



AILA recommends VOTE NO on H.R. 3548 “Border Security for America Act of 2017”

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AILA recommends that members of Congress oppose H.R. 3548, the Border Security for America Act of 2017. H.R. 3548 would waste billions of tax payer dollars by authorizing the construction of President Trump’s wasteful and unnecessary border wall, a major increase in border patrol agents without a demonstrated need for them, and the further militarization of our nation’s border region at a time when our borders are more secure than they have ever been. The bill also strips critical polygraph requirements for certain U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) applicants. The polygraph test is an important screening measure that weeds out criminal and corrupt applicants.

- **Congress should not fund President Trump’s unnecessary border wall.** H.R. 3548 grants DHS the authority to build a border wall system “as may be necessary.” Adding to the existing border fencing is ineffective and wasteful. A layered system of physical barriers and border security technologies already exists at our southern border, and apprehension numbers are significantly down. CBP patrols every mile of the U.S. border daily, and in many places, can view nearly all attempts to cross the border in real time. Any additional construction of walls or fences across the southwest border will likely be in more remote areas of the border, costing more to construct and yielding fewer apprehensions. Border apprehensions are currently one-fourth of the level they reached in 2000 and a recent report from the [DHS Office of Immigration Statistics](#) concluded that “the southwest land border is more difficult to illegally cross today than ever before.”
- **H.R. 3548 would enable Trump’s massive deportation force by adding 5,000 more agents.** This bill grants President Trump’s request, as outlined in his executive order on border security, for the dramatic scale-up of 5,000 additional Border Patrol agents. Adding 5,000 Border Patrol agents would represent a [25 percent increase](#) in agents at a time when border apprehensions are at some of the lowest levels in forty-years. The [DHS Office of Inspector General](#) has challenged DHS to demonstrate why these additional agents are necessary or how CBP will find the necessary applicants to fill the positions.
- **Congress should not be weakening hiring standards for CBP when the agency has a longstanding history with corruption, excessive force, and misconduct.** H.R. 3548 would weaken hiring standards for CBP by eliminating polygraph requirements for some applicants. Agents brought on during CBP’s last hiring surge in the 2000’s were frequently [corrupt](#) and [prone to misconduct](#). In response, Congress enacted the Anti-Border Corruption Act of 2010, which mandated polygraphs for all persons applying for CBP law enforcement positions. The former head of CBP’s Internal Affairs, James Tomsheck, [recently wrote](#) that attempts to undermine the polygraph requirement “would exacerbate corruption and abusive misconduct by adding unsuitable personnel who conceal criminal pasts - and/or have future intent to compromise CBP’s mission - so as to threaten our national security.” Other federal law enforcement agencies make no exceptions to the polygraph requirement for its applicants, including the FBI, DEA, ATF, and Secret Service.
- **Congress should not be wasting time with enforcement only measures, but instead should pass the Dream Act.** There are only 5 months left before Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) protections expire for 800,000 young people who grew up in this country and call America their home. The House should immediately bring to the floor a clean Dream Act and stop wasting its time with these wasteful, expensive, and punitive immigration border enforcement measures.