

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2010 -- (Senate - July 08, 2009)
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD**

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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1399

Mr. *DeMINT*. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly about an amendment that will be up second, I believe, this morning. It is about our southern border in this United States.

I think we have made some propositions to the American people to secure our southern border. We have

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passed laws that are currently not being followed, and I think we see the result of that in Mexico as well as in the United States. Our southern border has become a battleground. It is a place not only where illegal immigrants and workers come into our country, but drug trafficking and weapons trafficking are real security issues. We are destabilizing Mexico with all that is going on because we refuse to carry out our promise to the American people to secure that border. We cannot have security in the United States unless we have a secure border.

We passed a law that says we have to have 700 miles of reinforced, double-layer fencing along the southern border of the United States. Of the 700 miles, 370 miles were required to be built by December 31 of last year, and we have not met that requirement.

In fact, there are only 330 miles of the single-layered fencing and only 34 miles of the double-layered fencing that was required by law to be built.

So far they claim 661 miles of fencing are completed, but that includes both vehicle barriers and single-layered fencing.

They continue to speak of virtual fencing, which is basically just detectors if someone is going across. All the evidence is that doesn't work well, if at all.

The point of my amendment is to keep our promise to the American people. Let's move ahead with securing the border. I don't like a fence. I

don't like the way a fence looks. But in this world today, where we are threatened in many ways, it is critically important that we are able to determine who comes and goes and what comes and goes on the borders of the United States.

My amendment does two things. It requires that 700 miles of physical pedestrian fencing be completed, and it sets a deadline of December 31, 2010. We can do this if we just make that commitment and fund it in this bill.

A physical fence is effective, compared to the untested hundreds of millions of dollars of virtual fencing they are trying to substitute, even though we passed a law that says we need to secure the borders.

I remind my colleagues we made a promise to the American people. We passed a law. This country is based on the rule of law, and we need to follow it in the Congress. We need to fund this and set a deadline so this promise will be fulfilled.

I encourage all my colleagues to vote for the DeMint amendment this morning. I yield the floor.