



March 7, 2025

The Honorable Joe Neguse  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1332 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Letter for the Record: Legislative Hearing on H.R. 1820, the *Federal Lands Amplified Security for the Homeland (FLASH) Act*

Dear Representative Neguse,

GreenLatinos is a national network of environmental, conservation, and climate justice leaders working toward a healthy and equitable society where communities of color are liberated from disproportionate environmental burdens, free to breathe fresh air, drink pure water, access clean transportation and enjoy our majestic public lands, ocean, and waters.

**We write to express our strong opposition to the proposed FLASH Act**, a bill that mandates the construction of at least 584 miles of "navigable roads" across sensitive public lands within 10 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. This bill poses significant threats to environmental health, the integrity of public lands, and human dignity. We urge you to reject its harmful provisions.

The FLASH Act would mandate the bulldozing of national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and Bureau of Land Management lands, fragmenting critical wildlife habitat and undermining the wild, scenic, and sacred character of these landscapes. It would expedite border infrastructure construction, undermining existing resource management plans, critical environmental reviews, and permitting processes. Additionally, the FLASH Act has the potential to restrict recreational opportunities and erode public trust from the local stakeholders depending on and contributing to the maintenance of healthy, intact public lands.

Moreover, the bill authorizes states to build temporary barriers, effectively handing control of federal lands to individual states with minimal oversight and accountability processes. This dangerous provision erodes the federal government and Congress' mandated responsibility to protect public lands for the benefit of the nation. A patchwork of conflicting land management practices across the border region would follow, leading to confusion and land degradation.

These provisions would have unmitigated negative consequences on cities and towns along the southern borderlands. Land disturbance for the construction of roads and other structures would

exacerbate airborne dust pollution, ailing [public health](#). Increased U.S. Customs and Border Protection vehicle traffic and commercial truck traffic would cause a surge in [toxic air pollution](#). Temporary structures would create a visual impairment on the landscape. Increased air and ground traffic associated with border security operations would raise noise pollution above healthy levels for local wildlife and disrupt the peace and quiet that residents enjoy, notably degrading [children's health](#).

The bill's proposals—such as increased law enforcement, increased penalties for migrants, and the prohibition of utilizing appropriate areas to temporarily house asylum seekers—fail to address the true challenges of border management and immigration. Furthermore, its provisions exacerbate the militarization of public lands, increasing the potential for human rights abuses and disrupting communities that rely on these lands for cultural, recreational, and ecological services.

The FLASH Act misconstrues the actual drivers of environmental degradation, overlooking inadequately staffed and resourced agencies, climate change, extractive activities, and nature loss. The lands and water of the U.S.-Mexico border, cherished for their ecological and cultural value, would be irreversibly harmed by the proposed infrastructure development and false solutions to border management and ecological degradation. We urge you to reject the FLASH Act and work toward policies that respect both the environment and human rights, without compromising the integrity of our cherished public lands.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Respectfully,  
Mark Magaña  
Founding President and CEO  
GreenLatinos

cc:  
Ranking Member Jared Huffman  
The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
The Honorable Maxine Dexter  
The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernández  
The Honorable Melanie Stansbury  
The Honorable Jared Golden  
The Honorable Emily Randall  
The Honorable Nydia Velázquez  
The Honorable Yassamin Ansari  
The Honorable Dave Min  
The Honorable Luz Rivas  
The Honorable Julia Brownley  
The Honorable Adam Gray