

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 19, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin, III
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin,

We are writing to express serious concerns regarding the Department of Defense's (DOD) sale of border wall construction materials. This decision is a bad deal for the American people and undermines the Department's duty to advance national security, protect Americans, and safeguard taxpayer resources.

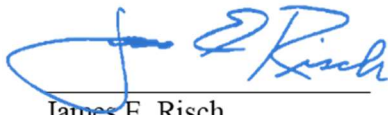
Section 2890 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2024 mandates all border wall construction materials must be used, transferred, or donated to states on the U.S.-Mexico border. Section 2890 further directs DOD to utilize the remaining materials to refurbish and maintain ports of entry along the southwest border—points of vulnerability vital to protecting American citizens from the crime, drugs, and chaos of rampant illegal immigration. By opting to sell materials intended for the construction of the border wall, DOD is exacerbating the ongoing illegal immigration crisis and subverting Congress's statutory mandate to strengthen border security.

Idahoans recognize the national security threat created by the border crisis. Our communities are directly impacted by the unchecked flow of drugs and human trafficking through our southern border.

The Department of Defense has a clear obligation to protect the security of the United States, and we urge you to uphold that responsibility. The DOD could have continued construction of the southern border wall with these materials, but instead chose to prioritize politics over the safety of our citizens.

To that end, we demand answers on why the DOD has auctioned these materials rather than following its statutory directive to prioritize their use for border security. We urge full transparency regarding the auction process to ensure the American people know where their hard-earned taxpayer dollars go.

Sincerely,



James E. Risch
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator