July 25, 2017

The Honorable Pete Sessions  
Chairman  
Committee on Rules  
H-312 The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Sessions:

We write to express our serious concerns regarding reports that you may once again decide to employ a deceptive legislative gimmick in order to avoid a clean up-or-down vote on funding for President Trump’s border wall. We strongly object to this approach and urge you to allow the House to separately consider whether to include funding for the wall in H.R. 3219, the Make America Secure Appropriations Act.

It has been reported that your Committee plans to approve a rule for the upcoming minibus defense spending bill that will include a self-executing provision adding $1.6 billion in funding for new barriers on our southwest border. We strongly believe that this legislative maneuver would be inconsistent with the best traditions of the House. Instead of making a border wall amendment in order and allowing this body to work its will, a self-executing rule would enable Members to evade a vote on an issue of great national significance.

That’s simply wrong. Not only is President Trump’s border wall expensive and unnecessary, Members of Congress who care deeply about our national defense shouldn’t be forced to decide between voting for this nonsensical proposal and voting to fund our military. More importantly, on such a momentous policy question, the American people deserve to know where their elected representatives stand.

Again, for these reasons, we strongly urge you to reconsider using a self-executing rule to add funding for a border wall that America doesn’t need and can’t afford.

Sincerely,

Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress
Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress