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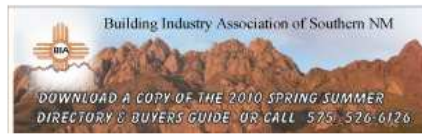
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GREATER LAS CRUCES
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce Board Reaffirms its Stance on Wilderness Bill

by admin on July 14th, 2010

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors' voted unanimously to re-confirm its prior position on SB 1689 (available [here](#)); especially as it pertains to homeland security. A review of the legislation, by the Chamber Board, was conducted following Senator Bingaman's recent modifications to the legislation. His modifications were made after a field hearing of the United States Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee was held in Las Cruces this past February.

Kiel Hoffman, Chairman, states, "While the Chamber commends the Senator for listening to concerns raised by the public and making modifications, we remain concerned that complete border security and law enforcement access are being denied unencumbered access by this legislation."

We commend the Las Cruces Sun News Editorial Board, which stated, on June 27th, the following: "We urge Senator Bingaman to go as far as necessary to ensure that the Border Patrol will have complete and unfettered access to all areas along the border before putting the bill (SB 1689) up for final action." Complete and unfettered access means zero conditions. Unfortunately, SB 1689 still has conditions placed upon border security.

We strongly encourage the Senator to further modify the language that removes any and all barriers to entry, in all protected lands in Doña Ana County, for routine surveillance by our United States Border Patrol, United States Armed Forces and any local, state or federal law enforcement agency. Anything short of removing all conditions and barriers only serves to increase risks to our citizens and further create a negative image for those considering relocation to Doña Ana County to live, work and/or retire.

We further encourage the consideration of designating the Potrillos Mountain Complex as a National Conservation Area, still prohibiting development, versus Wilderness Designation. Attached is copy of stated position on all other aspects of SB 1689.

We know that other organizations in our community have taken an opposite view. We respect all viewpoints; however, we are deeply troubled by one local organization's apparent acceptance of significant funds from special interests groups to promote their position without full disclosure of doing so to its members. For the record, the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce has not taken any money from any special interest groups to promote our position.

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