

White House cheers House's \$5 billion border wall bill



The White House on Wednesday backed a House spending bill that includes \$5 billion to build a border wall, saying it will pay for another 200 miles of physical barrier on the border with Mexico.

"This funding is critical to the administration's top priority, securing the nation's borders," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement.

She said the extra spending on border security was "essential to deterring, preventing, and denying illegal border crossings by would-be illegal immigrants, human traffickers, criminal aliens, child smugglers, and drug dealers."

The wall is the centerpiece of Mr. Trump's effort to reduce rampant illegal immigration across the southern border. But the administration and Republicans in Congress have run into solid opposition for Democrats, who have been able to block most of an estimated \$25 billion needed to build the wall.

"President Donald J. Trump has repeatedly noted that border security is national

security,” said Mrs. Sanders, noting that the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks underscored the importance of a secure immigration and visa system.

“The administration also continues to condemn the Left’s shameless and immoral attacks on the law enforcement officers of ICE and CBP who risk their lives daily to protect our families, our economy, and our beloved Nation. Ensuring funds for the wall, additional ICE and CBP officers, and detention beds is critical to protecting the Nation against illegal immigration, crime, and terrorism,” she said.

The \$5 billion, included in the House’s Homeland Security funding bill for next year, would be for “physical barriers and associated technology along the U.S. southern border,” including \$126 million for border technology, according to Republicans on the committee.

It would finance new “barrier construction” along the U.S.-Mexico border — easily outpacing the Senate’s version, which sets aside \$1.6 billion for fencing along the southern border.

“The administration understands that difficult decisions had to be made to provide this funding, in part because of Congress’s allocation of funds to lower-priority or unnecessary programs,” Mrs. Sanders said.

She said the administration also recognizes that House rules forced lawmakers to make tradeoffs that the White House would otherwise oppose.

“It further appreciates the commitment of the House Committee on Appropriations to increasing the number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention beds, as well as accelerating the hiring of ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers, although even more of both are needed,” said Mrs. Sanders.

The administration will continue to work with Congress to identify offsets for the extra spending, she said.

Source: <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/jul/18/house-5-billion-border-wall-bill-cheered-white-hou/>

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