

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9739

To prohibit the exercise of the right of eminent domain with respect to
Mount Cristo Rey.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 16, 2026

Ms. ESCOBAR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To prohibit the exercise of the right of eminent domain
with respect to Mount Cristo Rey.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Mount Cristo Rey Pro-
5 tection Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Mount Cristo Rey is a mountain that bears
9 deep religious and cultural significance located in
10 Sunland Park, New Mexico.

1 (2) Mount Cristo Rey is a holy site, and a pil-
2 grimage destination visited by over 40,000 people
3 every year.

4 (3) A 29-foot statute of Jesus Christ was con-
5 structed at the peak of Mount Cristo Rey and dedi-
6 cated in October 1939.

7 (4) Every year, faithful from Texas, New Mex-
8 ico, and the state of Chihuahua, participate in pil-
9 grimages on Good Friday in the spring and on the
10 Feast of Christ the King in the fall.

11 (5) Mount Cristo Rey is owned by the Roman
12 Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces.

13 (6) The Federal Government's attempt to seize
14 the land around Mount Cristo Rey for the purposes
15 of border wall construction infringes upon the reli-
16 gious liberty of the Catholic Church and all visitors
17 to the holy site.

18 (b) PROHIBITION WITH RESPECT TO MOUNT CRISTO
19 REY.—No Federal funds may be used to litigate United
20 States of America v. 14,259 Acres of Land, More or Less,
21 Situated in Dona Ana County, State of New Mexico, No.
22 2:26-cv-01458 (D.N.M. filed May 7, 2026) or for any
23 other action relating to eminent domain with respect to
24 Mount Cristo Rey in Sunland Park, New Mexico.

1 (c) PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN SECURITY
2 MEASURES.—No Federal funds may be used to con-
3 struct, install, operate, or maintain roads, fencing, vehicle
4 barriers, security lighting, cameras, sensors, or related
5 structures on or near Mount Cristo Rey in Sunland Park,
6 New Mexico.

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