



May 11, 2021

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

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris,

We call on you to take action on the crisis at the southern border immediately. Contrary to statements from your Administration, the border is neither closed nor secure. In fact, the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) reports a staggering surge in recent crossings: 172,000 encounters in March, the highest number in nearly 20 years, as well as 18,890 unaccompanied children, the largest monthly number in history.

The crisis is too big to ignore and is now spilling over the border states into all of our states. Recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services called upon many of our states to identify potential housing locations for migrants. In addition, the Department circumvented our states altogether by asking private organizations and nonprofits to house unaccompanied migrant children. Often these facilities lack adequate security. Allowing the federal government to place a potentially unlimited number of unaccompanied migrant children into our states' facilities for an unspecified length of time with almost zero transparency is unacceptable and unsustainable. We have neither the resources nor the obligation to solve the federal government's problem and foot the bill for the consequences of this Administration's misguided actions.

This Administration has enticed a rush of migrants to our border and incentivized an influx of illegal crossings by using irresponsible rhetoric and reversing a slew of policies—from halting border wall construction to eliminating asylum agreements to refusing to enforce immigration laws. Even officials of our neighbor, Mexico, reportedly conveyed concerns that the shift in U.S. policy is stoking illegal immigration and creating business for organized crime. As Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador stated, "They see him as the migrant president, and so many feel they're going to reach the United

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States. We need to work together to regulate the flow, because this business can't be tackled from one day to the next."

The cause of the border crisis is entirely due to reckless federal policy reversals executed within your first 100 days in office. The rhetoric of the Biden Administration and the rollback of critical agreements with our allies have led to the inhumane treatment of tens of thousands of children and undermined a fragile immigration system. While the most direct victims of the policy changes will be the children exploited and trafficked by gangs and cartels, the disastrous impact of your policies on America's recovery will be far-reaching.

Federal, state, and local authorities are overwhelmed, and the situation on the ground is heartbreaking. After a dangerous journey, many children are living in overcrowded conditions with uncertain futures and without parents or loved ones to care for them. Beyond the humanitarian crisis, the lack of border security is a criminal one, threatening the safety of American citizens. The CBP reports a 233% increase in the seizure of fentanyl compared to January last year, exacerbating the nation's opioid epidemic. Law enforcement officials are recovering drugs, illegal narcotics, and weapons being smuggled across the border by cartels—the same cartels that are also trafficking men, women, and children and jeopardizing their lives.

At a time when our country is trying to recover from a once-in-a-generation pandemic, the last thing we need is a self-created crisis that exploits families, undermines public safety, and threatens our national security. We urge you to take action to end the humanitarian crisis and secure our southern border immediately.

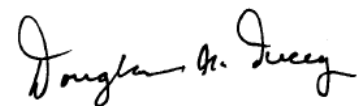
Sincerely,



Governor Bill Lee
State of Tennessee



Governor Kay Ivey
State of Alabama



Governor Doug Ducey
State of Arizona



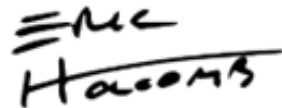
Governor Asa Hutchinson
State of Arkansas



Governor Brian Kemp
State of Georgia



Governor Brad Little
State of Idaho



Governor Eric Holcomb
State of Indiana



Governor Kim Reynolds
State of Iowa



Governor Tate Reeves
State of Mississippi



Governor Mike Parson
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State of Montana



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State of Nebraska

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Governor Chris Sununu
State of New Hampshire



Governor Doug Burgum
State of North Dakota



Governor Kevin Stitt
State of Oklahoma



Governor Henry McMaster
State of South Carolina



Governor Kristi Noem
State of South Dakota



Governor Greg Abbott
State of Texas



Governor Spencer Cox
State of Utah



Governor Mark Gordon
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