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Rep. Darby, other State Legislators Invoice Washington for Border Security Costs
More Than Two Dozen Lawmakers Press Washington for Reimbursement for Education, Incarceration, Security Costs

Austin – More than two dozen Texas lawmakers today called on Washington to reimburse the state for costs related to the federal government's failure to secure the border.

Rep. Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) joined with Speaker Pro Tem Dennis Bonnen (R- Angleton) to announce findings from the House Select Committee on the Fiscal Impact of Texas Border Support Operations and to invoice the federal government for known costs to Texas taxpayers.

"Texas taxpayers, through a continued commitment by the Legislature and Governor, will continue to meet the state's border security needs if the federal government fails to do its job," said Rep. Darby. "It's time Congress does their job and pays back Texas taxpayers."

Lawmakers noted several costs that have put Texas on the hook for \$559 million in expenditures since January, 2013 on populations illegally in the country. Costs include:

- \$104,277,316 spent by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) on border surge operations to detect, deter and apprehend criminal activities by drug cartels and trans-national gangs;
- \$3,405,241 spent by Texas Parks and Wildlife to assist with patrolling hot spots along the border;
- \$37,211,923 spent by the Texas Military Forces in response to the governor's order to deploy up to 1,000 members of the Texas National Guard;
- \$137,100,757 spent by county jails to incarcerate criminals aliens;
- \$205,092,350 spent by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to incarcerate criminal aliens in state prisons; and
- \$72,108,476 to be spent by the Texas Education Agency on the education of unaccompanied minors from Central America who now reside in Texas. This figure does not include the education of children who came to Texas illegally with their family unit.

This amount is on top of the \$86.1 million authorized by Rep. Darby and other members of the Legislative Budget Board on December 1st to extend and expand the state's current border security operations with additional DPS, Texas Military Forces, Texas Parks and Wildlife resources including four additional river interdiction boats and 4,000 additional border cameras.

"As state representatives, we take a solemn oath to uphold the constitution. So does Congress. It is time they live up to their sacred vow and their obligation to secure our borders," said State Rep. John Otto (R - Dayton). "They have a moral obligation to pay the price for failure on this front."

Lawmakers also noted they are seeking reimbursement for a conservative amount, noting that health care costs are not tracked by the federal government for these populations, nor are costs for educating children who entered illegally with their family unit.

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