

THE BIDEN BORDER CRISIS: ARIZONA PERSPECTIVES

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

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THE BIDEN BORDER CRISIS: ARIZONA PERSPECTIVES

Friday, May 10, 2024

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Washington, DC

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m. Mountain Time, Sahuarita Town Hall, 375 W. Sahuarita Center Way, Sahuarita, Arizona, the Hon. Jim Jordan [Chair of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Jordan, Biggs, McClintock, Fitzgerald, and Bentz.

Also present: Representatives Ciscomani and Crane.

Chair JORDAN. The Committee will come to order.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

We welcome everyone to today's hearing on the "Biden Border Crisis: Arizona Perspectives" from just South of Tucson, Arizona, in the town of Sahuarita.

I think I got—where's the mayor? Did I get that right, Mayor? Mayor? Mayor, thank you for having us, too. We want to thank you for being such a great host.

We want to thank our friend and colleague, who is doing a great job in the U.S. Congress, Congressman Ciscomani, for hosting us as well today.

Without objection—yes, you should cheer for him.

Without objection, Congressman Ciscomani and Congressman Crane will be permitted to participate in today's hearing for the purpose of questioning the witnesses, and they will receive five minutes for that purpose.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Ciscomani, to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ALL. I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Chair JORDAN. The Chair is now recognized for an opening statement.

Joe Biden is on track to let 12 million—12 million—illegal aliens into the United States. Let that number sink in.

I tell folks all the time: That's the equivalent to the entire population of the State of Ohio. We're the seventh largest State. That's

not evening counting the 1.8 million known gotaways who have evaded Border Patrol or the unknown number of gotaways who have not been detected.

In February of last year, we held our first field hearing in this great State in Yuma, Arizona. At that time, the Yuma Border Patrol Sector was seeing record-high illegal border crossers; the local hospital was drowning under the weight of illegal aliens' unpaid medical bills; and law enforcement officials were warning of the extremely dangerous repercussions of an open border.

We thought it couldn't get much worse, but it did. So, we are back in Arizona where the residents feel the effects of the Biden open border policies each and every day, the effects of nearly five million illegal aliens released into U.S. communities, the effects of criminal alien gangs flooding the U.S. with illicit drugs, the effects of an unknown number of aliens on the terrorist watch list evading Border Patrol detection and disappearing into our communities, like the one with ISIS ties from Uzbekistan across the Arizona border back in February 2022.

The Department of Homeland Security's own published numbers show that the Tucson Border Patrol Sector leads the Nation in the Southwest border encounters with at least 366,000 of the more than 1.3 million illegal alien encounters so far this fiscal year.

Illegal immigration is such a problem here that, last year, the Department of Homeland Security closed the Lukeville Port of Entry for more than a month during the holiday season when legitimate travel across the border was at its peak so that CVC officers could help process the huge number of illegal aliens entering the country.

The rampant illegal immigration welcomed by the Biden Administration devastated this area's holiday economy, but you don't have to believe me that the border is in chaos. You can believe the border—Chief Border Patrol agent from the Tucson Sector.

According to Chief John Modlin, on April 30th, the Border Patrol and Tucson law enforcement interdicted a load of more than 57 pounds of methamphetamine and more than 88 pounds of fentanyl.

On April 24th, the Chief posted on social media that agents had arrested an illegal border crosser who had an extensive criminal history, including convictions for the facilitation of homicide and aggravated assault with a weapon.

On April 18th, agents arrested an illegal border crosser who also turned out to be convicted of a vicious assault.

On April 14th, Tucson agents apprehended a group of illegal alien border crossers dressed in camouflage in a remote part of the sector.

On April 8th, agents seize 158,000 in fentanyl pills.

On March 26th, agents apprehended an illegal alien border crosser who was a gang member with a felony conviction for assault with a deadly weapon in California.

On March 25th, they apprehended a group of 15 illegal alien border crossers dressed in camouflage.

On March 20th, agents apprehended an illegal alien border crosser for viciously assaulting a child.

Those are just a few of the examples from the last couple of months that the Border Patrol knows about and tells the public.

Imagine what is happening that the Border Patrol doesn't know or that this administration won't let agents tell us.

Of course, do you know who else knows what is going on at the border? The residents of the great State of Arizona know, and a few of them are here today to share how President Biden's open border policies negatively affected their communities and their lives.

We will hear from a rancher who sees illegal aliens in camouflage on his land every day.

We will hear from a mom, a mom whose family has been forever altered because President Biden refuses to prevent the Chinese Government from teaming up with Mexican cartels to flood our country with fentanyl.

We will hear from a Border Patrol Chief who knows firsthand the disaster that President Biden's policies created on the Southwest border and the negative effects that the open border has on agents' morale.

We will hear from a former Sheriff's Deputy about the dangerous condition President Biden's open border creates in communities all across Arizona.

They all have different stories to tell, but they all agree that the border has never been as much of a dangerous disaster as it is today. It went from the most secure border in recent history to the most unsecure border in recent history in just a matter of days. Ultimately, only Joe Biden is responsible for that.

Before going to our witnesses and recognizing them and swearing them in, I want to give a chance to our host, Congressman Ciscomani—who, as I said, has become a good friend of this Committee, a good friend of all of us, and is doing a great job in the U.S. Congress trying to address these issues and others—I want to give him a chance to make some introductory remarks.

Congressman Ciscomani, you are recognized.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Thank you, Chair. Thank you so much for the opportunity to be here and thank you for choosing our community to come and add more attention to this pressing issue.

I wanted to thank all my colleagues as well on the Committee for making the trip down here.

For people here that know, these Members have different districts from around the country, and they leave home to be here and see what's really happening at the border.

To the witnesses, of course, thank you so much—and then the audience as well—for making the time. This is an important issue. We have always known that. We have recognized that.

Of course, our host town, the town of Sahuarita with Mayor Murphy, a good friend and someone that has been steadfast on this issue and supportive as well. It does take all of us to highlight the importance of the issue, and that's what we've been doing and working together.

The testimonies you will hear today will highlight something that we know quite well here in Southern Arizona, and that the border is broken. That's not just a saying. It's not a random line. We've seen that, and the evidence is there. It's not an opinion. It's a fact. We can see that with the numbers. It's having a devastating impact here on a daily basis.

The border crisis and any crisis here are not anything new that we haven't seen in this region, but we're experiencing now something we have never seen before: The numbers, the amount, and the consequences of it. The tragic results of what fentanyl has done to our community is something that we never even imagined.

From public safety to trade and commerce as well to other industries like agriculture, no aspect of life in Arizona is untouched by this border crisis. It's a reality that my constituents live every day, that you all live every day.

Our local communities feel abandoned by the Federal Government and this White House and this Administration and are paying the price for their inaction, both literally and figuratively.

Local hospitals pay out of pocket for medical care for the flow of migration that we're seeing, and counties foot the bill for bus tickets to transport individuals to different areas.

Then, of course, we have families here like Ms. Fagan Alexander's, who is—and also the Dunns that I just met today—that have lost loved ones to accidental fentanyl poisoning, and ranchers who live on the border like Mr. Chilton—that we've talked about this several times—who are afraid to leave their houses due to cartel activity coming through their property. Families like Mr. Chilton's have been here for generations, and what they're seeing now, they have never seen before.

To our witnesses and those watching at home, I want you to know that the colleagues here that I'm joined with today are listening, and they're paying attention from all across the country and that they're represented here. They care about this. I know because I work with them every single week.

I have become a friend of this Committee. In fact, this Committee, the Judiciary Committee—it helped pass the bill that I introduced not too long ago, and it passed out of the House—I may say with bipartisan support with over 56 Democrats voting for this as well and every single Republican, H.R. 5585, the Agent Raul Gonzalez Officer Safety Act. If it wasn't for this Committee and the leadership of this Committee, then that bill would have never made it through. They were able to speed it up, and we were able to vote on it.

If you don't know this Committee, this bill deals with high-speed chases and tackling that issue that has become just a constant threat in our communities of cartels recruiting young people from Tucson and from Phoenix to come and drive at high-speed chases and drive migrants up North, endangering not only their lives and the lives of the migrants, but also the lives of innocent bystanders.

This is a humanitarian crisis as much as it is a national security crisis as well. Humanitarian for those being trafficked, those women and children being trafficked, and also for our own citizens and communities here that are being abused and are being introduced to this deadly, deadly drug of fentanyl that, in many cases, the poisoning happens by accident.

So, I want to thank, once again, my colleagues for being here and for helping us pass that bill. It's in the Senate now, and it's up to the Senate to also take action on it, and it's up to this White House to take action.

So, again, thank you to my colleagues for being here.

Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to waive in and to be able to participate in today. With that, sir, I yield back.

Chair JORDAN. Thank you. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and so many others.

We will now introduce our witnesses.

Mr. Chris Clem, retired from a 27-year career in the United States Border Patrol as a Chief Patrol Agent in the Yuma Sector in December 2022, he served the bulk of that career on the Southwest U.S. border but also spent time in leadership positions at Border Patrol Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Mr. Clem earned a master of science in management and leadership in criminal justice and a B.S. in criminal justice from Sam Houston State University and a certificate of graduation for senior managers in government from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Mr. Clem, thank you for your service, and thank you for being here today.

Mr. Jim Chilton, as Congressman Ciscomani mentioned, is a fifth-generation Arizona rancher who founded the Chilton Ranch and Cattle Company with his father and brother in 1979. Not only is Mr. Chilton an accomplished rancher and businessman, but he also served as a special assistant to the U.S. Senator from Arizona.

Mr. Chilton earned a bachelor of science and a master of science in economics and a master of arts in political science from Arizona State University.

Again, Mr. Chilton, thank you for your service and for being here.

Mr. Jacob Kartchner recently retired as a detective from the Cochise County Sheriff's Department after a 20-year career. During that time, Detective Kartchner served on the Department's Ranch Patrol and was a founding member of the SABRE unit which worked closely with landowners to strategically place cameras on border lands to catch human and drug smugglers as well as other criminals crossing the border.

Mr. Kartchner is also a rancher whose family has owned land in Cochise County since 1891. Thank you as well.

Ms. Jill Fagan Alexander is a wife and mother of nine children. She's an accomplished writer, publisher, and speaker who went back to school while she was in her forties to become a labor and delivery nurse.

Based on her family's experience, Ms. Fagan Alexander is now on a mission to promote awareness of the fentanyl crisis and how Arizona kids and families can protect themselves from being fentanyl victims.

We thank you for being here and sharing your important story and for all your work.

We welcome our witnesses and thank them for appearing today. We will begin by swearing you in.

Would you please raise—now please rise—excuse me—and raise your right hand.

Do you swear or affirm under penalty of perjury that the testimony you are about to give is true and correct to the best of your knowledge, information, and belief, so help you God?

Let the record reflect that all witnesses have answered in the affirmative.

You can be seated. Thank you so much.

Please know that your written testimony will be entered into the record in its entirety. Accordingly, we ask that you summarize your testimony in five minutes, but we'll be fine. We'll give you a little extra if you need a little extra. That's up to you. We're going to just go right down the list just like we introduced you and we'll finish with Ms. Fagan Alexander, but let's start with Mr. Clem.

You are recognized for five minutes.

STATEMENT OF CHRIS CLEM

Mr. CLEM. Good morning, Chair, the Members of the Committee. My name is Chris Clem. I am a retired Chief Patrol Agent of the U.S. Border Patrol.

I began my career in 1995 about 150 miles east of here in Lordsburg, New Mexico, as a GS-5 Border Patrol trainee and retired nearly 17 months ago about 250 miles West of here as a Senior Executive Service Chief Patrol Agent in Yuma, Arizona. Therefore, my responses to your questions are based on my recollection of my experiences over the last now 28-plus years.

I spent most of my career along the Southwest border, and I spent a few years in Washington, DC, and New Orleans, Louisiana. I was a career government employee who served under five Presidential Administrations, starting under Clinton and ending under Biden. I was not a political appointee.

I promoted through the ranks through competitive process and commanded four Border Patrol stations across New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. I served as the Deputy Chief Patrol Agent in New Orleans Sector, El Paso Sector, and was Acting Chief in Big Bend, Texas, for nearly six months before being promoted to Chief Patrol Agent of the Yuma, Arizona, Sector for two years until my retirement.

I spent time as an agent in remote locations as well as urban environments, and I can tell you: If you've been to one station, you have been to one station. If you've been to one sector, you have been to one sector. Each location is different with its own set of unique circumstances, from terrain to infrastructure to communities and to threats.

However, the one thing that is consistent across the spectrum, without border security, our agents, our community, the migrants, and our country are vulnerable.

While immigration and border security are closely related, they're not mutually exclusive. However, without proper border security in the form of physical security, Border Patrol agents, strong policies, and consequences, the integrity of the immigration system is compromised and the founding principles surrounding the rule of law suffer.

My statement testimony today will be focused on border security, to which I would be considered a subject matter expert. Immigration, as mentioned, is related but can only be effective and efficient when the border is secured.

It is also my testimony that each administration that I served under made efforts to secure our border based on the requirements of Border Patrol agents except the Biden Administration.

Under President Clinton, a hiring push for more agents began. I was one of them.

Under President Bush and the results of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, infrastructure plans and one of the first national Border Patrol strategies were implemented. Even under President Obama, there were hundreds of miles of border wall constructed, especially early in his terms.

We also know that “build a wall” was a fixture of the Candidate Trump campaign, but became a reality under President Trump.

Let me be clear. President Trump implemented requirements which were a culmination of decades of experience from Border Patrol agents. The wall was much more than a wall. It was a system to include wall technology, access road, and even strong policies to close loopholes.

I will state that the system in place in 2020 was one of the best we could have asked for as a country, even with party politics and funding making things difficult. This ended and came to a screeching halt under President Biden.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2020, Yuma Sector had just over 8,800 arrests. That number leaped to over 114,000 in Fiscal Year 2021, and over 312,000 in Fiscal Year 2022.

This Committee and Congress have access to all available data, and the staunch difference between the previous Administration and the current is gut-wrenching and jaw-dropping. I understand not every threat to our great Nation will come directly across the border, but why would we be willing to risk it?

We know that there are countless gaps and vulnerabilities created along the border, specifically the Southern border. We are on the heels of two recent testimonies from FBI Director Wray that indicate the threats are real.

With hot spots around the world that have happened under President Biden’s Administration, there are more than enough reasons to secure our border and put back in place the plan as intended to include infrastructure, technology, and policies.

We need the wall installed and completed where it makes sense, we need technology installed as intended, and we need to increase the number of Border Patrol agents and border security personnel as requested by senior field leaders.

Last, I want to thank you for holding a field hearing. I have been advocating for more field hearings so we, the people, can meet you and feel represented. While it’s difficult to pull off, it’s essential for Americans to be truly represented.

I understand many will claim this is a political stunt, and I would counter by stating talking about the hearing and not acting on behalf of the community so greatly impacted by this border crisis is the political stunt. I am grateful for your willingness to come to the border again to hear from those that have lived it and are living it today.

My full and complete statement has been submitted. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Clem follows:]

Written Testimony-Chris T. Clem 5/10/24

House Judiciary Committee

Good morning Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Chris Clem and I am a retired Chief Patrol Agent of the US Border Patrol. I began my career in 1995 about 150 miles east of here in Lordsburg, NM as a GS-5 Border Patrol Trainee and retired nearly 17 months ago about 250 miles west of here as the Senior Executive Service Chief Patrol Agent in Yuma, AZ. Therefore, my responses to your questions will be based on my best recollection of my experiences over the last now 28 plus years.

I spent most of my career along the Southwest Border, where I was a canine handler, collateral duty intelligence officer, firearms instructor, and I spent a few years in Washington, DC and New Orleans, LA. I was career government employee who served under five Presidential Administrations starting under Clinton and ending under Biden. I was not a political appointee. I promoted through the ranks through the competitive process and commanded four border patrol stations across New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. I served as the Deputy Chief Patrol Agent in New Orleans Sector, El Paso Sector, Acting Chief in Big Bend, Texas Sector for nearly six months before being promoted to the Chief Patrol Agent of the Yuma, AZ Sector for two years until retirement. I spent time as an agent in remote locations as well as urban environments, and I can tell you if you have been to one station you have been to one station, if you have been to one sector you have been to one sector. Each location is different with its own set of unique circumstances from terrain to infrastructure, to communities and to threats. However, the one thing that is consistent across the spectrum, without border security, our agents, our community, the migrants, and our country are vulnerable. While immigration and border security are closely related, they are not mutually exclusive. However, without proper border security, in the form of physical security, border patrol agents, strong policies and consequences, the integrity of the immigration system is compromised and the founding principles surrounding the rule of law suffer. My statement and testimony today will be focused on Border Security to which I would be considered a subject matter expert, immigration as mentioned is related, but can only be effective and efficient when the border is secured.

It is also my testimony that each administration that I served under made efforts to secure our border based on requirements of the border patrol agents, except the Biden Administration. Under President Clinton a hiring push began for more agents, I was one of them. Under President Bush and as a result of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, infrastructure plans and one of the first National Border Patrol Strategies were implemented. Even under President Obama, there were hundreds of miles of border wall constructed, especially early in his terms. We also know that "build a wall" was a fixture of the Candidate Trump campaign but became a reality under President Trump. Let me be clear, President Trump implemented requirements which were a culmination of decades of experience from border patrol agents, the wall was much more than a wall it was a system to include wall, technology, access roads and even strong policies to close loopholes. I will state that the system in place in 2020 was one of the best we could have asked for as a country even with party politics and funding making things difficult. This ended and came to a screeching halt under Biden. This committee and Congress have access to all the available data, and the

staunch difference between the previous administration and the current is gut wrenching and jaw dropping. I understand not every threat to our great nation will come directly across the border, but why would we be willing to even risk it? We know there are countless gaps and vulnerabilities created along the border, specifically the southern border. We are on the heels of two recent testimonies from FBI Director Wray that indicate the threats are real. With hot spots around the world that have happened under President Biden's Administration, there are more than enough reasons to secure our border and put back in the place the plan as intended to include infrastructure, technology, and policies. We need the wall installed and completed where it makes sense, we need the technology installed as intended and we need to increase the number of border patrol agents and border security personnel as requested by senior field leaders. It is also my opinion that a border security bill should be submitted as a stand-alone bill. This bill should be based on the needs of Border Patrol Field Chiefs as required by their agents to complete their security mission. Immigration and Customs Enforcement investigations and detention agencies should also be included in this package. It is when this bill is signed into law then and only then should a separate immigration system overhaul begin. This will allow border security solutions to stand on the principle of American security and minimize the trade-offs over outside interests for immigration reforms. A standalone border security bill that addresses the obligation of the government to protect its borders and people will not only make us safer, but it will also give a much needed boost to the border patrol agents who have had to be put in the middle of this nightmare with little support and advocacy from the White House.

Lastly, I want to thank you for holding a field hearing. I have been advocating for more field hearings so "We the People" can meet you and feel represented. While it is difficult to pull off, it is essential for Americans to be truly represented. I understand many will claim this is a political stunt, I would counter by stating, talking about the hearing, and not acting on behalf of the communities so greatly impacted by this border crisis is the political stunt. I am grateful for your willingness to come to the border again to hear from those that have lived it and are living it today. I look forward to your questions.

Chair JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Clem. I would just agree with you. It is anything but a political stunt. There's a reason we have Mr. Crane, Mr. Biggs, Mr. Ciscomani from your great State here, and others from around the country. We have the Chair of the Immigration Subcommittee from California, Mr. McClintock, here.

I wish we had some Democrats that would actually show up because it is not a stunt. It's about dealing with a real problem and doing everything we can to highlight how serious it is. So, thank you for your testimony.

Mr. Chilton, you are recognized for five minutes.

STATEMENT OF JIM CHILTON

Mr. CHILTON. Thank you, Mr. Chair and honorable Congressmen.

My name is Jim Chilton. I am a fifth-generation Arizona rancher from the small town of Arivaca Southwest of Tucson. The ranch includes private properties, State school trust lands, and Federal grazing permits. My ancestors drove cattle from Texas to Arizona for 139 years ago.

Do I see a map here? Oh, right.

This map of our 50,000-acre ranch—the Southern end of our ranch is the international boundary for about 5.5 miles. The black lines are our ranch boundaries. The blue lines—is the international border with Mexico, and the red line is the Ruby Road.

Wall construction was stopped on our ranch by President Biden on January 20, 2021, with half a mile left to go on our ranch, and there were additional gaps all along the wall.

For about 10 years, I have collected film from hidden motion-activated cameras of drug packers, previously deported persons, criminals, and other persons not seeking asylum and crossing North through our ranch. Of approximately 100 trails on our ranch, only five have cameras.

[Video shown.]

Mr. CHILTON. I have images now of over 3,050 people coming through the ranch marching North. Are any of these 3,050 terrorists? This is a national security issue.

Simultaneously, the cartel is routing massive numbers of asylum seekers through the end of the wall on our ranch and a gap in California Gulch.

Last month—that's April—approximately 5,460 of these undocumented persons were apprehended, processed, and released. They are wearing street clothes and seeking the Border Patrol and appear to come from all different parts of the world. The amount of trash and human waste left by these people is appalling.

The failure to secure the border allows border crosser deaths. We have had three deaths on our ranch in 2023, and I estimate 35 deaths on our ranch since 1987. The cartel scouts occupy our mountains, and they facilitate flooding drugs into our country, including is the fact that there are devastating crosser-caused fires and, in sum, causes substantial environmental damage.

Part of the solution is to complete the construction of a wall, including fiber-optic cable, electronics, cameras, and sensors.

I believe in legal immigration—not illegal immigration. We are a Nation of immigrants, and they do great things for our country.

Bottom line: Everybody should be legal. My thought is we need to expand the number of people legally coming into the country and secure our border. Right now, it's open, and it's President Biden's fault.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Chilton follows:]

“The Biden Border Crisis: Arizona Perspectives”

Submitted to the

The Committee of the Judiciary

The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman

By

Jim Chilton, Chilton Ranch LLC

May 10, 2024

“The Biden Border Crisis: Arizona Perspectives”

May 10, 2024

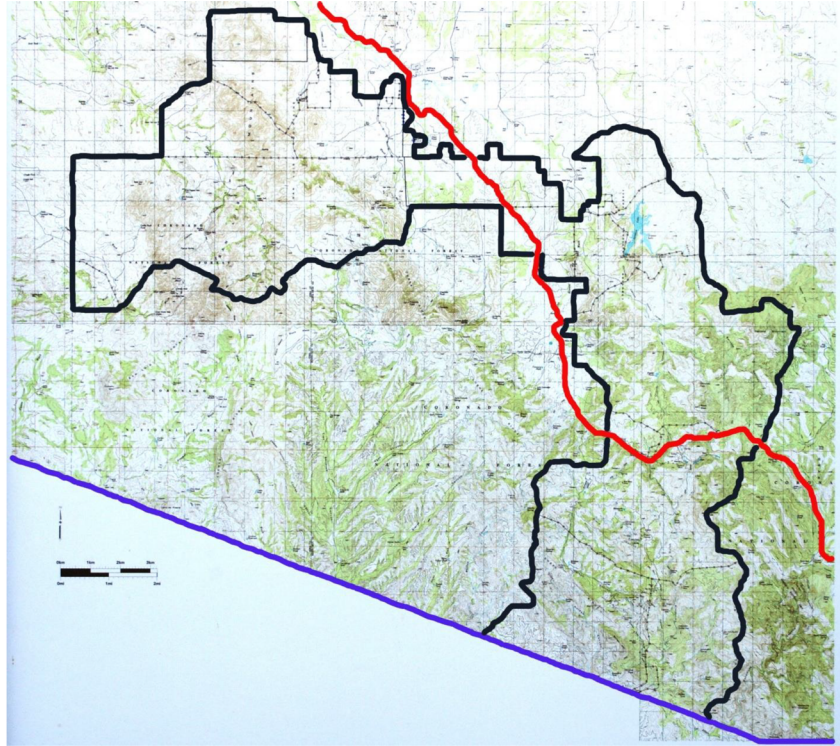
My name is Jim Chilton. I am a 5th generation Arizona rancher from Arivaca, Arizona. Arivaca is a small rural town approximately 55 miles southwest of Tucson, Arizona. Our ranch is adjacent to the town and extends south about 19 miles to the international border with Mexico. The ranch includes private property, State School Trust lands and three federal grazing permits in the Coronado National Forest. My wife and I have been married for over 60 years. Our entire extended family is blessed to be able to preserve our western ranching customs, culture, and heritage dating back to our pioneering ancestors who drove cattle from Texas to Arizona Territory in 1885. We have a long-term view of the necessity to be excellent stewards of the grasslands and have been honored to have received various valued awards for resource conservation and wildlife stewardship.

Our family ranch is in a corridor identified as among the most active for drug smuggling and human trafficking in the Nation. My comments generally relate specifically to the portion of the border at the southern edge of our ranch south of Arivaca, between Nogales to the east and Sasabe, Arizona to the west. However, my border concerns are similar to those of most ranchers in the Tucson Sector of the Border Patrol regardless of whether their ranch is located adjacent to the international boundary or 100 miles north of the border. Department of Homeland Security policy has made us all essentially border ranchers.

I advocate that the international border should be secured at the border. The wall between our Nation and Mexico must be finished and secured in order to prevent drug packers, terrorists, criminals and economic migrants who did not follow legal procedures from entering our country. Chilton Ranch border issues could be resolved by securing the border.

Chilton Ranch and the International Border

The map on the next page is of our 50,000-acre, beef-producing, family ranch. Please notice that the southern end of the eastern part of the ranch is the international boundary for about five-and-one-half miles. Mexico is right across from our ranch boundary.



Chilton Ranch boundaries- South of Arivaca, Arizona and west of Nogales. Five-and-one half miles of the southern end of the ranch is the United States/Mexico international border. The ranch, like many western ranches, is composed of U. S. Forest Service grazing allotments, State School Trust leases and private land. The blue line is the international border with Mexico and the red line is the Ruby Road that runs through much of the ranch.

There are two very distinct types of individuals and groups that cross the international border onto our ranch. Border crossers who are seeking to evade interdiction by the Border Patrol are wearing camouflaged clothes, carpet shoes and often carry identical backpacks. Almost all are men, in stark contrast to other ranch border crossers along the international

boundary who seek Border Patrol apprehension and wear casual street clothes and include women and/or children.

Recommended Solution to Border Crisis

As a sovereign nation, the United States should have complete control of its borders and therefore **only accept legal immigration**. In my opinion, the following actions need to be considered:

1. Complete the construction of the Wall, including all of the planned fiber optic cable, electronics, cameras, and sensors that alert Border Patrol to approaching persons in Mexico in time to interdict them if they try to climb over, cut through or dig under the wall.
2. Hire and train enough Border Patrol Agents to **secure the border at the border 24/7**, together with, if necessary, National Guard and military assistance back-up.
3. Immediately deport apprehended illegal intruders.
4. Retain sufficient welders and other maintenance personnel 24/7 to immediately repair any successful breaches or cuts in the wall.
5. Staff Ports of Entry on the Mexican border and fully equip them to prevent, to the degree possible, drugs and undocumented individuals from entering our country at the ports.
6. Require true asylum claim seekers to be processed at United States embassies, consulates or other government properties **in foreign nations** utilizing the internet for backup personnel in the United States to assist in the processing.
7. Persons seeking economic opportunity do not qualify under the asylum category and need to return to their countries and submit an application for legal admittance.
8. Double or triple the current number of **legal** immigrants permitted to gain qualified entrance into our nation with effective vetting following the legally prescribed procedures. We welcome LEGAL immigrants in a number that can be assimilated and can contribute their future to this nation; we oppose flooding the United States with completely unvetted persons.

Need to complete the Wall

On our ranch, five miles of the Trump wall were well-started, but still under construction, when President Biden was inaugurated on January 20, 2021. One of President Biden's first executive orders was to stop all construction on border security structures. At the end of the Wall on our ranch, there is a "convenient" gap of no effective wall along the international boundary right in a favored entry point for the Cartel drug packers, terrorists, criminals and others sneaking into our nation.

This section of Arizona, including our ranch border, was just described by a Trump-era highly-informed, highly-placed Border Patrol spokesman as leading the entire border in "got-aways"—crossers who are **not** apprehended. In my opinion, President Biden or his successor must finish the wall, including all of the planned fiber optic cable, electronics, sensors and cameras.



Jim Chilton and cousin Jerry Chilton at the end of Trump wall on our ranch. Large gaps were unfinished and fiber optic cable, electronics, sensors and cameras were not installed when the wall construction "stop order" was given.



Large wash crossings like this one on our ranch at the international boundary were left unfinished when wall construction was halted and are currently an open door for Cartel border crossers.

Need to Patrol the Border at the Border

Most importantly, a completed Wall must be patrolled 24/7 and must include the surveillance technology originally planned. Technology alone is NOT the answer; it is a force multiplier. If Border Patrol agents need further assistance to secure the border, the National Guard and then, if this is insufficient, the military should be deployed. The current extremely dangerous situation will not change until the border is actually secure.

With appropriate personnel numbers, a line is simpler to defend rather than the current strategy of protecting thousands of square miles deep into the country north of the International Boundary.

Stop Incentivizing Illegal Crossing

Immediately deport apprehended illegal intruders. Immediate deportation sends a clear message to all would-be border crossers and to the Cartel.

Keep the Wall in Good Repair

The Border Patrol must retain sufficient welders and other maintenance personnel 24/7 to immediately repair any successful breaches. It is my understanding that it takes 20 to 30 minutes or more to cut a bollard-style wall pillar. If Border Patrol is at the wall and the sensors are working, agents can respond to these efforts and would-be entrants can be arrested. Then the wall can be immediately repaired.

North-bound International Border Crossers on Chilton Ranch

For about ten years, my wife Sue and I and my friends at *Secure Border Intel* have collected motion-activated camera film of drug packers, previously deported persons, possible terrorists and other illegal entrants crossing north up the canyons and ridges through our ranch. These persons are not seeking Border Patrol; on the contrary, they are using every technique to evade capture.

Since January 2021, these cameras on our ranch have recorded **evidence of 3,050 unlawful border crossers. I have cameras on only five of about one hundred trails crossing my ranch; the filmed crossers are probably only a very small percentage of the persons coming north along these numerous trails and evading Border Patrol.** Importantly, my Testimony today includes the film of the 3,050 photographed crossers during this Administration.
<https://youtu.be/j2pzKHRwmeY?feature=shared>

On their way north through our ranch, illegal border crossers are wearing camouflaged clothes and carpet shoes and are often carrying identical backpacks. **There have never been any women with small children filmed by our cameras during the last decade.** Approximately, only two percent--of these filmed 3,050 intruders—do appear to be women. Why would a woman hike twenty or more miles over this rugged mountainous terrain when other women just walk across the border and look for immediate apprehension, expecting to be released into the

interior of the nation with a court date many years in the future? Are they being trafficked in the sex trade? Are they previously deported for having committed a crime?

Who are the 3,050 filmed individuals and why are they being allowed to successfully sneak into our nation? One Border Patrol intelligence officer estimates 20% of these crossers are drug packers while other knowledgeable individuals claim the percentage of drug packers on our video evidence is likely significantly greater than 20%. **Most critically, how many of the 3,050 trespassers are potentially TERRORISTS entering our country to do Americans harm?**

Securing the border at the border is a national security issue. There are reports that persons from over one hundred fifty different countries have crossed into the United States during the Biden years including Chinese, Russians, Iranians and persons from Middle Eastern countries.

The aforementioned video documents approximately a five-fold increase, compared with what we were documenting on film prior to January 2021, in the number of totally unknown international entrants seeking to evade detection by choosing this route.

West-bound International Border Crossers on Chilton Ranch

During just 30 days, beginning April 1, 2024, the Tucson Station of the Border Patrol has made approximately **5,460** apprehensions over **142** separate events. These border crossers are generally undocumented migrants dressed in street clothes. **Most all crossed the international boundary at the end of the wall on our ranch or at a major gap in the wall on our ranch.** It appears that these border crossers walking along the United States' side of the wall want to be apprehended, processed by the Border Patrol, transported as necessary, and released into the nation. Those we have personally seen as we were working in our border pastures include mostly young men and women, some with little children. Furthermore, just from looking at these incredible numbers and seeing the people walking west seeking Border Patrol, these migrants appear to come from many different parts of the world.

Mexican Cartel Scouts

What is most outrageous to me, is that Mexican Cartel scouts, occupying some of our ranch mountain tops on US soil, guide these border crossers. The scouts communicate with Cartel operatives through encrypted satellite phones with radio function. Scouts are also equipped with the finest binoculars, night vision and backpack roll-down solar panels to keep their equipment functioning. Their purpose is to know where the Border Patrol is at all times and guide the Cartel drug packers or persons ineligible for asylum to sites where Cartel operatives inside the United States can pick up and then distribute the drugs and people throughout the Nation.

Removing Mexican Cattle

The failure to secure the border is expensive. During the last six months, in cooperation with our Mexican rancher neighbor, I have removed 110 Mexican cattle from our ranch back to Mexico. This work required approximately 129 cowboy-days to get the four-legged "undocumented entrants" out of our southern pastures.

Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity is suing the Forest Service to remove cattle grazing on approximately 150 Forest Service grazing allotments in southern Arizona, including our grazing allotments, on behalf of the Yellow-billed cuckoo. The bird is listed as threatened and if the Center is successful, it would likely cause most of the ranches in southern Arizona to go out of business.

This situation—the failure to secure the border which also results in the uncontrollable entry of Mexican cattle when the Cartel or migrants cuts the fences-- has currently assisted environmental organizations to undertake lawsuits. The open border has interfered with our long-term successful commitment to sustainable resource management of our rangeland. This management system is the product of research at the Santa Rita Research Ranch of the University of Arizona. It is designed for our elevation and for the continued vigor of our plant community. We are strong proponents of this system, called rest-rotation, which means those border pastures that are being directly impacted by the failure to complete the Wall are only grazed by our cattle one quarter of every other year which is 1/8th of each two-year grazing cycle. Our cattle are currently in a pasture about four miles north of the border.

The Mexican cattle issue began when wall-road building personnel had removed the old international border four-strand barbed wire fence, during border road construction in advance of wall construction. Several months after the abrupt termination of wall construction, Homeland Security caused what we call Normandy barricades, together with about three-eighths mile of new barbed wire fence, to be placed in the huge gap left open when wall construction was abruptly halted. However, the railroad rails, connecting the end of the border wall to the Normandy barricades, were placed too high off the ground resulting in an easy entry into my ranch by Mexican cattle.

I personally placed barbed wire along the lower portions of the Normandy barriers to deter Mexican cattle from trespassing onto my grazing allotment. Unfortunately, the barbed wire was promptly cut allowing Mexican cattle to freely pass through. Hoping I could solve the problem, I then spent another entire day getting metal rebar welded onto each Normandy barrier at great expense in time and materials. Once again, the Cartel crossers broke the welds near the end of the wall and bent the rebar to the south resulting in Mexican cattle having easy entry into my ranch. My third try to prevent the entry of Mexican cattle was to weld heavy-duty steel pipe to the Normandy barricades hoping, once again, I had solved the cattle-crossing problem. However, I soon discovered the pipe had been totally removed, again allowing Mexican cattle easy entry onto the ranch.



We have recently spent two more days traveling to and from the border to weld more metal to close the gap.....until one evil group or another decides to get rid of my efforts to keep Mexican cattle from moving into my border pastures which are supposedly being rested in our carefully managed rotation grazing system. Managing for long-term sustainability has been our objective; until the Border wall is completed and the flood of Cartel traffic is actually stopped, we, the border ranchers and our commitment to rangeland conservation, are the only protection provided to the habitat.

Annual Border Costs to Chilton Ranch & Cattle Company LLP

Compared with beef producers distant from the border, I have estimated that the additional cost to me for working to conserve my border pastures and provide waters and long-term rangeland management is about \$60,000 per year. The extra costs include the following:

1. Fixing 13.5 miles of surface pipelines cut by unlawful aliens seeking water; these water infrastructure improvements are the only reliable source of water for cattle and wildlife on major portions of our ranch.
2. Gathering and removing trash left by border crossers;

3. Cattle dying due to ingesting plastic bags discarded by intruders;
4. Regularly (roughly every 48 hours) inspecting twenty-four different wells by two cowboys rather than one cowboy due to border safety concerns; this requirement doubles the time that used to be required.
5. Regularly checking 32 wildlife, stock water troughs/float valves and human drinking fountains often damaged by crossers and then repairing the frequently-encountered damage.
6. Checking Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service exclosures.

Lawsuit Relating to a Forest Service Cattle Exclosure near the Border

The Forest Service created an exclosure during the late 1990s on the southern end of my ranch as a preserve for a threatened species. The recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion requires the Forest Service to attempt to prevent cattle grazing in the exclosure. The problem is that I have found the gate on the road entering the exclosure to be left open about one third of the time when I enter the exclosure to gain my only access to the border wall road. I carefully close it, but it is soon re-opened. It requires hours to get to this site and check it, re-close it, and then it can be opened in minutes by the Cartel or others as soon as we leave. This route is one used by drug packers to move north undetected. This problem is directly a result of the open border.



Mexican cattle can walk into the exclosure through this gate, frequently found open when we check it.

Specifically, the Fish and Wildlife Service requires the Forest Service to exclude cattle from the border exclosure while at the same time Homeland Security fails to secure the border resulting in Mexican cattle having access to the exclosure. The Center for Biological Diversity sues the Forest Service to eliminate cattle grazing because Homeland Security has failed to prevent Mexican cattle from crossing through the border and entering the exclosure. Consequently, if the Center for Biological Diversity is successful in their suit against the Forest Service, the Chiltons and many other border ranch families who work to conserve the grasslands and put water on these lands for wildlife and cattle, pay the price: the termination of their ranch grazing rights on Forest land.

Cartel Armed Battles on Our Ranch

Forest Service and Border Patrol officers have called us and said their Agency does not want them to go check the border exclosure or enter the border area because it is deemed too dangerous. Then, there is the impact on the Forest Service and on us of recent, repeated armed battles between Cartel factions seeking control of the wide-open, unsurveilled entrances. We, the border rancher and our cowboys, check these border areas and exclosures because we are trying to conserve the area **in spite of Cartel conflicts**. In addition to factional battles, there have been firefights on our ranch between Cartel drug packers and gangs ("rip crews") attempting to hijack drug loads.

Forest Fires Started by Cartel Operatives

Arizona borderland residents, ranchers and farmers have suffered hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage due to major **forest fires** set intentionally as decoy operations or accidentally by illegal crossers. On average, border crossers start two forest fires each year on our ranch. These fires cost the Forest Service tax-payer dollars to battle and put fire-fighters and ranch property in danger.

The human and property costs of these fires, like the Monument Fire, the Murphy Complex Fire, Chiricahua Fire and the Horseshoe Fires and many other fires, must also be figured into the cost of NOT securing the border at the border. We have estimated that U. S. Forest Service costs in one year to fight fires caused by border crossers just in Arizona borderlands, including on our ranch, were about \$600 million. We understand that border area Forest Service fires, even when it is known they are started by illegal crossers who are apprehended, are accounted for on the **Forest Service books** rather than more honestly charged to Homeland Security. As a consequence, **the basic failure to enforce homeland security**, the real reason for these recurring costs to the American taxpayer, is obscured from Congress and from the American people.

Drug Crisis and Impact of Cartel Drug Activities on Local Ranchers

Our family ranch is in a corridor identified as among the most active for drug smuggling and human trafficking in the Nation.

From my perspective, it is impossible to separate the drug crisis from the immigration issue. Some border crossers are repeat professionals who work for the Cartel and walk back to Mexico after each fentanyl, heroin, methamphetamine or cocaine delivery. They will look for opportunities to steal items they can carry back. In addition, the Cartel forces other undocumented persons to either pay in cash or at a discounted rate if they pack drugs.

We have been burglarized twice by south-bound drug packers who, after depositing their drug load at GPS sites or safe houses, stole laptops, cameras, firearms, including historic pieces, and other valuable items they carry off on their return to Mexico. This is a typical situation for those of us near the border all across the Tucson Sector. Ranchers in the border area often feel they cannot leave their homes unguarded, even for a few hours, since their homes and ranch buildings are often broken into if someone is not on guard duty. It can be hours before law enforcement can respond to rural calls.

Some would-be immigrant groups, after paying the Cartel to cross, are unaware that they are to be used as decoys and led into probable detection to distract the Border Patrol while the Cartel is running drugs into the United States up another canyon.

Government reports indicate a massive increase in fentanyl traffic through the Arizona border. John R. Modlin, Chief Patrol Agent, Tucson Sector testified on February 7, 2024 at a Congressional Hearing “last year we seized about 700 pounds of fentanyl in my sector between ports of entry...” We wonder how many pounds of fentanyl were packed through our ranch.

The precursors of this drug arrive from China, are off-loaded at Mexican seaports to be processed in Mexican labs, packaged and hidden for transport. This is chemical warfare. Many Border Patrol officers, who were formerly trying to put a dent in this border disaster, have been dispatched to help handle the diversionary tactic of floods of undocumented immigrants crossing the border in the Tucson Sector. This tactic clearly opens the between-ports rural ranching trails with unfinished border wall openings to nearly unimpeded passage. President Biden has signed a bill to hire 87,000 new IRS agents to “patrol” Americans and few new agents to patrol illegal immigration and drug packing.

Border Crosser Human Tragedies

There are terrible human tragedies and abuses faced by border crossers, especially women. Crossers currently have no feasible option but to cross in the hands of the Cartel. I estimate that about thirty-five crossers have died on my ranch which include three during 2023. It is reported by Alvaro Enciso, a Tucson citizen who puts crosses out to mark death sites, that about 4,100 border crossers have died just in Southern Arizona since 1990. Huge numbers of near-fatal experiences are common along with innumerable serious injuries. Women are often abused and raped. The Border Patrol, which is a first-class search and rescue team, together with

humanitarian organizations like the Samaritans, spend much of their time saving mostly lost and abandoned crossers in distress. These human tragedies could be avoided by securing the border at the border.

Border Patrol

We want to emphasize that we support and deeply appreciate the Border Patrol. The agents are polite, well-trained and there is a sincere effort by top officials in the Tucson and Nogales Stations to listen to and try to address ranchers' border issues in our area. Currently, agents struggle with the impossible requirement to deal with large numbers of economic migrants, self-identifying as asylum seekers, whom current Biden policy requires be released into the Nation.

During the last few months, as I was out on our place working, checking cattle, waters and fences, I have not seen a single agent patrolling known drug trails within our approximately fifty square miles of ranch pasture lands just north of the border since most agents have been reassigned and pinned down at totally overwhelmed, immigrant-flooded locations. One agent told me that he was tired of being removed from his border security responsibility to serve as a taxi driver repeatedly transporting unvetted, undocumented, persons to processing locations.

Furthermore, we are incredibly concerned that due to the massive invasion of persons claiming to be asylum seekers, Border Patrol checkpoints along Arivaca Road, Sasabe Road and along other roads heavily used by drug packers have been **closed for months** since agents are focused on processing these individuals and no staff is available to man these checkpoints.

Rancher Family Emotional Costs

The emotional cost to our families is summarized by noting we are all very much aware of what happened to rancher Larry Link the day after he reported a load of drugs on his ranch and was then murdered and to Sue Krentz's husband Rob when he went out to check his ranch waters and was killed (including his dog) by an illegal who then escaped into Mexico. Myself and others in our area have been called during the Biden Administration by Border Patrol and told NOT to go to our border pastures because competing factions of drug cartels were, at that point, conducting armed warfare ON U.S. PROPERTY in our border pastures, or just immediately south of the border in shooting range, over control of these valuable drug trails.

Environmental Costs

Much of the border area includes national forests, (like the Coronado on which we have pastures), conservation areas, national monuments, Indian reservations and wildernesses. These federally designated areas are open, little-patrolled routes, often with uncompleted wall sections most favored by the cartel-led operations. The Border Patrol reported at a meeting we attended that undocumented crossers have left a reported average of 8.5 pounds of trash apiece on these lands. It is estimated that over 25,000 tons of garbage have been dropped by crossers in the Tucson Sector alone since 1992. Additionally, thousands of miles of wildcat roads and trails

resulting from Cartel operations have had severe adverse environmental impacts on border conservation areas.

In conclusion, the entire list of impacts on lives, property and conservation management can only be stopped by actually securing our border at the border.

JAMES K. CHILTON, JR.*5-10-24*

Born in 1939, Jim Chilton, a fifth generation Arizona rancher, was raised on farms and ranches. In 1979, Mr. Chilton, together with his father and brother, founded Chilton Ranch & Cattle Company. In 1987, Mr. Chilton and his wife Sue purchased a 78-square-mile ranch south of Arivaca, Arizona.

A graduate of Arizona State University, he earned a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Science in Economics, and a Master of Arts in Political Science. Prior to forming his own municipal investment banking firms, Mr. Chilton was Senior Vice President and Manager of the Shearson/American Express Public Finance Division for the western United States. Prior to his municipal finance career, Mr. Chilton served U.S. Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona for three years as a Special Assistant.

Mr. Chilton was honored as Rancher of the Year by the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association (2002) and by the Arizona Farm Bureau (2005). In 2005, Mr. Chilton received the True Grit Award from the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association and the Individual of the Year Award from the Arizona/New Mexico Coalition of Counties. In 2005, he and his wife received The Arizona Farm Bureau Environmental Stewardship Award. In 2018, Mr. and Mrs. Chilton received the Arizona Association of Natural Resource Conservation Districts Arizona Conservation Leadership Award.

Chair JORDAN. Well said. Thank you, Mr. Chilton.
 Mr. Kartchner, you are recognized.
 Just, yes, pull that microphone nice and close. Go right ahead.

STATEMENT OF JACOB KARTCHNER

Mr. KARTCHNER. Mr. Chair, Members of this Committee, I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today and for your willingness to come here and identify where the problem lies.

I'm a fifth-generation resident of Cochise County with both sides of my family ranching and raising families here for over 100 years. I'm a rancher within the border region and recently retired from law enforcement.

Over my lifetime in Cochise County and my tenure with the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, I have seen the ebbs and flows of illegal immigration and the effects that it has on those of us that live in rural Arizona. This is the worst I've ever seen.

Growing up, there were always those wanting to come to America for a better life, the American Dream as it were. Those folks would pass through, maybe stop and ask for water or food, and be on their way. Then larger groups started coming through cutting holes in fences, draining water tanks, leaving trails of trash in their wake, and, in some cases, succumbing to the elements.

I ranched throughout Cochise County and dealt firsthand with the border-related issues. The environmental impact caused by millions of people coming through has devastated ranch lands in Cochise County, making it more difficult for ranching families to continue their legacy and heritage.

Several multigenerational ranchers in Cochise County have sold over the last decade to large corporations or absentee owners in part, if not all, due to the increasing pressure felt by the ongoing border crisis.

Cochise County has been on the front lines of this crisis for decades, and I've had the privilege of serving those who are affected on a daily basis: Cochise County citizens and ranchers.

During the last 10 years of my career, I was part of the ranch patrol and SABRE team, which consisted of a handful of guys dedicated to identifying the threats from international smuggling organizations and doing everything we could to stop them.

SABRE stands for the Southern Arizona Border Region Enforcement team, and it's a collaborative effort with other law enforcement partners. Live-feed game cameras are set up in the rural areas between the ports of entry to detect illegal activity.

Prior to 2020, the border issues in Cochise County were what we referred to as controlled chaos, in that law enforcement agencies working together were able to respond and address issues as they were detected.

The traffic here in the majority of Southern Arizona is not give-up or asylum seekers, as seen on the limited media coverage. What comes across the Arizona desert are generally males 18–40 wearing camouflage from head to toe, including wearing carpet over their shoes to make it harder to detect and track them.

Since 2021, the detected flow of military-age males that has been detected on the SABRE program has increased over tenfold from the years prior. In drug-smuggling or events where the State crime

was committed, deputies would take disposition on the cases, but in cases involving illegal immigration, coordination was made with the corresponding Border Patrol stations for the apprehensions. Of all the suspected illegal entries documented by the SABRE program since its inception, less than 35 percent of all detections were apprehended and identified.

Since 2021, when I would encounter these individuals, our conversations would turn to where they're going, where they come from, or why. They would always tell me about these commercials that they would see in their home countries, and there would be people on the TV telling them, "Come to Oregon, come to New York, come to Chicago. There's a job waiting for you, no questions asked." The destination and the job that they were seeking weren't always the same, but multiple times—these commercials would always come up.

So, they would also tell me that it was costing anywhere between \$6,000–\$8,000—sometimes more—that they had to pay the cartel to cross. Most of the people that I had contact with didn't have that kind of money to pay the cartel, telling me they would owe that amount to the cartel once they reached their final destination, wherever that may be.

As the trafficking increased, so did the need for transportation of the cartels' chattel, and I call them chattel because they, at that point, are property of the cartel. The cartels use social media platforms to recruit drivers to pick these folks up and transport them to larger transportation hubs such as Tucson or Phoenix.

These load drivers, as they're called, are told by their handlers where to go and when to run from law enforcement. These drivers come from all walks of life, ranging in age from 13 to over 70, drug addicts to suburban grandmothers, but all have one thing in common: They all work for transnational human-trafficking organizations.

Offers to pay cash money for drivers entice people from all over the country to come to Southern Arizona and transport illegal aliens to further the cartels' operation. This operation comes at a cost for residents in Cochise County with over a dozen deaths from high-speed collisions over the last couple of years, all tied to human-smuggling events.

Am I OK? OK.

These incidents have become so commonplace that, even when the light turns green, residents of Cochise County wait to see if a high-speed load driver is going to run the red light before proceeding into the intersection. When one of these load drivers does stop or evade law enforcement, a common response is for every occupant of the vehicle to run in a different direction, lessening the chance of capture. This puts not only criminals already fleeing from law enforcement onto our ranches into our neighborhoods, but also unknown aliens who are literally in a foreign country who will do anything to avoid capture and have to try and find a way to survive.

Again, thank you for being here and allowing me to speak, but as of today, we, as a country, have no control nor knowledge of who or what is coming across our borders. Our Southern border is being

controlled by the cartels, and we need to find a way to regain that control.

I'm happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kartchner follows:]

Congressional Testimony of Jacob Kartchner, 05-10-24

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I want to thank you allowing me to speak, and for your willingness to come here to identify where the problem is.

I am a fifth generation resident of Cochise County, with both sides of my family ranching and raising families here for over 100 years. I am a rancher within the border region, and recently retired law enforcement. Over my lifetime in Cochise County, and my tenure with the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, I have seen ebbs and flows of illegal immigration, and the effects it has on those of us that live in rural Arizona. This is the worst I have ever seen.

Growing up there were always those wanting to come to America for a better life, the "American Dream" as it were. Those folks would pass through, maybe stop and ask for water or food, and be on their way. Then larger groups started coming through, cutting holes in fences, draining water tanks, leaving trails of trash in their wake. I have ranched throughout Cochise County and have dealt first hand with border related issues. The environmental impact caused by millions of people coming through have devastated ranchlands in Cochise County, making it more difficult for ranching families to continue their legacy and heritage. Several multi-generational ranches have sold over the last decade to large corporations or absentee owners, in part if not all due to the increasing pressure felt by the ongoing border issues. Cochise County has been on the front lines of this crisis for decades, and I had the privilege of serving those who were affected on a daily basis, Cochise County citizens and ranchers.

During the last 10 years of my career, I was a part of the Ranch Patrol and SABRE team, which consists of a handful of guys dedicated to identifying threats from international smuggling organizations, and doing everything we could to stop them. SABRE stands for the Southern Arizona Border Region Enforcement Team, and in a collaborative effort with other law enforcement partners, live feed cameras were set up in the rural areas between the ports of entry to detect illegal activity. Prior to 2020, the border issues in Cochise County were what has been called controlled chaos, in that law enforcement agencies, working together, were able to respond and address issues as they were detected. The traffic here, and the majority of southern Arizona, is not the "give-up" or asylum seekers, as seen on limited media coverage. What comes across the Arizona desert are generally males, ages 18-40, wearing camouflage from head to toe, including wearing carpet over their shoes to make it harder to detect and track them. Since 2021, the detected flow of "military aged" males has increased over tenfold from the years prior.

In drug smuggling or events where a state crime was committed, deputies would take disposition of the case, but in cases involving immigration violations, coordination is made with the corresponding Border Patrol station for apprehensions. Of all the suspected illegal entries documented by the SABRE program since it's inception, less than 35% of all detections were apprehended and identified.

Since 2021, when I would encounter these individuals, conversation would turn to where they were going, where they came from, and why? On multiple occasions I was told of television commercials in their home country, advising them if they came to ...New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Chicago,

Anywhere USA...there were companies looking for workers, and that they could have a job, no questions asked. Landscaping, pool services, agriculture, hospitality, the jobs weren't always the same, nor the destination, but the same story of television commercials was ever present. Who is advertising and why? These same people would also tell me that they had to pay the cartel for crossing the border, costing them anywhere from \$6,000-\$8,000 or more. Most of the people I had contact with did not have that kind of money to pay the cartel, telling me they would "owe" that amount to the cartel once they reached their final destination, wherever that may be.

As the traffic increased, so did the need for transportation of the cartel's chattel. The cartels use social media platforms to recruit drivers to pick up these folks and transport them to the larger transportation hubs such as Tucson or Phoenix. These "load drivers" are told by their handlers where to go, and when to run from law enforcement. These drivers come from all walks of life, ranging in age from age 13 to 70, drug addicts to suburban grandmothers, but all have one thing in common. They all work for transnational human trafficking organizations. Offers to pay cash money for drivers entice people from all over the country to come to southern Arizona and transport illegal aliens to further the cartel's operation.

This operation comes at a cost for residents in Cochise County, with over a dozen deaths from high speed collisions over the last couple of years, all tied to human smuggling incidents. Daily instances with loads of human "cargo" being put at risk for a fast dollar, in furtherance of the cartel's human smuggling operation. These incidents have become so common place that even when a light turns green, residents of Cochise County wait to see if a high speed load driver is going to run the red light before proceeding into an intersection. When one of these "load drivers" does stop or evade law enforcement, a common response is to have every occupant of the vehicle run in a different direction, lessening the chance of capture. This puts not only the criminal, already fleeing from law enforcement onto our ranches and into our neighborhoods, but also the unknown aliens, who are literally in a foreign country, who will do anything to avoid capture and have to try to find a way to survive.

I again thank you for being here today and allowing me to speak, but as of today, we as a country have no control, nor knowledge, of who or what is coming across our border. Our southern border is being controlled by the cartels, and we need to find a way to regain that control. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully,

Jacob Kartchner

Chair JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Kartchner. It, again, underscores why Mr. Ciscomani's legislation on the high-speed chases is so, so important.

Ms. Fagan Alexander you are recognized for five minutes.

STATEMENT OF JILL FAGAN ALEXANDER

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Chair Jordan, other Members of Congress, thank you—

Chair JORDAN. Pull that real close there.

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Thank you.

Chair JORDAN. I want to hear you.

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Chair Jordan and other Members of Congress, thank you for coming to Arizona to hear one perspective of how the open border is impacting families in Arizona.

I recently lost two of my boys just three weeks apart due to the fentanyl crisis in Arizona.

My 20-year-old, Sam, had been in and out of detention since he was 14 years old, mostly for alcohol-related incidents. He typically stayed away from hard drugs, but at 17, he went to prison for a year for a crime he committed while he was high on meth. When he got out, he was excited to stay clean. He wouldn't even take his ADD meds, because he was worried he might abuse them.

Over the next year, he worked hard at setting up a new life. He found a girlfriend and got a job, a car, and an apartment. He seemed to be doing well for a while, but then it all began to fall apart.

His girlfriend moved out because he started using it again, and not just pot or meth. He was buying fentanyl because it was cheap, potent, and easy to find. He lost his job, and on April 6, 2023, while he was high, he got arrested.

On intake, he was honest about his drug use. Deputies discovered he also had COVID, so they put him in isolation which, together with coming down from fentanyl, put him at greater risk for self-harm.

Experiencing the effects of COVID and fentanyl withdrawal, Sam reported intense muscle and bone pain, chills, sweats, uncontrollable shaking and vomiting, and he decided to end his life by hanging himself in jail. It wasn't until days later that his dad and I were notified and eventually allowed to see him while he was on life support waiting for a determination of brain death.

Even though Sam had quite often made poor choices, he was a good person, and he had a good heart. When he got his driver's license after getting out of prison, he chose to be an organ donor. Our family honors his wish, and on April 16th, Sam was able to donate his best kidney to his 30-year-old cousin who was on dialysis due to pharmaceutical kidney failure and for whom our family had been praying for months would find a donor.

Sam's other kidney and pancreas were gifted to a woman in her thirties, his liver to a man in his forties, and his heart, by strange coincidence or by miracle, was gifted to the adopted son of my cousin's friend who was near death due to congenital heart complications.

As my family tried to move forward from this tragic experience, we all suffered from grief to varying degrees. Every time one of my

kids left the house, I was sure I was going to get a call that they had been killed. My constant thoughts and prayers were for their safety.

We went to clean out Sam's apartment, and I took out all the paraphernalia I found before letting the kids in. I threatened them not to bring anything home that they shouldn't, but I let them each pick a few things of Sam's that they wanted: A Dolly Parton shirt, a Village Inn baseball cap, a llama planting cup, and a cup that says, strangely, "Mountains above the rest, dad." It became some of our newfound favorite possessions.

My 18-year-old son floundered in his last semester of schooling as did his 16-year-old brother. Gabe, my 13-year-old, ended up getting suspended for forgetfully bringing one of Sam's pocketknives to school in his jacket. I couldn't believe it, but I also couldn't blame him. My 11-year-old daughter became my constant shadow, unwilling to be too far away from me for any amount of time. None of us could think straight. We were all wrapped in a fog of loss and sadness.

During the week that Gabe was suspended at home, he decided a change was in order for his schooling. He picked out some online classes and was excited. As only a 13-year-old can, he confidently told us of his plans to finish high school in just one year and to take over the world.

On Wednesday, May 3rd, just 2.5 weeks after Sam's honor walk and organ donation, Gabe was found unresponsive with no pulse, no respiration, and he was blue in the face. Gabe had never shown signs of drug use. I have no knowledge that he was a regular user of any substance.

We found out later that he had a pill found at Sam's house, and we surmised that he took it that day. I think he thought it would be fun to see what it was like to get high on oxy.

When he said he wasn't feeling well and threw up, I think he realized he was in danger, and he was reaching out for help. I think after he showered and said he was going to take a nap, and he thought he was out of the woods. I think he thought he was going to wake up that day, but he never woke up again.

Valiant attempts were made by his dad, sheriff's officers, first responders, and medical staff to save him, but that night, we were given the news that Gabe had also suffered anoxic brain injury due to respiratory failure caused by fentanyl poisoning.

Through another nightmarish week in the ICU, we decided to give the gift of life again through organ donation. I cannot describe the grief and pain we personally experienced nor the shock of the organ donor network coordinators as we met again and made arrangements for Gabe's gifts.

Another honor walk was done, and on May 9, 2023—one year ago yesterday—Gabe was able to impact seven lives and families by gifting his kidneys to two men in their seventies, his liver to a 15-year-old boy, and two of his heart valves and his cornea to others.

I never set out to be an influencer, a politician, or a firebrand for change, but the things I learned after my boys were, in essence, murdered by fentanyl dealers both shocked and angered me into action.

Gabe's pill was not unique. The DEA states that 7 out of 10 pills they've seized and tested have more than a lethal dose of fentanyl. The pill that Gabe took that ended his life had more than five times the lethal dose of fentanyl.

Everyone knows the statistics on fentanyl deaths, but no one believes it will happen to them, just like I didn't. Did my boys play a part in their own deaths? Absolutely. They made their choices, and our family has to live with them. This virtual flood of pills both into and through Arizona, which has dramatically worsened in the current Administration, allowed my boys to make choices they may not have without the current open border crisis.

Nothing now will stop me from teaching kids that one pill one time can kill, from educating parents that Narcan at home saves lives, and from trying to close the border while stiffening penalties for those producing, importing, and selling fentanyl in our country knowing that every pill that comes into Arizona in this border crisis is likely a death sentence for another child like mine or yours. I am asking our government to do the same.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fagan Alexander follows:]

Written Testimony of Jill E Fagan Alexander, mother of
 Samuel Teancum Fagan, February 20th, 2003 - April 16th, 2023
 Gabriel Braddock Fagan, July 13th, 2009 - May 9th, 2023
 House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary
 The Biden Border Crisis: Arizona Perspectives

May 10, 2024

Good morning, Chairman Jordan and representatives Biggs, McClintock, Bentz, Ciscomani, Crane, and other members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide one family's perspective on how the open border policies of this administration have impacted us in Arizona.

Exactly one year ago this week, I lost the second of two of my boys just three weeks apart due to the fentanyl crisis in Arizona.

My 20-year-old, Sam, had been in and out of detention since he was 14 years old, mostly for marijuana and alcohol related incidents. When he was 16, he lost two friends to overdoses, so he typically stayed away from hard drugs. But at 17, he went to prison for a little over a year for a crime he committed while he was high on meth. When he got out, he was excited about staying clean. In fact, he wouldn't even take his ADD meds because he was worried he might abuse them.

Over the next year, he worked really hard at setting up a new life. He found a girlfriend, and got a job, a car, and an apartment. He seemed to be doing really well for a while, but then it all began to fall apart. His girlfriend moved out because he started using again, and not just pot or meth; he was buying fentanyl because it was cheap, potent, and easy to find. He lost his job, and on April 6th, 2023 while he was high, he got pulled over for passing out behind the wheel. He ran from the police, crashed his car, and was eventually arrested.

On intake, Sam was honest about his drug use. Deputies also discovered he had COVID, so they put him into isolation, which, together with coming down off of fentanyl, put him at greater risk for self harm. Experiencing the effects of COVID and fentanyl withdrawal, Sam reported intense muscle and bone pain, chills, sweats, diarrhea, fever, uncontrollable shaking, nausea and vomiting...and he decided to end his life by hanging himself with his blanket in jail.

It wasn't until days later that his dad and I were notified of the incident and eventually allowed to see him while he was on life support waiting for a determination of brain death after his catastrophic brain injury from asphyxiation. Even though Sam had quite often made poor choices, he was a good person with a good heart. When he got his driver's license after getting out of prison, of his own volition, he opted to become an organ donor.

Our family honored his wish, and on April 16th, 2023, Sam was able to donate his best kidney to his cousin who was on dialysis due to pharmaceutical kidney failure and for whom our family had been

praying for months would find a kidney donor. Sam's other kidney and pancreas were gifted to an Arizona woman in her 30s; his liver went to a California man in his 40s; and his heart, by strange coincidence (or by miracle), was donated to the adopted son of my cousin's friend, who was near death due to congenital heart complications.

As my family tried to move forward from this tragic experience, we all suffered from grief to varying degrees. In the weeks that followed, we didn't always make very good choices because of the pain we were swimming in. Every time one of my kids left the house, I was sure I was going to get a call that they had died. I made them each promise to make good choices, and I prayed they would. My constant thoughts were prayers for the safety of my children.

As a family, we went to clean out Sam's apartment, and I took out all the paraphernalia I found laying around before letting the kids in. I reminded them not to break my heart by bringing anything home they shouldn't, but I let them each pick a few things of Sam's that they wanted to keep. A Dolly Parton shirt, a Village Inn baseball cap, a llama planting pot, and cups that said "A Mountain Above the Rest, Dad" were some of our newfound favorite possessions.

My 18 year old son floundered in his last semester of schooling, as did his 16 year old brother. Gabe, my 13-year-old, ended up getting suspended for forgetfully bringing one of Sam's pocket knives to school in his jacket pocket. I couldn't believe it, but I really couldn't blame him either. None of us could think straight due to the flood of grief. And my 11 year old daughter became my constant shadow, unwilling to be too far away from me for any amount of time. We were all wrapped in a fog of loss and sadness.

During the week that Gabe was suspended at home, he decided a change was in order for his schooling. He picked out some online classes and was excited about this new opportunity. As only a 13 year old can, he confidently told us of his plans to finish high school in a year and take over the world!

On Wednesday, May 3rd, just two and a half weeks after Sam's honor walk and organ donation, after complaining of not feeling well that day to his dad, Gabe was found unresponsive with no pulse or respirations and was blue in the face.

Gabe had never shown signs of drug use. I have no knowledge that he was a regular user of *any* substance. We found out later that he had a pill found at Sam's house, and we surmise that he took it that day. I think it was a fluke, and he thought it would be fun to get high on what he thought was oxy. When he told his dad he wasn't feeling well and threw up, I think he realized he was in danger and was reaching out for help. I think after he showered and said he was going to take a nap, he thought he was out of the woods. I think he thought he was going to wake up that day, and so did his dad.

But he never woke up again.

Desperate and valiant attempts were made by his dad, sheriff's officers, first responders, and medical staff to save his life, but that night we were given the news that Gabe had also suffered anoxic brain injury due to respiratory failure caused by fentanyl poisoning.

Through another nightmarish week in the ICU, we decided as a family to give the gift of life again through organ donation. I cannot describe the grief and pain we personally experienced, nor the shock of the donor network coordinators as we met, again, and made arrangements for Gabe's "gifts." Another honor walk was put together, and on May 9th, Gabe was able to impact seven lives and families by gifting his kidneys to two Arizona men in their 70s, his liver to a 15-year-old boy in California, and two of his heart valves and his corneas to others.

I never set out to be an influencer, a politician, or a firebrand for change, but the things I learned after my boys were, in essence, murdered by fentanyl dealers both shocked and angered me into action. More than 50% of the fentanyl supply for the whole United States is coming in through the Arizona border, along with who knows what else. And Gabe's pill was not unique. The DEA states that seven out of ten pills they've seized and tested have more than a lethal dose of fentanyl. The pill Gabe took that ended his life had more than **FIVE TIMES** the lethal dose!

Did my boys play a part in their own deaths? Absolutely, they made their choices. Our family will live with this for the rest of our lives. But this virtual *flood* of pills both into and through Arizona, which has dramatically worsened under the current administration, allowed my boys to make choices they may not have without the current open border crisis.

Nothing should stop our government from ending this massacre of our children and young adults through rampant, unintentional fentanyl poisoning. Nothing should stop our government from securing our border through appropriate resource provision and management. Nothing should stop our government from disincentivizing people to break our laws and bring harm to our country.

And nothing now will stop me from teaching kids that one pill one time can kill. Nothing will keep me from educating parents about the fact that Narcan at home saves lives. And nothing will deter me from trying to close the border while stiffening penalties for those producing, importing, and selling fentanyl in our country, knowing that every pill that comes into Arizona is likely a death sentence for someone's child and a cause of grief for another family like mine.

Thank you.

Jill E Fagan Alexander, BSN
Mother of 9, wife, labor nurse

Chair JORDAN. Thank you. Thank you. Said as only a mom can say it, so we appreciate you being here and for your testimony.

The Chair now recognizes the Chair of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Mr. McClintock from California.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you all for coming today.

Mr. Clem, during a visit with Border Patrol agents last year in Yuma, I reminded them Congress has no power to enforce the law. Our role is to write the laws. I asked them what laws they needed us to write to be able to better do their jobs. They answered unanimously: We don't need new laws. We need to enforce the laws we already have.

Obviously, we can and we have written laws to make it easier for future Presidents to secure the border, as Donald Trump did, and make it harder for them to open the border, as Biden has done, but is this still mainly a question of enforcement?

Mr. CLEM. Yes, sir. I would agree with that. The laws and the books that have been written over the last decades allow us to do our job. It is the policy and the direction coming out of the Executive Branch that directs how we're going to do things. (A) U.S.C. 1325 clearly says if you cross the border outside of a port of entry, it is against the law, regardless of your intent.

So, yes, I don't believe we need new laws. I think we just need new leadership and direction to encourage us to continue to enforce the laws.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Now, as I recall, on Inauguration Day, our borders were pretty much secure. The Remain in Mexico policy of the Trump Administration slowed phony asylum claims to a trickle. The border wall was nearing completion. We were actually enforcing court-ordered deportations, returning illegals to their own communities, where word got out very quickly it's not worth paying the cartels thousands of dollars because you are just going to end up back here.

The laws didn't change on inauguration day. The Presidency did. On that first day, Joe Biden rescinded the Executive Orders that Trump had issued to enforce our laws.

What differences did you see on the ground between the days before the inauguration and the days we're seeing today?

Mr. CLEM. I can tell you that, in October 2020, Yuma Sector averaged—where I was going to be—25 arrests a day. It went up in November to 34 a day, up to about 54 a day in December, and 119 in January. By May 2021, it went up to over 500 a day.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, we went from 8,800 arrests in 2020 in Yuma, to 114,000 in 2021, and to 312,000 in 2022. So, that is a direct result of the Executive Orders that pretty much undermined and undid everything that we had worked toward over a culmination of several years.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. On the ground, as a law enforcement officer, what change did you have in the orders you received from on high when the Administration changed?

Mr. CLEM. It wasn't so much of any direct orders to stop doing or do anything. It was just the fact that the floodgates had been opened.

When you are dealing with a thousand arrests a day and you only have a couple hundred Border Patrol agents working in a 24-hour cycle, it quickly adds up, and it ties our hands. Our agents were pretty much relegated to process—transportation and processing and getting people processed and out as quickly as possible. That was really what was the direction we were heading.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Current law requires that asylum claims be detained until their claim is resolved. The Trump Administration implemented the Remain in Mexico policy and the Safe Third Country policy that allowed claimants to remain free in those countries while their claims were being heard.

What was the effect of this policy on the number of illegals claiming asylum that you encountered, and was the rescinding of this policy by Biden largely responsible for the influx that you just described?

Mr. CLEM. Yes. I have no doubt in my mind that the rescission of the Migrant Protection Protocol led to the mass incursions we started seeing.

I want to make something very clear. The majority—and I would say an overwhelming majority—I don't recall people in my custody actually seeking asylum. It was through the removal process while we were processing them did they claim fear which offers them an asylum hearing.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. They're all trained to do that?

Mr. CLEM. Right. They're trained. These are all folks that are not seeking asylum. They are using it as a defense.

When you end the Migrant Protection Protocol, which basically was closing loopholes, that word got out so quickly that if you make it, you get to stay, and it ultimately put us back in a catch-and-release mindset.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Kartchner, what are you seeing in Cochise County with respect to criminal cartels and affiliated gangs? Are they now operating here in American communities, and what does that mean for the safety of our neighborhoods?

Mr. KARTCHNER. As far as the criminal cartels—as in my statement, the criminal cartel—or the Mexican cartels control the border, and they control that from both sides of the line.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Have they now permeated into our country?

Mr. KARTCHNER. The majority of what I've seen through investigations and everything else—there are players within the Phoenix area, within the Tucson area. That's where the coordination for these load drivers is from people that are already in the U.S., not—

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, local law enforcement in my community in California told me of one of the nearby rural towns that became a place where MS-13 brought its victims from Los Angeles to murder, and there are absolutely gruesome stories of faces being carved off, fingers severed digit by digit.

Can we expect this sort of violence to proliferate here as MS-13 and other violent gangs establish stronger footholds in our communities?

Mr. KARTCHNER. I can speak to what I've seen here in Cochise County, and Cochise County is not where people are staying. The cartels do operate there, but we're simply a pass through.

Further out in the country—in Ohio, California, and New York—that’s where I believe that you’re going to see probably some of that cartel.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. That’s why Border Patrol have been warning us for years to warn our communities outside of the international boundary that every community is becoming a border town?

Mr. KARTCHNER. Yes. Correct.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chair JORDAN. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Arizona, who has been working on this issue nonstop, Congressman Biggs, is recognized.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thank you for bringing this hearing here.

Thank you to our witnesses who have given us amazing testimony. We appreciate you being here.

Thank you to the audience for being here. The police presence and Mayor Murphy, thank you, and the town of Sahuarita.

Then, I see at the back of the room my old friend from the State Senate, Frank Antenori, and I would just advise the police you might to want haul that guy out right now. Just saying.

So, earlier this week, we had a briefing—some of us did—with Chief Modlin, who is the Sector Chief for this sector, the Tucson Sector. I want to give you some startling figures.

So, from 2018–2020, the encounters averaged 60,000 a year in this sector—in Tucson Sector. It had been higher in 2019 for sure. In 2021, that number was 190,000—190,000 encounters in 2021. In 2022, there were 250,000 encounters. In 2023, it was 373,000 encounters, and year to date, it exceeds 350,000, and they anticipate that they will exceed 700,000 encounters in the Tucson Sector by the end of the Fiscal Year which is September 30th.

I’m not counting or including gotaways, both known and unknown. I’m not figuring into the fact that CBP has now changed how you count known and unknown gotaways, which actually will impact how you count them.

So, I want to reiterate—Chief, you told us at the time, and you’ve now testified twice, but I have got to get this. Yuma Sector—you were the Chief in 2020—what was the total annual count?

Mr. CLEM. It was just over 8,800 arrests in 2020.

Mr. BIGGS. Right.

Mr. CLEM. Then, it went up to 114,000 at the end of Fiscal Year 2021.

Mr. BIGGS. When we look at it, they’re averaging somewhere North of 350 a day in Yuma still. That’s what I’ve been told. That’s the report.

What does that do to communities? Let’s just take Yuma for one second. To go from 8,800 encounters, we know—and I’ve been there. I saw it when it was just overcrowded and booming.

What happens to a community like Yuma who has one hospital, and you have all those people coming in? You’re having to release them because you have no place to put them, and neither does anywhere else on the Southwest border.

Mr. CLEM. Yes. Thank you for that question. I think it’s very important for people to realize that, even if one geographic location

is getting hit very hard like Yuma did, others are suffering as well. We take care of each other along the way.

In a place like Yuma, the majority of the year, there's only about 100,000 residents. There's a lot of winter visitors that come down there and add to the community. When you arrest over 100,000 people—that matches and exceeds the community—it becomes a problem. There's only one food bank. There is only one large non-government organization that was capable of handling that, and there's only one hospital.

So, it took an entire community to rally around the Border Patrol and thank goodness they did, because we were already overwhelmed sitting on average of 5,000–6,000 people a day that we would have to release. The NGO would take them and help us, so we weren't releasing them to the street because there's no bus station. There's one airport that people can fly to Phoenix out of, but it was very difficult.

So, thank goodness the NGO stepped up, but so did the entire community. The hospital—my understanding is there is still \$20–\$30 million in unpaid bills from migrants that were showing up directly because we could not get out there and respond quick enough.

Mr. BIGGS. There were times that the ER was filled with illegal aliens. The maternity ward was filled with illegal aliens. So, it really, really impacted the community. You had farmers that had to plow under fields because they had been contaminated.

Now, Mr. Chilton, at the edge of your ranch where the fencing ends, not too far away—just a couple miles—I don't know how to describe it—an encampment that's being run. It's highly—I've been there. It's unsanitary. They're rolling people through there.

How many people have come around that edge of your ranch and filtered through there?

Mr. CHILTON. According to one Border Patrol officer, 5,640 people have come around the end of the wall on our ranch and through California Gulch—which is a huge gap—and they walk to the West to this migrant camp that you spoke of—5,640 people in April alone.

Mr. BIGGS. They're moving people out—just so you understand, there might be 100–150 there, and then Border Patrol will get to them, and they'll take them out, and then it's immediate filled back up, that encampment.

Mr. CHILTON. You are correct. I've talked to Border Patrol officers, and they've said, "We used to be a security force and now we're just glorified taxi drivers."

Mr. BIGGS. So, thanks for that, Mr. Chilton.

Then, Mr. Kartchner, the high-speed chases and the SABRE force. We could talk about what Sheriff Daniels has done in Cochise County and how he has really tried to secure that county quite a bit.

Tell us a little bit about the impact of the high-speed chases through the town of Sierra Vista.

Then, while you're thinking that, I'll just tell you that I was down there once, and a high-speed chase had just ended in a fatal accident. So, please tell us.

Mr. KARTCHNER. As I stated in my statement, over a dozen deaths have occurred directly tied to these immigration or high-speed chases coming through.

The sheriff has done a fabulous job of utilizing what resources we have to try and address it. We've brought in law enforcement partners from different parts of the State to help out with that, but they continue to happen as long as the cartel is going to continue to recruit these people.

Like I said, anywhere from the age 13 is the youngest that we've had. He took mom's car from Phoenix and drove down to Cochise County to pick up however many unknowns to—

Mr. BIGGS. Kids who can't even—don't know how to drive?

Mr. KARTCHNER. Correct.

Mr. BIGGS. They're told to not stop and just go fast and keep going?

Mr. KARTCHNER. One particular 17-year-old driver told us that, "yes, he was just playing a real-life game of Grand Theft Auto." He was playing a video game with people's lives.

Mr. BIGGS. Our heart goes—thank you, Mrs. Alexander, for your testimony.

I will just tell you that, when you start talking about recruitment, they're recruiting at high schools. They're recruiting on Snapchat, Instagram, and they're giving you specific load-out places: "Go to mile marker X on—maybe it's the I-8 corridor" or wherever else it may be—"and there's where you're going to meet somebody, and you're going to transport them, and you're going to make a thousand per hit or something like that." To a young person, it's going to be incredibly enticing to get involved in that.

So, my time has way expired. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you all for being here today.

Chair JORDAN. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Oregon, Mr. Bentz, is recognized.

Mr. BENTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank all of you for being here today sharing your stories with us.

My family is a ranching family up in Oregon. Granddad came out of Texas 110 years ago. The ranches of my—three of my little brothers have ranches of similar size to yours, Mr. Chilton, and I cannot imagine having thousands on thousands of people traipsing through and across our permits and our land. I cannot imagine the damage that this would do to your operations, your watering facilities, your fences, and your ability to keep cattle in the proper place. I was looking at the fences that Mr. Biggs called out on your map, and I truly cannot imagine.

I will tell you that the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service up in Oregon where I'm from are very, very intent on making sure that we don't go off trails and that we don't damage the land in any—I assume they must be down clattering around your ranch to make sure that your property is protected from all these people traipsing across. Is that correct?

The BLM is making a huge play, I'm sure, to try to keep all these folks from coming across your land. Is that correct?

Mr. CHILTON. The Forest Service, where I have three permits, does a remarkably good job of trying. However, it's impossible. The 3,050 people I have images of coming across do great damage, and

5,640 people at the end of the ranch going toward that migrant camp just leave tons of trash. Sometimes our cows eat the trash or plastic and die.

Mr. BENTZ. I'm being facetious. The point is that we have these Federal agencies that should be focusing exactly on your problems because it's so broad in scope, and it's really sad to see.

Ms. FAGAN, first, thank you so much for having the courage to be here today and sharing that almost impossible situation with us. We are now awash in fentanyl. We are literally awash in this stuff. So, the value of what you're doing to try to warn people of this incredible danger is unbelievable.

Are you talking to young people and others? How are you trying to—because the odds of us going around and scooping this up—the odds of us finally convincing the Biden Administration to do something about the border are remote, but your ability to try to go in and try to at least warn kids, how is that going?

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. I had the opportunity on September 11, 2023, to go and speak to my son's school, so his classmates and peers as well as their parents. That was a unique opportunity. It was very challenging.

I also made sure to tell kids,

You can't take anything. You can't take medicine from your friends. You can't take anything from anyone that didn't come from your parents or from the school nurse. Nothing is safe. Not because your friends are trying to poison you, but because who knows where it all has been.

I talk to parents all the time to tell them,

You can give Narcan to your child. If you find a child unresponsive, you can give Narcan. It's not going to hurt them if they haven't had opioids. You can give it every two minutes until EMS arrives.

If that had been done for my son, he would be alive.

There were signs that he was having respiratory stress, which is the biggest factor in fentanyl poisoning: Respiratory distress. It was seen in him, but his dad didn't know what to do.

I want that message to get out to parents so that when our kids make these stupid choices—like at 13, they're going to go and traffic people—our kids are going to make mistakes. We need to be parents that they can come to when they have made that bad decision, and they can be safe with us so that we can save them from themselves.

Mr. BENTZ. Have you found others that are helping you in this effort?

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Absolutely. I've coordinated with other mostly family driven organizations that are trying to get the message out about fentanyl and about all the impacts that these are having on our children. I would look for more opportunities to do that. I would do anything I could to save one family from experiencing what we have.

Mr. BENTZ. Well, I really, really appreciate your being here, and thank you for your efforts.

With that, Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Chair JORDAN. The gentleman yields back. Thank you.

The gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Fitzgerald, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Thank you, Chair. Thanks for bringing the Committee to Arizona.

Thanks to Congressman Ciscomani for hosting us. I appreciate it.

I want to thank Ms. Alexander for coming and telling her story. It's obviously heart-wrenching. Unfortunately, like Congressman Bentz said, we all have stories now from our Congressional districts of families that have suffered the same tragedy that you've gone through, which means, even though we're here today taking testimony in Arizona, this is something that has affected everyone throughout the entire country at this point.

So, along with that, Congressman Biggs and I were able to make a quick trip down to the border and meet with Border Patrol this morning, and one of the most alarming things was the confirmation that we got from them that they've had contacts now with Chinese nationals. Maybe not in the same numbers that you see in some of the other sectors, but, in fact, it's really happening.

Any of us that have any contact with the Foreign Affairs Committee or if you have been on some of these visits internationally, this is a threat that's way beyond what any of us could have imagined even a year ago.

I want to go back to Mr. Clem, if I could. One of the things I've worked on—and I think because this has an effect, again, nationally is—and a priority—has been that we still haven't permanently designated fentanyl as a Schedule 1 substance, which is just amazing to me.

It's not because we haven't tried. We've authored a bill—I've authored bills to try and underscore the seriousness of this. Unfortunately, we still have an Administration right now that is more worried about legalizing marijuana than scheduling—than making fentanyl a Schedule 1.

Can you talk a little bit about—do you think that would have an effect on law enforcement and how they approach the issues and the problems that we have related to fentanyl and how it's coming across the border right now?

Mr. CLEM. Anytime you take a serious approach on something that is causing such devastation like fentanyl poisoning across this country and you prioritize it and you make it something like a Schedule 1, that's going to give a boost to the morale to law enforcement, because they know that this is going to lead to a successful prosecution and is an opportunity to at least mitigate the threat that it poses.

They've got the priorities mixed up as far as working on legalizing one while they're not criminalizing one at the highest level. I think that we need to make that a Schedule 1, and we need to hold source countries and pass through countries accountable for that because, unfortunately, I hate using this as an example—but, if a plane crashed every day and 300 people died, they would make a big deal about that. That's the number of people that are dying every day according to statistics to fentanyl poisoning.

We need to prioritize that. We need to shut it down where it's coming from, and we need to help the Border Patrol agents and the officers at the ports to help shut it down.

Mr. FITZGERALD. So, one other thing I would just like you to comment on, if you could, because this is really happening right now.

Some of my Democrat colleagues are suggesting that the majority of fentanyl is coming through the U.S. in the ports of entry.

Can you comment to me, it makes no sense and I think to most people, but it's something—it's a narrative that's being driven right now in D.C.

Mr. CLEM. Well, there's some truth to that statement because I can tell you that—I believe it was in 2022—at least in the State of Arizona, about 52 percent of the fentanyl seized was at the ports of entry, which meant the 48 percent was outside the port. That's what's being seized. We don't know where the majority of it is coming through because, as we've mentioned and has been talked about already, the number of people that are coming in and then getting away—we don't know who they are and what they may be bringing in.

So, there is some truth to the fact that a lot is being seized at the ports of entry, but it's almost hard to determine how much is coming through where, because we don't know a lot of the unknown factors.

We do know that fentanyl is one of the things that is hitting every community in the United States. The migrants are passing through the border States, but the fentanyl is going everywhere to include border communities.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Thank you.

If I could just—Mr. Kartchner, I just want to—because of your years serving as a Sheriff's Deputy, you understand and know the communities in and around the county. What I've been experiencing in my district are some of the municipalities have been just overwhelmed with this sudden influx of illegals into their community.

I have the city of Whitewater, Wisconsin—who had 200 non-English speaking students show up on the first day for school. I've talked to the school board president there, and they're like, "We're unequipped. We're ill-equipped to handle this."

Then if you talk to the Chief of Police and to law enforcement there, what becomes a fender-bender in the parking lot is a much bigger issue when you've got one person that does not speak any English.

The amount of resources are being depleted at a much more rapid pace as a result of the level of immigration that's happening in our communities. Can you just comment on that, and is that something you saw in the communities that you worked in and around?

Mr. KARTCHNER. I think I stated it before. Cochise County and Southern Arizona, we take the brunt of it. I kind of liken it to the front door. When you walk into the house, you don't stand at the front door. You walk through the front door. The floor gets dirty. We end up with some of those problems, but the destination is not here. The destination is where you're at throughout the country.

We would do tours for sheriffs that wanted to learn where—

OK, this is where the fentanyl is coming from. This is where the drugs are coming from. This is where the illegal immigration starts.

So, they would come down, and our sheriff there in Cochise County has a program called Borders To Backyards. So, these Sheriffs would come down, and they would see what's going on.

I had a sheriff actually from Ohio that rode with me, and we were dealing with these vehicle loads. When we pulled one over, there was 11 people stacked up in the bed of a pickup and he actually was able to see it. He went back to Ohio. Two days later, he sent me a picture and had something very similar on the Ohio Turnpike.

So, it takes that realization of where it's coming from. We're so callous to it and we're so used to seeing this that it makes a bigger impact when you realize where it's going.

Mr. FITZGERALD. My time is up, Mr. Chair.

Thank you all for being here today.

Chair JORDAN. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Crane, another one of our new great Members from this State.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for allowing me to waive on to this Committee.

Thank you to my colleague, Mr. Ciscomani, for hosting this in his district. Thank you, Mayor, for allowing us to have this here. Thank you, everybody, for your attendance. Thank you to the panel for showing up today.

I'm going to read you guys a quote. I want to see if you guys know where this comes from.

We're a Nation who says if you want to flee and you're fleeing oppression, you should come.

Anybody know who said that?

VOICE. Joe Biden.

Mr. CRANE. Yep. Bingo.

And those who come seeking asylum, we should immediately have the capacity to absorb them and keep them safe until they can be heard.

Anybody know who said that?

VOICE. Joe Biden.

Mr. CRANE. Yes. Candidate Biden. The first quote was September 12, 2019. The second quote was June 27, 2019.

Anybody that has a brain in their head, ears, and eyes knew exactly what was going to happen as soon as this individual became the President of the United States. They were going to throw that border wide open. Why? A lot of us are asking why, and I think we're going to get into that today.

Because they don't give a damn about you guys. That's what I think. I've been in enough of these hearings. I'm on the Homeland Security Committee. I'm not going to mince words anymore. I've talked to enough families that have lost their loved ones to fentanyl, MS-13 gang members, individuals on the terror watch list. We've talked to hospital administrators talking to us about how overrun their facilities are. I've seen enough of the data and enough of the evidence.

Do you guys think that President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas don't know what's going on? Do you think they haven't heard enough information yet? I said I'm not going to mince words. I think it's treasonous. I absolutely do, all right?

I just looked up—yes.

I know that some people say, "Oh, that doesn't reach the legal definition of treasonous." Treasonous: Involving or guilty of the

crime of betraying one's country. Do you guys feel betrayed? I know I do. I know I do, and I know a lot of you guys do, too.

I'm going to read you guys something from the Constitution of the United States. This is Article IV, Section 4.

The United States shall guarantee that every State in this union a republic form of government and shall protect each of them against invasion.

Do you guys think that President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas swore an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States?

Yep. They did. Are they doing that for you guys?

What do you think, Mr. Clem? Are they doing that?

Mr. CLEM. I don't think they're doing it to the best of their ability, that's for sure.

Mr. CRANE. Best of their ability? Mr. Clem, why do you think they developed an app to make it easier to get people into this country?

Mr. CLEM. All the things that this Administration has done in regard to the border are like giving somebody a bucket to bail water out of your sinking boat as opposed to fixing the leak. That's what that app does, is to facilitate people in and, in their minds, get them out of Border Patrol's custody quicker. It has nothing to do with securing the border. The border is a national security threat if we don't get it secured.

So, yes, it's about facilitating people into this country, not forcing people to do things the right way.

Mr. CRANE. All right. You guys all have smartphones, right?

Why do you guys have apps on your phone? Navigation apps and music apps to make it easier for you guys to do certain functions, right? That's why they created an app, guys, to make it easier for them to flood this country with illegals.

We can sit here and we can talk about the different reasons why they're doing it, but the bottom line is, this is a complete dereliction of duty, and they are betraying you, the American people.

VOICE. They don't care.

Mr. CRANE. They don't care. They don't care.

Mr. Kartchner, what do you think, sir? Do you think this Administration is stupid? Do you think they don't know what's going on? Do you think they're so foolish that they don't know the havoc they're wreaking on the American people?

Mr. KARTCHNER. I would dare say that it's no longer ineptness that's going on. I believe there is some truth to the corruption.

Mr. CRANE. It's tough to ascribe anything else, isn't there, after this point?

Guys, I had a hearing this week in Homeland Security, and this hasn't even become very mainstream yet, but it was about different foreign adversaries using direct weapons—direct energy weapons against U.S. citizens that completely incapacitate citizens of the United States. You guys might have heard of it called Havana syndrome.

Then, we went down to the SCIF, and we got a classified briefing from some of the people on the panel, and it was one of the most—I'm a former Navy SEAL, so I've traveled around the world and hunted bad guys for a long time, but I can tell you this. When I

went down to that SCIF, it was one of the most terrifying briefs that I've ever been a part of, OK?

This is how brazen our enemies are becoming because of how foolish, corrupt, incompetent, and I would actually say wicked we have become, and our leadership has failed us at every turn. So, this next election is going to be important.

Thank you guys for coming.

Mr. Chair, thank you for allowing me to speak.

Chair JORDAN. Thank you. We appreciate that.

As I've been told, we have another mom here who is another family. Ms. Dunn? Is Ms. Dunn here? I wonder—I know you know your Members from Arizona, but we want to recognize you and your family. What you've had to go through is, obviously, what Ms. Fagan Alexander has had to go through, too. So, thank you for being with us and for your work.

With that, I want to go to our host for his time for questioning. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Again, thanks, everyone, for being here.

I connected with the Dunns right before this and, again, offer your deepest condolences for what you've been through and, also, thank you for your bravery.

Ms. Alexander, I obviously had read your testimony and had read the story, but nothing like hearing it from you directly and from your heart. I don't think there was a dry eye in this place when you shared the pain and the grief that your family has gone through, certainly not in this panel. As I looked around, I think we're all touched and reminded why we're here. As a father myself, as a dad of six, I can tell you that it doesn't matter how old your kids are or what they do, they'll always be our babies.

The pain that you and your family have gone through for the failures of this Administration is beyond what words can describe. Especially on the eve of Mother's Day, I can't thank you enough for your bravery and your advocacy of being here. Thank you.

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Thank you.

Mr. CISCOMANI. I can't imagine the pain you felt when those calls were received. We can look back and look at so many things that everything could be different, and we should be doing differently.

So, I want to just ask you a broad question here. What, in your mind, we need to be doing to avoid more families going through the pain that you and the Dunns have gone through and at least 300 other families in this county alone and way more—thousands around the country?

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. Well, first, we need to close off opportunities for people to be bringing whatever they want over our borders.

Second, 50 percent of all the fentanyl for the U.S. comes through Arizona, which is shocking. That means our streets are flooded with fentanyl. Kids in junior high, in elementary school, are buying this like candy.

So, first, we need to close our border. We need to make it more difficult. We also need to stiffen the penalties for people that are producing, manufacturing, and selling all this.

It's crazy to me when you consider the fact that 70 percent of the pills have a lethal dose of fentanyl in them. Of all the pills seized, every single one of those pills is a death sentence. We aren't charging that. That's not what we charge people with when they are seized with all these drugs. We charge them with possession. We charge them with production or manufacture, or we charge them with intent to sell. We don't charge them with murder, but that's what this is.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Thank you for that. I think that message is loud and clear. When you look at simple economics of supply and demand, you can see there the price and the cost of making these terrible pills.

On that front here, Mr. Clem, one thing that we touched on is the gotaways, right? These are the people that cameras detected, but they were never encountered or at any point with our local law enforcement or Federal law enforcement. So, as you look at those images walking through, they don't look like people that are just here for the reasons that a lot of immigrants are here for.

It was mentioned that we are a country of immigrants. I believe that. I'm an immigrant myself. You all know that. I became a citizen in 2006 and a Member of Congress in 2022. No other country in the world would allow you to do that. I believe in the American Dream, but that abuse that we're seeing on that screen is not a reflection of that. It is not the way that we need to do this.

So, when you look at these gotaways, how do you account for gotaways? How did you do it when you were in your position among different posts, and how is that compared to today? Are the numbers actually higher than they seem? How do you calculate that? Because a lot of it that is coming in, besides the ports of entry, it is coming in through these gotaways individuals.

Mr. CLEM. Yes. Thank you. So, a gotaways is somebody that has been detected either through—we see it with our own eyes, we've tracked it with our—through sign-cut and tracking operations, or we've caught them on video camera, but we never made the arrest. There was no law enforcement resolution. So, those are reported every 24 hours into a GPRA data base, and those numbers are officially recorded.

The other part that is always concerning is the unknowns. Where I'm going with that is there has got to be a level of percentage of people that we never even get to understand if they crossed or we saw them on camera or anything because we didn't get out to the border.

So, if we're reporting 1.8 million, we know that there is a percentage of people that we are just completely unaware of. So far, this year, there has been almost 170 different countries apprehended.

In this Administration, why somebody would evade arrest by Border Patrol knowing that they're going to be caught and released should scare the heck out of everybody because the people that are evading Border Patrol are someone or something that is going to do us harm.

In fact, I know that the numbers of criminals that have been encountered over the last few years on this Administration have doubled, if not quadrupled some of the numbers in the previous Ad-

ministration. So, we don't have a clue of who these people are other than just using statistics to say they're probably not people we want in this country.

Mr. CISCOMANI. So, if the data reflected—this is the worst that we've ever seen, it's worse than the data shows being the worst that we've ever seen?

Mr. CLEM. I think that's a fair assessment. There is a pocket of just we have no idea.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chair, I want to be respectful of the time.

Mr. Chilton and Mr. Kartchner, I see them on a regular basis. I want to thank you both for being here and for your perspective as well.

I think Arizona is a State where you can see how many people that have moved here just recently, and we also have people that have been here for five generations, and everyone is unanimous on the opinion and the fact that this is the worst that we've ever seen.

So, I will take the opportunity to speak with you, also offline, to respect the time.

Mr. Chair, I want to thank you once again—you and the Committee Members—for coming in.

I want to tell everyone here today that every Member here gave up their time to be here and have the opportunity of being with their constituents in their States, but they care about this issue. We have been leading this fight from Arizona. We're going to continue to do that, but as you can see here, we're not alone in this fight. We have a lot of fighting in us, and a lot of fighting still to do to protect our border. We will continue to do our job in doing that.

So, I want to thank you all of you for your involvement, your passion, you giving up your time, and being here as well. We're going to continue to work on this, and you can see here the dedication of my colleagues. When I go back to Washington, this is who we're working with to make sure our border is secure in spite of this Administration not doing what they need to do to make sure that happens.

So, thank you all.

Thank you, sir.

Chair JORDAN. It's great to see the good Member is appreciated here in his district like we knew he was. Thank you for your leadership.

I just want to go to the question that Mr. Crane raised, which is the sort of fundamental question: Why do you think they're doing it?

We know it's intentional because, on day one, they decided no more building the wall; no longer Remain in Mexico; and "When you get here, you will not be detained. You will be released." They announced it to the world. So, literally, in three years and four months, we went from a secure border to no border. It still begs the fundamental question: Why? Why are they doing it?

I want to know from folks on the—our witnesses. We want to hear from the audience, too, but I want to know from the people who testified here today, what do you think the ultimate motivation is that Mr. Crane was getting to just a few minutes ago? What

do you think? I have an idea what I think it is, but I want to know what you guys think here on the front line.

So, let's start with the gentleman with a few more years of wisdom than the rest of us. Let's start with the rancher, if we can.

You've been here—you said your ranch has been in your family, like, 6,000 years or something, I think you said. So, Mr. Chilton, you go first. Tell me what you think. Why do you think Joe Biden intentionally, deliberately, in a premeditated fashion on January 20, 2021, changed the policies that were working and created the mess that we have heard about for years now but certainly heard about from you in such a compelling way?

MS. FAGAN ALEXANDER. All of you.

Mr. Chilton, tell me what you think the motivation is.

MR. CHILTON. Mr. Chair, it's purposeful, and the purpose is to change the demographics of this country. It's politically thought by the Administration, Mr. Biden, that these people will vote for Democrats in the future once they become citizens and eligible to vote. It's strictly a political ploy.

Chair JORDAN. Mr. Clem?

MR. CLEM. Initially, my thoughts were strictly political spite because it took all the Executive Actions. He started on day one. In the first 30 days, there were 94 Executive Actions that directly impacted the border. So, just to undo everything from the previous Administration.

Overtime, as you start looking at all this and you kind of piece it together, your brain wants to reason and try to find some facts and truth. The only thing I can come up with is just—and this is sitting as a citizen here testifying—is that the more people they can bring in, regardless of citizenry, they can do census. They can do population votes and gain more seats maybe in their favor and/or electoral college votes down the road to—as Mr. Chilton mentioned, to swing power in their—on their behalf for the future.

I think there's no other reasoning because they're not being transparent other than us having to make this up.

Chair JORDAN. Yes. Politics is more important than what happens to kids like—

MR. CLEM. Absolutely. They're about securing the narrative, not securing the border.

Chair JORDAN. Yes. That's kind of what I think, too. It's sad because you don't want to think that about the Commander in Chief of the greatest country in history. You don't want to think that about your government or the people who are elected to high offices. You just don't want to think that.

It's tough to come up with any other conclusion because, again, we're all for—we've got a Member of Congress who came here as a legal immigrant, did it the right way, and doing an outstanding job. We're all for that, but what we're not for is the chaos, the chaos that creates situations where two young lives are gone. The Dunn family and other young—that's what we don't want.

Mr. Kartchner, I'll give you a chance to respond.

MR. KARTCHNER. Mr. Chair, I don't know if I have an answer for you other than to fundamentally change our country, but I'll carry it on one step further. If they're looking for votes, if they're looking for that kind of stuff, why—and throughout my career, I would say

somewhere in the 90 percentile of the people that we encountered were military-age males.

Chair JORDAN. Yes. No, that's the scary element.

The Chair of the Subcommittee on Immigration has warned the Committee now and talked to this—talked to the entire Congress about these people coming across, some of them who we know are on the terrorist watch list, but there's a whole bunch we don't.

I think someone said—I think, Mr. Clem, you said earlier, you can walk right up to a Border Patrol agent, and you're going to get in. You're going to get released. We know what's happening. So, if you're trying to evade that, you aren't up to anything any good.

That's the scary thing to—and, again, it seems to be all done in a deliberate way by this Administration, which is scary.

Ms. Fagan Alexander, you're going to get the last word here, the last 30 seconds, which is probably appropriate. So, you go right ahead.

Ms. FAGAN ALEXANDER. I think that these gentlemen are all right. I think there is political power and political gain. I think it is also genuinely a dislike for who we are as America. I don't think that he likes who we are. I don't think he wants us to continue having freedoms that we do. By allowing whoever and whatever to come over the border, it changes, it shifts, and I don't think he's opposed to that. That's very sad because I love America.

Chair JORDAN. Yes. Well, we want to thank the four of you for taking time out of your busy lives and coming here and giving compelling testimony.

I want to thank all of you for your attendance.

Mayor, thank you and our law enforcement for being such gracious hosts. I wish I could stay a little longer.

Of course, we want to thank your Congressman who, as I have said now a couple times, is doing a great job. All your team from Arizona is doing a great job.

Plus, I tell your Congressman all the time, his last name is just one of those names—it's Ciscomani. It's just one of those names you like to say, right? It's one of those great names.

We thank you all. We're going to keep fighting and trying to—we have Juan's bill that we passed, a bill that our Committee worked on, and House Bill 2 that went through Tom's Subcommittee and so much work that would actually help, but the main problem is, as Mr. McClintock started us off with saying, we just need an Administration who actually enforces the current law. So, we're going to continue to stress that.

God bless you all. The Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m. Mountain Time, the Committee was adjourned.]

All materials submitted for the record by Members of the Committee on the Judiciary can be found at: <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=117288>.