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## Brownsville chamber tells Cornyn of its concerns over border

By Steve Taylor

AUSTIN - The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce has written to U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, about its concerns over the federal government's plans to build fencing along the Mexican border.

The letter, signed by Chamber President and CEO Angela Burton and transmitted via e-mail, was sent after Cornyn hosted a public meeting about the border wall in Brownsville last Saturday.

Burton attended the meeting.

"We are reminded daily by our long lines at the bridges and the extended questioning; the events of September 11 indicated that some have used our borders as an entryway for these evil and malicious attacks. As a result, many have called for increased checks and the 'tightening' of our borders," Burton wrote.

"While such proposals are understandable, and immigration improvements are clearly needed, difficult questions remain about the potential severe impact to border economies of any improperly conceived system that does not realistically deal with border communities and their concerns."

Burton said her chamber passed a resolution against a border wall late last year when Congress was debating H.R. 6061, otherwise known as the Secure Fence Act.

"The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce believes that our borders can



Angela Burton

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and should be a line of defense against those who pose security threats to this country, but borders must also allow for legitimate commerce and travel,” Burton wrote, in her letter to Cornyn.

“We also believe efficient allocation and use of technology, personnel, and environmental friendly barriers can achieve these goals. We encourage you and other legislators to take a very hard look at what is being proposed and make certain that building ‘tactical infrastructure’ is the answer to our immigration, i.e., border security issue.”

Asked about Saturday's public meeting, Burton told the *Guardian* that strong opposition to the border wall plan was aired by many border leaders. She said if her letter appeared more measured in tone it was because the Chamber did not believe in taking a confrontational approach.

Burton said the Brownsville Chamber wanted to see continued open dialogue and that it was asking Cornyn respectfully to keep communities informed of further developments on the reinforced fencing plan.

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