General Information

Source: NBC Nightly News  
Creator: Brian Williams/George Lewis  
Event Date: 10/26/2002  
Air/Publish Date: 10/26/2002

Resource Type: Video News Report  
Copyright: NBCUniversal Media, LLC.  
Copyright Date: 2002  
Clip Length: 00:01:41

Description

President George W Bush signs a controversial bill authorizing the construction of a fence to be built to prevent illegal immigrants from Mexico from crossing into the United States.

Keywords

President, George W. Bush, Mexico, Mexican, Illegal, Immigrants, Immigration, Fence, Border, Felipe Calderon, Juan Jose Gutierrez, Bill, Legislation, Law, Signing, Ceremony, Congress, Civil Rights, Immigrant Rights, Election, Executive Branch, Presidency

Citation

MLA
**Transcript**

President George W. Bush Signs Mexico Border Fence Act

BRIAN WILLIAMS, anchor:

One last pre-election event on the red-hot issue of illegal immigration for President Bush. He signed a bill today authorizing the construction of a fence along the border with Mexico. This fence would be 700 miles long, though the border is much longer, and cost anywhere between 2 and $6 billion. And as NBC's George Lewis tells us tonight, though the fence has a lot of fans, others say it won't fix anything.

GEORGE LEWIS, reporting:

This section of the border at San Ysidro, south of San Diego, was once the number one hot spot for illegal crossings, but not since they beefed up the fence here in the 1990's. It cut the flow of illegal immigration here way back, and that's what the government hopes to do elsewhere by fencing about one third of the border with Mexico. Now, starting here in California and extending eastward along the border, the law authorizes new fencing where illegal immigrant traffic is the heaviest, but leaves many areas still open. The bill signed by the president authorizes but does not fund the fence.

President GEORGE W. BUSH: This bill will help protect the American people. This bill will make our borders more secure.

LEWIS: Critics immediately blasted the idea of more fences.

Mr. FELIPE CALDERON (through translator): Humanity made a huge mistake by building the Berlin wall, and I believe that today the United States is committing a grave error in building a wall on our border.

LEWIS: Immigrant rights groups in this country call the bill an election year gimmick.

Mr. JUAN JOSE GUTIERREZ: The building of the wall is going to be viewed by our Latino community as a frontal attack by the extreme wing of the Republican Party, and they will pay a high political price for it.