

THE BORDER WALL

Building a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border would be divisive, ineffective, and costly.

7 FACTS ABOUT THE BORDER WALL:

1.

A border wall is unnecessary.

There is already a barrier that restricts people and vehicles along 653 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. This is a 444 percent increase in miles covered since 2005. The Rio Grande river forms a natural barrier along most of the remaining miles.

2.

Building a border wall would be expensive and a waste of resources.

The Trump administration's latest proposal would construct 722 miles of new or replacement barriers over the next 10 years at a cost of \$18 billion. That adds up to a whopping \$25 million per mile.

3.

A border wall would not stop border crossings.

A barrier only slows down a potential border crosser for several minutes. Those several minutes make a great difference in urban areas, but in rural areas the advantage disappears. Having no fence may give a crosser a head start, but that matters little if they must cross miles of open country to reach a population center.

4.

Children and families fleeing violence will not be deterred by a border wall.

In the last three months of 2017, U.S. Customs and Border Protection noted a 21 percent increase in family units and a 7 percent increase in unaccompanied children crossing the U.S. southern border. In most cases, these migrants seek out agents for protection rather than try to evade detection. A wall would inconvenience them, but not deter them.

5.

Building a bigger wall would do little to stem the flow of drugs into the U.S.

According to the Drug Enforcement Agency, the vast majority of drugs trafficked into the United States are smuggled through legal ports of entry—in concealed departments in passenger vehicles, or hidden amidst legitimate merchandise.

6. Most Americans oppose the border wall.

A February 2017 Pew Research Center survey found 62 percent of Americans opposed building a wall along the entire border. The survey also showed that self-identified Republicans were less likely to support the wall the closer they lived to the border.

7. The border wall sends a hostile message to allies in Latin America.

The wall would carry a steep diplomatic cost, particularly in U.S. relations with Mexico. It would detract from international cooperation needed to fight against drug trafficking, terrorism, and other issues.