

# United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

October 22, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

We understand that the State of Texas, through the Office of the Governor, has formally appealed your denial of an emergency declaration for the ongoing crisis at the border. Governor Abbott submitted his initial request for an emergency declaration on September 20, 2021, and we subsequently sent you a letter supporting the Governor's request. The ongoing humanitarian crisis on the border warrants supplemental federal assistance and we urge you to reconsider your denial of emergency assistance.

Since declaring a state disaster in May, Governor Abbott deployed thousands of National Guard and Department of Public Safety troopers to the border over the past months in order to enforce existing Federal immigration laws. Despite these efforts, significant numbers of additional foreign migrants are still heading to the southwest border.

In the last eight months alone, over a million individuals crossed illegally into the United States, which is now on pace for over 2 million illegal crossings for 2021. To put that into perspective, that is roughly the population of Houston, Texas crossing illegally into this country in just one year. As of August 2021, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) encounters have increased 325% compared to the prior fiscal year to date. Encounters in each Texas Border Patrol sector have increased significantly under your administration's policies. For example, from August 2020 to August 2021, encounters in the Rio Grande Valley have increased over 692%.

The state and local communities in Texas bear direct and indirect costs of the increasing volume of illegal immigration along the southwest border, and federal assistance is necessary to further protect the lives, property, public health, and safety of the communities along the border. The over 15,000 illegal immigrants at the Del Rio International Bridge last month—which is nearly half of the entire population of the city of Del Rio, Texas—is only one example of the ongoing border crisis, but it is illustrative of the significant state resources devoted to the situation in order to protect the safety and welfare of communities along the border. As mentioned in the Governor's appeal letter, state personnel in Del Rio outnumbered federal deployment "three to one" in order to control the situation at the international bridge.

As a result of the continually deteriorating situation at the southwest border, the public health and safety of communities along the border are at risk. Recently, the rate of COVID positivity of illegal immigrants in detention in the Rio Grande Valley was 24%. Also, earlier this year the administration released over 7,000 illegal immigrants who tested positive for COVID. Since the

population in McAllen, Texas is 141,000, roughly five percent of McAllen consists of COVID-positive illegal immigrants. This unconstrained illegal immigration causes spikes of COVID-19 in South Texas communities and leads to further strain on the healthcare systems in the region.

Fentanyl seizures at the southern border are also increasing. Federal agents have indicated that fentanyl seizures have increased 4,000 percent over the last three years. This increased volume of narcotics entering the United States not only threatens border communities, but is a danger to Americans all across the county.

Not only does the ongoing crisis at the border pose a threat to the health and safety of Americans, but also their property. Farmers and ranchers in Uvalde, Texas—as well as other property owners along the border—are dealing with illegal aliens flowing across their property and cutting down fences—forcing these landowners to make repairs to protect their property from further damage. Landowners are living in fear that this trespassing and damage to property could lead to severe violence. American citizens should not be scared in their own homes and on their land.

It is a federal responsibility to protect the border, yet the State of Texas and cities and counties along the Texas border are expending considerable resources to address this ongoing border crisis to protect the residents of Texas. We strongly support the Governor's request and urge you to reconsider your denial and provide any and all emergency measures afforded by the approval of an emergency declaration.

We appreciate your attention to this request. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN CORNYN  
United States Senator

  
TED CRUZ  
United States Senator