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TRUMP HINTS AT REQUEST FOR BORDER WALL FUNDS FROM CONGRESS

By Siobhan Hughes and Laura Meckler
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WASHINGTON—President-elect Donald Trump on Friday appeared to acknowledge that he and House Republicans are considering asking Congress for money to build a wall along the border with Mexico, a move that would undermine his repeated campaign vow that Mexico would pay for the wall.

Mr. Trump and House Republicans are weighing acting under a 2006 law signed by President George W. Bush that authorizes a physical barrier on the southern border, instead of passing new legislation, a House Republican and multiple aides confirmed. The Republicans are considering appropriating money for the project through the next spending bill, which must pass by the end of April. The government is currently funded through April 28.

“The dishonest media does not report that any money spent on building the Great Wall (for sake of speed), will be paid back by Mexico later!” Mr. Trump said early Friday morning on Twitter.

During his campaign, Mr. Trump repeatedly called for a wall on the Mexican border and asserted that Mexico would pay for it, something Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto said he would not do.

The Trump campaign said that as president, Mr. Trump would compel him to fund the wall by threatening to cut off remittance payments that Mexicans living in the U.S. send to family back in Mexico. He also said Mexico could be forced to fund the wall through negotiations over trade, by increasing visa fees or by threatening to cut off visas to Mexicans who want to visit the U.S. for tourism or business.

Sean Spicer, a spokesman for the Trump transition team, noted Friday that in October the campaign called for full funding of a southern border wall “with the full understanding that the country of Mexico will be reimbursing the United States for the full cost of such wall.”

“The idea that we’re going through the appropriations process and figuring out how to pay for it shouldn’t be news,” he said Friday.

He declined to offer an estimate of the wall’s cost or of how long the U.S. would have to wait for reimbursement.

The Secure Fence Act of 2006 authorized construction of nearly 700 miles of fencing along the U.S. border with Mexico.

The law called for “at least two layers of reinforced fencing,” but that mandate was later modified and the Department of Homeland Security was given leeway to meet the goal through means including barriers and electronic surveillance. In 2011, President Barack

Obama declared that the fence was "basically complete," but that was accomplished mostly through the use of vehicle barriers and single-layer fencing.