

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

Thank you for your steadfast leadership to secure our southern border. We applaud the progress you have made to build more than two hundred miles of new, secure fencing that is directly increasing the safety of American communities.

During a recent trip to the Arizona border, we heard concerning reports that activists are calling on your administration to cut wildlife passthroughs into the new border wall. We were surprised to hear that these demands, which will lower the wall's effectiveness, are being considered. According to an April 2020, article from *Arizona Daily Star*, a U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) spokesman commented that CBP and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working to “identify strategies to accommodate larger mammals, such as jaguars, while still meeting U.S. Border Patrol’s operational requirements.”¹

We have already seen the results of having permanent openings in the border wall. Floodgates were installed along certain parts of the border to prevent flooding during the Southwest’s rainy seasons. These gates are commonly opened at the beginning of the summer rains and remain open for months. Predictably, U.S. Border Patrol agents are not the only individuals aware of these openings – drug cartels, human traffickers, and any other individual looking for a way through the barrier use them as an access point. According to a border rancher who we met with during our trip, the gates are no longer opened wide enough for vehicles to drive through, but they are still plenty large enough for traffickers on foot.

Any new opening wide enough for a large animal to fit through will also be large enough for a human to fit through. Wildlife passthroughs will undoubtedly be used by cartels to smuggle drugs and humans into the United States, lowering the effectiveness of the new wall and putting lives at risk.

¹ Tony Davis, “‘Kiss Jaguars Goodbye’ in Arizona if Border Wall Cuts Off Access From Mexico,” *Arizona Daily Star*, April 18, 2020, https://tucson.com/news/local/kiss-jaguars-goodbye-in-arizona-if-border-wall-cuts-off-access-from-mexico/article_fe64ba29-add9-55e4-81bc-3caf8bca6f86.html.

We encourage you to oppose demands to create openings in the border wall or breaches to the wall's security. Every official we met with along the border testified to the wall's effectiveness at deterring illegal activity and increasing the safety of their communities.

Your border wall, along with your strong America First immigration policies, are proving to make America safer. We look forward to working with you to continue these efforts.

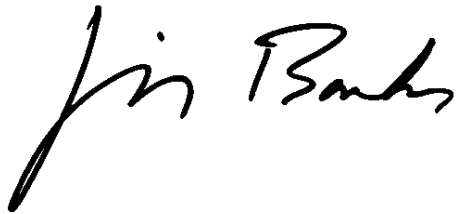
Sincerely,



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



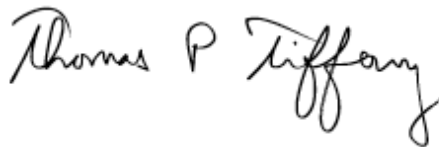
Brian Babin
Member of Congress



Jim Banks
Member of Congress



Jodey Arrington
Member of Congress



Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress