

Questions for the Record by Republican Members

Questions from Ranking Member Bruce Westerman

1. Will you please explain why you left the Committee hearing before it was over?

I am a novice and have never testified before a congressional committee. I did not understand the process of successive interactions. I sincerely apologize for departing prematurely; it was ignorance, not intended as disrespect to any Member of this Committee. I deeply apologize to this Committee.

2. Were you advised or instructed by any Congressional staff or anybody else to sign off from the Committee hearing before it was over? If so, who instructed you to sign off?

No, sir, I was not advised to do so by anyone. Again, it was out of my lack of familiarity with the process.

3. During the hearing, when asked if you thought that offensive language in one of your tweets referencing Ivanka Trump was appropriate, you responded “no”. However, this tweet has not been deleted from your public Twitter profile as of the submission of this question (6 days after the hearing). In fact, you have not deleted a single tweet since the hearing but have re-tweeted 3 new posts. a. Do you still stand by your tweet that refers to Ivanka Trump using derogatory language?

No, sir, I do not. It has been deleted.

Why have you not deleted any offensive tweets from your Twitter profile?

The tweets on my personal account were removed June 24. I apologize for any offense.

Questions from Ranking Member Russ Fulcher

1. Mr. Rincon, like Ranking Member Westerman mentioned, you originally submitted testimony to this Committee with disparaging remarks about the border wall that were later removed in an updated version.

a. Did any Congressional office or staff instruct you or suggest to you in any way that these comments should be removed from your testimony? If so, who instructed you to do this?

No. No one. After feedback from Congressman Cuellar's office, I felt that my comments regarding the border wall would not be productive before this committee, so I decided to make the changes. At no time did anyone instruct me to change my testimony.

b. If nobody suggested to you that this line should be removed, then why did you make the change in your testimony? Do you no longer believe the border wall is a "folly"?

I changed my testimony out of respect for differing views on the border wall.

2. Are you testifying in support of H.R. 2359 because you hope that the legislation will make it more difficult to construct a border wall or will stop construction altogether?

I am testifying because of my long experience and love for historic preservation in the region and to highlight the work done by my predecessors and colleagues, often at their own expense and out of love and respect for their heritage and a desire to preserve it for future generations. This also is what motivates my support for HR 2359.

3. Mr. Rincon, your organization, the River Pierce Foundation, is listed as a partner for the organization "Not Another Foot," which publicly advocates against the border wall. Many of the posts on your public Twitter page are also retweets of Not Another Foot posts or direct people to the group's website.

a. What has been your organization's involvement with Not Another Foot?

There is no organizational involvement of any kind.

b. What financial support does your organization provide to Not Another Foot?

None. Never.

c. Would you please provide the Committee with detailed breakdowns of the financial and staff support shared between your two organizations, so we can fully understand any potential conflicts of interest?

The River Pierce Foundation shares no staff support and has no financial involvement of any kind with this organization.

4. Mr. Rincon, Not Another Foot's website, which you have publicly linked to on your social media accounts and supported, includes the following statement:

"Tear Down A Giant Racist Monument. Chant's [sic] of "Build The Wall!" have accompanied incidents of racist violence across the country. The wall is a motivating symbol for the violent MAGA base that will

continue to plague our society as long as it is allowed to stand. Stopping the wall will undercut this surge in anti-immigrant hatred in our country. Tell Biden to stop building this giant racist monument.”

Do you agree with the previous statement that former President Trump’s supporters are a “plague to society”?

No. I do not think that all Trump supporters are a plague to society.

Questions from Rep. Louie Gohmert

1. Mr. Rincon, in the original draft of your testimony you referred to the Trump Administration's vision of a border wall as a "folly." Please state the reason or reasons you consider protecting our southern border to be a folly?

I do not consider protection of our southern border to be a folly.

2. Mr. Rincon, I was interested to read in the original version of your written testimony you provided to the committee, you included some disparaging comments about President Trump's border wall. And then we received revised testimony with the comments removed. It appears Democrats on the committee don't want to talk about the border crisis, but I do. Mr. Rincon, on January 19th of this year you directed your Twitter followers to sign a petition that was "close to your heart." This petition stated that the border wall was "fueling violent racism" and that "for Trump's most violent supporters, the wall is their single greatest symbol of inspiration, one that fuels violent racist attacks across the country."

Do you agree with the characterization that all people who support secure borders are racist? Are all of President Trump's supporters violent and racist as well?

No, sir.

3. According to data from ICE, illegal aliens arrested last year had an average of 4 criminal convictions or pending charges each. If there are concerns about violent crime, why aren't you circulating petitions to step up our border enforcement and stop dangerous illegal immigrants from entering the country?

As a resident of the border, I have not seen a rise in violent crime.

4. Mr. Rincon, you recently retweeted a Tweet that said the following, in reference to construction equipment being used to secure our borders: "It sure was nice to see these death machines parked & immobile today, the ones we've seen every day cutting an irreversible scar into our borderlands. @POTUS must cancel all contracts for good so they're never used again. Also, @CaterpillarInc profits from ecocide. Never forget." Mr. Rincon, how do you define "ecocide" and in what way is this "ecocide"?

According to merriam-webster.com, ecocide is the destruction of large areas of the environment as a consequence of human activity.

5. Mr. Rincon, under the Biden Administration, Border Patrol has encountered well over 600,000 aliens attempting to enter our country illegally. We know that on average each illegal alien discards between six to eight pounds of trash when entering our country illegally. Would you consider the millions of pounds of trash discarded along the border due to the Biden Administration's policies ecocide?

It is a problem that needs to be dealt with.

Questions from Rep. Lauren Boebert

1. Mr. Rincon, you retweeted a picture of an individual making an obscene gesture toward a construction worksite at our southern border. I think most people can interpret how you feel about President Trump's border wall. But can you clarify for us and tell us what exactly you meant by that tweet?

I believe the picture is self-explanatory.

2. Mr. Rincon, on August 7, 2019, you tweeted the following in reference to Kellyanne Conway, then a senior advisor at the White House: "I need to get whatever filter Kellyanne is wearing in this interview. Makes her lying [expletive] *look* not so haggly." Once again, you did not censor the expletive word in the Tweet.

a. Do you often judge women's work performance based off of their looks?

No.

b. Do you think it is appropriate to refer to a women's appearance as "haggly"?

No, it is inappropriate.

3. Mr. Rincon you are here today to speak in support of H.R. 2359, which directs the Department of Interior to study designating more than 200 miles of our southern border as a National Heritage Area. Mr. Rincon, if this 200-mile area is eventually designated as a National Heritage Area, do you believe the management plan should allow Border Patrol to continue to do their job and stop illegal immigration in this area?

I do.

4. Do you personally believe National Heritage Areas should be sanctuary areas for illegal aliens?

No.

5. Mr. Rincon, can you tell the committee how many illegal aliens have crossed through this area in the past year?

No.