more sense to give the Border Patrol full access so that lands are environmentally preserved and that Americans can safely enjoy them? Instead, without action, the Obama Administration is enticing lawbreakers to make these lands the next big corridor for smuggling...The National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act (HR 1505), would "prohibit the Department of Interior (DOI) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) from using environmental regulations to hinder U.S. Border Patrol from securing [the] border on federal lands." Getting serious about drug trafficking and controlling the border requires better interagency cooperation than what is currently at work. If the Obama Administration is serious about getting control of the border, it should take a hard look at this problem."

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