

WASHINGTON – An amendment offered by Rep. Harry Mitchell to strengthen border security technology through the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) was adopted this morning by the House Science and Technology Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation.

Mitchell offered the amendment to H.R. 3916, a bipartisan bill to provide for the next generation of border and maritime security technologies at the Department of Homeland Security. The bill was introduced by Rep. Ralph Hall (R-Texas). Mitchell, who serves as vice chair of the subcommittee, is a co-sponsor of the legislation.

“A great deal of the border stretches over miles of rural landscape with no natural barrier,” said Mitchell. “We can utilize GPS technology to help law enforcement see the precise location of the border, and all of the hills and valleys where drug smugglers and human traffickers like to hide. This is an important tool to give our Border Patrol agents the edge in the battle to secure the border.”

If adopted, the Mitchell amendment would require the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the U.S. Geographical Survey to study research and technology needs to make better use of GPS technologies in border security efforts. The study’s results would be presented to Congress and reported back to the appropriate committees for further review. This study will also be available for state and local governments in states near the U.S. Border, including Arizona, which also use GPS technologies in law enforcement.

H.R. 3916 is scheduled to be considered by the full committee on Feb. 27.