



August 1, 2011

**Honorable Ron Wyden, Chairman
Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forest
223 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510**

Dear Senator Wyden:

The National Association of Former Border Patrol Officers is opposed to S. 1024. This legislation seeks to create 242,000 acres of wilderness designations on or near our border with Mexico and deny all but the most minimal use of motorized vehicles, even for routine patrol. Prohibition against the use of mechanical equipment will consequently prevent the deployment of mobile surveillance systems, remote cameras, electronic detection devices and other tools critical to maintaining operational control of the area in question. Approval will restrict unfettered access to Border Patrol Agents and their equipment to a strip of land only five miles wide from the border. By Federal statute the Border Patrol has the right to enter private property within twenty-five miles of the border and we find it astonishing that Congress would choose to limit this to five miles on Federal property.

Our organization is currently completing a review and analysis of 570 documents which we recently received from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) pursuant to a request authorized by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Our paramount mission is to contribute to the security and stability of the United States. To that end, we shall propose and be advocates for immigration laws and policies that we believe serve those national interests, and we will oppose those that do not.

**National Association of
Former Border Patrol Officers
P.O. Box 2012
Brunswick, GA 31521-2012
www.nafbpo.org**

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We believe that a knowledgeable examination of these highly redacted documents will help determine, among other things, what criteria was used by the sponsor of S.1024 (formerly S.1689), when negotiating exceptions to the strict “no human presence” provisions mandated by Section 4(a)(3)(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Specifically, we hope to determine on what basis it was found acceptable to confine all Border Patrol assets and activities into a narrow five-mile wide strip along 25.24 miles of the US/Mexico border. This crucial section of the border is located in southern New Mexico between the Border Patrol Stations located at Santa Teresa and Deming, New Mexico. It is adjacent to the city of Cd. Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico which is recognized as one of the most dangerous cities in the world.

While we do not speak for the active Border Patrol, it is clear from our several millennia of collective experience that even the smallest impediment to unencumbered access of enforcement assets is unacceptable. Agent safety and national security issues are of paramount concern to us.

Additionally, we are hopeful that our review will determine to what degree Border Patrol Field Supervisors were denied permission to provide candid assessments of the likely consequences of withdrawing enforcement assets as proposed by S.1024, and how the implementation of this restriction will adversely affect their ability to accomplish priorities mandated by the National Border Strategy.

Until answers to these important questions have been answered and for the other reasons stated herein, we respectfully request that this legislation not be advanced and that this letter be made a part of the official record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Lundgren", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Kent Lundgren
Chairman**

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