

Call for troops to stay on U.S.-Mex border

by UPI

LAS CRUCES, N.M. -- U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., is concerned about federal plans to reduce the number of National Guard troops stationed along the U.S.-Mexico border. In a letter Monday, the Democrat asked President George W. Bush to maintain troop strength along New Mexico's international border until more Customs and Border Patrol agents are trained and assigned to the area, the Las Cruces (N.M.) Sun-News reported Tuesday. The number of immigrants illegally crossing the border has dropped since thousands of guard troops were deployed to bolster the Border Patrol in May 2006, Bingaman said. About 700 National Guard troops have built barriers, monitored surveillance cameras and maintained roads along New Mexico's border, Bingaman said. An estimated 6,000 new agents are expected to be patrolling U.S. borders by the end of 2008, he said.

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