

From: **Otero Residents** <oteroresidentsforum@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 8:28 AM

Subject: S.1689 WILDERNESS OPENS PORTAL TO CRIME,DRUGS, & MORE INVASION

To:

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S.1689 WILDERNESS OPENS PORTAL TO CRIME,DRUGS, & MORE INVASION

Otero Residents Forum says:

I'll get right to the point. You all know the dynamics of the State of the Nation today. I'll focus on one glaring point. The border with the United States and Mexico has never been secured. The media downplays the invasion of illegal trespassers into our Nation. Colorado has legalized medical marijuana use by its Citizens. Other states have already legalized pot for medical use. The legalization of medical marijuana in the United States will lessen the demand for illegally smuggled marijuana into the United States from Mexico. Medical marijuana will be grown in the United States by licensed growers. This will create a void now filled by the Mexican drug cartels. The drug king-pins in Mexico will adapt their criminal enterprise to compensate for drug monies lost in the United States. There's a real possibility that the flood of Mexican 'super meth', illegally smuggled into the U.S., will increase substantially.

Our elected officials in Santa Fe are going to vote on S.1689 in the near future. They will be voting on legislation that would create a wilderness area on the U.S./Mexican border in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. Senators Jeff Bingaman, Tom Udall and Harry Teague want to designate 259,000 acres as wilderness and another 100,850 acres as a national conservation area. *These designations come with the heavy handed regulations from federal agencies that severely restrict county and public use and control of these areas.* Add to this designation of wilderness the failure of state and federal governments to close the U.S./Mexican border. This wilderness designation will create an attractive, unsecured, unmonitored gateway for drug smuggling into the United States.

The drafters of this legislation and environmental groups have NO concern for the Citizens of Dona Ana County who live in the region of this proposed wilderness designation. Citizens in Dona Ana County and the contiguous counties will be forced to endure with and protect themselves from illegal trespassers and the possibility of a flood of illegal drug smuggling through the wilderness area. The Mexican drug cartels are at war in Juarez, MX., right across the river from El Paso. *The creation of a massive wilderness area on the border, so close to Juarez, threatens to invite the drug smugglers and their violent turf war into Dona Ana County.* Now is the worst time to add a large region of land to our nation's already unsecured and open border between the United States and Mexico. Do these elected officials really want to destroy our nation's sovereignty and put the lives of U.S. Citizens at risk? The answer is YES. They seek political expediency at the expense of the Citizens of Dona Ana County. This is the State of our Nation today.

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