

**GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT: OPEN-BORDER  
POLICIES AND THREATS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND  
TECHNOLOGY**

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

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## **GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT: OPEN-BORDER POLICIES AND THREATS TO LAW ENFORCE- MENT**

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**Tuesday, December 10, 2024**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
AND TECHNOLOGY,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:12 a.m., in room 310, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Anthony D'Esposito (Chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives D'Esposito, LaLota, Strong, Carter, Goldman, and Kennedy.

Also present: Representative Correa.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. The Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology will come to order.

Without objection, the Chair may declare the subcommittee in recess at any point.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine the impact of open-border policies to the law enforcement community and how transnational criminal organizations are taking advantage of the Biden-Harris administration's lack of border control.

Without objection, the gentleman from California, Mr. Correa, may sit with the subcommittee and question today's witnesses.

With that, I recognize myself for an opening statement.

Today, the Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology will examine how President Biden's open-border policies have threatened and endangered law enforcement officers across this great Nation.

Before we begin, I want to thank our witnesses for coming to testify about the threats you and your communities have faced. As a retired NYPD detective, I know you have a difficult job, and we are all grateful for your strong commitment to keeping Americans safe no matter the threats posed against your own personal safety. We commend you for your bravery and service to this great country, and we look forward to hearing your testimony on how Congress can better support you.

Second, I want to share that it's been an honor to serve as Chairman of this subcommittee. I have enjoyed working with my fellow members, staff, and with Ranking Member Carter throughout the last 2 years.

Together, we investigated several challenges posed against this great Nation's homeland and evaluated the best approaches for moving forward. From grappling with the consequences of open-border policies on public safety to assessing fire safety, evolving technology, and our national preparedness, we have worked hard to shine a light on the issues impacting Americans across the country and to improve our everyday lives.

While much remains uncertain, I know that our best days are ahead. I will keep serving this great Nation and the people of New York's Fourth Congressional District to make it a safe place that we all love.

In this subcommittee's previous hearings, we have heard reports of how Americans across this country have endured the devastating consequences of President Biden's open-border policies.

We learned that transnational criminal organizations, such as Tren de Aragua and MS-13, are empowered by the United States' failure to secure the Southwest Border and enforce existing immigration laws. Trans-criminal organizations have exploited the chaos at the border and have set up extensive human smuggling operations, drug distribution networks, and human trafficking pipelines.

Even in the last few months, it has become abundantly clear that criminals are not only benefiting from the Democrats' failure to maintain law and order, but they're also being emboldened by it.

For instance, earlier this summer, Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations warned local law enforcement across the country that a Venezuelan gang gave its members a "green light" to attack and fire upon U.S. law enforcement.

The Venezuelan criminal organization has been deemed "MS-13 on steroids," establishing drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, and extortion networks throughout the United States of America.

While the gang originally formed in Venezuelan prison, it has expanded throughout Latin America and the United States, congregating particularly in Texas, Colorado, and my home State of New York.

Earlier this year, 2 New York City police officers were assaulted by a migrant shelter near Times Square. One police officer was repeatedly kicked in the head while both of them were surrounded by 13 other people. Shortly after, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg released the suspects without bail, a sickening move that was even criticized by Governor Hochul.

Tren de Aragua's green light to attack United States law enforcement is particularly concerning considering last year, assaults against American law enforcement officers reached a 10-year high. Not only that, but our Nation's law enforcement agencies have become strained and overwhelmed due to increasing 9-1-1 calls and other demands related to the influx of migrants.

Instead of supporting suspected criminals endangering our Nation's police officers, we should be securing the Southwest Border, enforcing our Nation's laws, and making our police officers' job easier, not more difficult.

In an article by *The Wall Street Journal*, Joseph Kenny, the chief of detectives for the New York City Police Department, recently said that the Venezuelan gang brought “a wave of crime” that New York City “has never seen before.” From shooting at 2 NYPD police officers who were at a traffic stop, to retail theft, to moped robberies and more, Tren de Aragua has overwhelmed the NYPD and surrounding communities.

I’m concerned about incentives for Venezuelan criminals to take up shop in communities throughout the United States of America. We know nothing about their criminal history, and they have gained a foothold in the United States because of the Biden administration’s and local sanctuary city policies.

As Members of this committee, we need to prioritize the safety of those who put their lives on the line for ours.

Thank you again to our witnesses for your courage and your service despite the challenges you’ve faced. Again, I always have the back of law enforcement agencies throughout every corner of this country.

I’d now like to recognize the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for his opening statement.

[The statement of Chairman D’Esposito follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN ANTHONY D’ESPOSITO

DECEMBER 10, 2024

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From grappling with the consequences of open border policies on public safety, to assessing fire safety, evolving technologies, and our national preparedness, we have worked hard to shine a light on the issues impacting Americans across the country and to improve our day-to-day lives. While much remains uncertain, I know that our best days are ahead, and I will keep serving this great Nation and the people of New York’s 4th Congressional District to make it a safe place for those we love.

In this subcommittee’s previous hearings, we have heard reports of how Americans across the country have endured the devastating consequences of President Biden’s open border policies. We learned that transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), such as Tren de Aragua and MS-13, are empowered by the United States’ failure to secure the Southwest Border and enforce existing immigration laws. TCOs have exploited the chaos at the border and have set up extensive human smuggling operations, drug distribution networks, and human trafficking pipelines.

Even in the last few months, it has become abundantly clear that criminals are not only benefiting from the Democrats’ failure to maintain law and order, but they’re also being emboldened by it.

For instance, earlier this summer, Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) warned local law enforcement across the country that a Venezuelan gang called Tren de Aragua, or TdA, gave its members a "green light" to attack and fire upon U.S. law enforcement.

The Venezuelan criminal organization has been deemed "MS-13 on steroids," establishing drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, and extortion networks throughout the Nation.

While the gang originally formed in a Venezuelan prison, it has since expanded throughout Latin America and the United States, congregating particularly in Texas, Colorado, and my home State of New York.

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TdA's "green light" to attack U.S. law enforcement is particularly concerning considering that, last year, assaults against American law enforcement officers reached a 10-year high. Not only that, but our Nation's law enforcement agencies have become strained and overwhelmed due to increasing 9-1-1 calls and other demands related to the influx of migrants.

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As Members of this committee, we need to prioritize the safety of those who put their lives on the line for ours.

Thank you again to our witnesses for your courage and your service despite the challenges you've faced. As a retired NYPD detective, I will always have our police officers' back.

It has been a privilege to serve in Congress and to shine a light on these issues, and I look forward to learning more about how we can better support our Nation's law enforcement officers moving forward.

I now recognize the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for his opening statement.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, and I'd like to thank our witnesses for being here today.

This is not our first hearing that we've held about conditions on the Southern Border, or the second, or even the third. The Committee on Homeland Security has held 23 prior hearings this Congress on the Southern Border. Yet not a single hearing has resulted in any meaningful solutions from my Republican colleagues.

When they had the chance to do real work by considering a bipartisan border deal negotiated in the Senate, my Republican colleagues rejected it and yielded to the demands of President-elect Donald Trump, sabotaging a solution in favor of maintaining a political talking point.

This bill, described as the "toughest bill in generations"—this was a common-sense border security bill that would have strengthened our defenses, included new Presidential emergency authority to shut down the border when necessary, and provided much-needed personnel and resources to communities. But Trump said no.

Now Trump is returning to the Presidency, and we are seeing a resurgence of his partisan agenda taking precedence over meaningful solutions. "Project 2025," drafted in part by Trump's new border

czar, Thomas Homan, underscores the Republican strategy of chaos and dysfunction. This initiative aims to drastically reduce immigration, dismantle key security agencies, and impose sweeping restrictions on asylum seekers, all while failing to address humanitarian concerns or economic realities that drive immigration.

Donald Trump's planned mass deportation, which will include nonviolent and hardworking individuals, will distract law enforcement from prioritizing violent criminals and national-security threats. Such policies epitomize the Republican approach: No real solution. No viable path forward. Just chaos.

While I understand my Republican colleagues wish to continue the partisan border rhetoric, today's hearing should have focused on protecting our Nation from the increasing threat of natural disasters, which devastate communities every year, causing loss of life and billions of dollars in damages.

This subcommittee has oversight jurisdiction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and it is puzzling that after one of the deadliest and most costly hurricane seasons we are not discussing the impacts of Hurricane Helene or Milton or how our subcommittee's work can help disaster survivors.

Under Republican leadership, Congress has failed to pass critical disaster relief measures that could help communities recover from devastating disasters. Despite the Biden-Harris administration's request for supplemental funding for the Disaster Relief Fund in both June and November 2024, no additional funds have been allocated to help communities recover from devastation.

This is not a Republican or a Democratic issue; this is an American issue. As we sit here today, Republican leadership is slow-walking the disaster relief package while Americans are without help.

Specifically, the Small Business Administration announced 2 months ago that its Disaster Loan Program has run out of funding, leaving 18,000 businesses and homeowners without critical support they need to rebuild.

We should be talking about this today. My district is no stranger to disasters, and the thought of Congress not moving with the utmost speed to help survivors is extremely troubling.

Republicans' unwillingness to provide critical funding does not stop at disasters. They've targeted Homeland Security Grants, which are vital for emergency response and are within the jurisdiction of this subcommittee.

Today's hearing could've also been about Homeland Security Grant Program dollars to better support law enforcement, especially since Republicans pushed for and enacted a 10-percent cut to the Homeland Security Grant Program, like the Urban Area Security Initiative, the State Homeland Security Program, Operation Stonegarden, and the Nonprofit Security Grant, which supports law enforcement and communities.

Also, "Project 2025" has called for these grants to be terminated. All of this is familiar because, during his Presidency, Donald Trump proposed slashing \$700 million from these grants in fiscal year 2021.

As one can see, there is plenty of work to be done for the subcommittee to do. I look forward to the next Congress and hope my

Republican colleagues will prioritize safeguarding our communities from disasters and providing support for those working to help keep America safe.

As I said earlier, these are American issues. They're not Republican or Democratic issues. It's high time that this committee and this Congress address the issues that face the American people and not individual parties.

With that, I yield back.

[The statement of Ranking Member Carter follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER TROY A. CARTER

DECEMBER 10, 2024

This is not the first hearing we have held about conditions on the Southern Border—or the second hearing, or the third hearing. The Committee on Homeland Security has held 23 prior hearings this Congress on the Southern Border. Yet, not a single hearing has resulted in any meaningful solutions from my Republican colleagues.

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ment and communities. Also, Project 2025 has called for these grants to be “terminated.” All of this is familiar because during his Presidency, Donald Trump proposed slashing \$700 million from these grants in fiscal year 2021.

As one can see, there is plenty of work for the subcommittee to do. I look forward to next Congress and I hope my Republican colleagues will prioritize safeguarding our communities from disasters and providing support for those working to keep us safe.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. Well, thank you, Mr. Ranking Member.

I just want to point out that President-elect Donald Trump has made it very clear that “Project 2025” was nothing to do with his administration. In fact, I think he said that he didn’t even read it.

When we talk about the border bill that we’re saying that Republicans failed on, that was not a solution; it was a surrender. It codified the mess that Joe Biden created. It continued catch-and-release. It allowed 5,000 migrants into this country per day. No wall. It reaffirmed Biden’s parole abuses. It funneled billions of dollars to NGO’s. It empowered smugglers and traffickers. It provided immediate work permits to hundreds of thousands of people.

Mr. CARTER. If I might—

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. Other Members of the subcommittee are reminded—

Mr. CARTER [continuing]. Mr. Chairman, just briefly?

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. You’re recognized.

Mr. CARTER. Very respectfully, your comments are in conflict with numerous news reports, even on Fox News, CNN, and the various cable stations, that suggest that the comments that you made that refute my comments are inconsistent with what actual testimony says.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. I’m going to stick with my comments, and know that the Republicans did their best to absolutely secure this border and were stopped every step of the way because of the Biden administration. They could’ve secured the border on Day 1 with Executive Orders but, instead, allowed this country to enable hundreds of thousands and millions more people to come across our Southern Border.

Mr. CARTER. The bipartisan bill that was in the Senate that President Trump insisted stop, would you also say that Republicans were for that? I think it was a bipartisan bill that had Members of both the House—both Republicans and Democrats.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. With all due respect, because one Member of the Senate says that it’s bipartisan doesn’t make it bipartisan. Where the starting point should’ve been is H.R. 2, which was negotiated in this room.

Mr. CARTER. Again—

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. I never said—with all due respect, I never said it was perfect, but what I did say is that—and I’ve said this all along—it could’ve been a starting point.

With that—

Mr. CARTER. I think it was a lot more than one Member of the Senate that—

Mr. D’ESPOSITO [continuing]. Others Members of the subcommittee are—

Mr. CARTER [continuing]. Supported that bipartisan bill.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO [continuing]. Reminded that statements may be submitted—

Mr. CARTER. It was not one Member of—  
 Mr. D'ESPOSITO [continuing]. For inclusion in the record.  
 Mr. CARTER [continuing]. The Senate; it was multiple.  
 [The statement of Ranking Member Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON

DECEMBER 10, 2024

Unfortunately, today's hearing is a missed opportunity for this subcommittee to have a conversation about protecting Americans from natural disasters, which cause loss of life and billions of dollars in damage every year.

Coming off one of the deadliest and costliest hurricane seasons, this subcommittee should have a conversation about the impacts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton and discuss how our work can help disaster survivors.

It is alarming that my Republican colleagues have shown no urgency in providing FEMA and other Federal Agencies with supplemental funding for disaster survivors. This funding was requested by President Biden months ago and again in November and as we sit here today, they are still looking for reasons not to support full funding.

This subcommittee should also address the misinformation and disinformation spread this hurricane season by President-Elect Trump and other Republicans this hurricane season, undermining the public's perception of Federal support in the face of disasters and making FEMA's job harder.

We need to do more to assure the public that the Committee on Homeland Security is working to make this country stronger and more resilient to all the threats we face.

Instead of focusing on FEMA, which is this subcommittee's jurisdiction, today's hearing focuses on border security—an important issue that Republicans have talked a lot about while actually doing very little.

Earlier this year, the Senate came together to produce a bipartisan border deal, but House Republicans blocked it. Republicans also voted to cap non-defense discretionary funding, cutting 2,400 CBP officers and agents.

It's clear that Republicans don't want policy solutions, they want a political issue. I hope in the 119th Congress my colleagues will be serious about working together on border security and immigration.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. I am very pleased to have such an important panel of witnesses before us today.

I ask that the witnesses please rise and raise their right hands.  
 [Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. You may be seated.

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

I would now like to formally introduce our witnesses.

Mr. Jonathan Thompson serves as the executive director and CEO of the National Sheriffs' Association, representing the interests of over 3,000 sheriffs and their deputies in the United States. Previously, Mr. Thompson served as the director of external affairs for FEMA and was previously deputy assistant secretary of defense for public affairs and served the Defense Reconstruction Support Office for Iraq and Afghanistan Affairs.

Mr. Patrick Ryder is the commissioner of the Nassau County Police Department. Commissioner Ryder has dedicated 41 years of his life to law enforcement, 38 of those years with the Nassau County Police Department. Throughout his career with the Nassau County Police Department, Commissioner Ryder has implemented several programs and initiatives to ensure officer and public safety, including the creation of the Counterterrorism Unit. He has a wealth of law enforcement experience and also serves as a professor of crimi-

nal justice and intelligence-led policing at Nassau Community College.

Mr. Mike Chapman was elected sheriff of Loudoun County, Virginia, in 2011 and was reelected to serve his fourth term in 2023. Sheriff Chapman oversees a \$133 million budget, 700 sworn deputies, and 200 civilian personnel for the largest sheriff's office in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 2023, he was awarded the National Sheriffs' Association Ferris E. Lucas Sheriff of the Year Award. Prior to serving as sheriff, Mr. Chapman held several positions within the Drug Enforcement Administration, gaining extensive law enforcement experience throughout the United States and holding field assignments in Miami, Tampa, and Pakistan.

Mr. David Bier is the director of immigration studies at the CATO Institute. Mr. Bier's work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and many other print and on-line publications. Prior to his position at the CATO Institute, Mr. Bier worked as a senior policy advisor for Congressman Labrador.

I thank the witnesses again for being here today.

I now recognize Mr. Thompson for 5 minutes to summarize his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN F. THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR AND CEO, NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION**

Mr. THOMPSON. Good morning, and thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished Members of the subcommittee.

You have my written testimony before you, but I would like to give you just a summary, if you will.

We appreciate you holding this hearing. This topic has become more and more important as days have gone by since November 2022, when we first learned about this threat.

I am Jonathan Thompson, executive director and the CEO of National Sheriffs' Association, a nonprofit organization representing 3,081 elected sheriffs and over 20,000 public-safety professionals, including deputies, chiefs of police, and other law enforcement officials across the United States.

The NSA is committed to elevating the professionalism in law enforcement through education, through training, and support. Our mission is to ensure that sheriffs—all sheriffs—and law enforcement officers at every level—local, State, and Federal—are equipped to protect our communities.

Today I'm here to talk about a growing threat, the Venezuelan-based criminal organization Tren de Aragua. This gang has become a severe public-safety threat to the U.S. communities, and its rise is a direct consequence—a direct consequence—of border policies that have failed this country.

The danger posed by TDA, coupled with the challenges of an open border, should prompt immediate action from both Congress, this administration, and the next administration to protect our Nation's law enforcement officers and the people of this country.

TDA has metastasized to the criminal element in this country. It is the leading and most dangerous criminal element we face, no doubt about it. It's a transnational criminal organization that originated in Venezuela and now has expanded its operations well into

the United States. News reports are showing and indicating that it is active in at least 17 States in the United States. Those are just news reports; the facts are starkly different.

We believe it has 5,000 members. It's involved in things such as human trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, narcotics trafficking. Incidents that have made national news, such as the violent robbery in Denver and arrests in Colorado linked to an attempted murder, highlight this growing presence.

In July, DHS issued a warning bulletin to law enforcement about credible threats, as the Chairman alluded to and mentioned in his opening remarks. Since March of 2023, CBP has apprehended at least 70 TDA members, and estimates suggest over a thousand—a thousand—may be operating in the United States.

It's important that—to note that in November 2022, November 2022, the administration then issued—prepared a written bulletin on border intelligence on TDA. That document was not granted access to local law enforcement, that I'm aware, until nearly a year later. One year, TDA operated, unfiltered, uncontrolled, unreviewed, in the interior of this country.

Though a little late to the game to address this threat at the Federal level, the Department of Homeland Security is hosting a webinar next year—next week, December 16, to brief local law enforcement posed by—the dangers posed to local law enforcement posed by TDA. The demand from law enforcement for assistance to combat this gang—which, honestly, should be classified as an FTO, foreign terrorist organization—is so overwhelming that DHS had to move the webinar to a larger platform, to over a hundred—to over a thousand registrants.

Border security has failed this Nation. We cannot let perfect become the enemy of good. TDA exploits weaknesses in U.S. border security. Since fiscal year 2021, over 10½ million immigrants have been encountered at the border, including an estimated 2 million who have evaded capture.

Let me close by saying the following things. We have recommendations for advancing the threat and addressing the threat.

No. 1, we have to strengthen the border. We must recognize that border security is a primary concern, immigration is a primary concern, but we must have a secure border.

We need to reinstate Migrant Protection Protocols.

We need to use technology to vet, not to clear.

We need Congress to provide additional funding, direct funding to law enforcement to help hire more deputies and obtain technology.

We need to target trans-criminal organizations. I commend—I commend this Department of Treasury for designating TDA as a TCO. It's important.

We have to end apprehension-and-release policies. They are unacceptable, and they are making this country more dangerous, with a higher risk, by the minute.

We support bipartisan bills to help law enforcement—for example, the POWER Act. We think it helps innumerable.

We need to enhance access to encrypted communications. This is a problem. Every criminal organization in this country—small, me-

dium, or large—is using encrypted communications to carry out illicit activities.

Technology is a friend, but it is also in conflict with our country’s basic morals and norms. We don’t need to look any further than actions like the CFPB’s desire to clamp down on access to critical data, public information for law enforcement. That rule is dangerous on its face and at its core. People’s lives are at risk if that policy becomes—if that rule becomes policy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for going over.  
[The prepared statement of Mr. Thompson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN F. THOMPSON

DECEMBER 10, 2024

Chairman D’Esposito, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing on the critical issue of “Given the Green Light: Open Border Policies and Threats to Law Enforcement” and for the opportunity to testify.

I am Jonathan Thompson, executive director and CEO of the National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA), a non-profit organization that represents more than 3,000 elected sheriffs and over 20,000 public safety professionals, including deputies, chiefs of police, and other law enforcement officials across the United States. The NSA is committed to elevating professionalism in law enforcement through education, training, and support. Our mission is to ensure that sheriffs and law enforcement officers at every level—local, State, and Federal—are well-equipped to protect our communities.

Today, I am here to talk about a growing threat: the Venezuelan-based criminal organization Tren de Aragua (TDA). This gang has become a severe public safety threat to U.S. communities, and its rise is a direct consequence of failed border policies. The danger posed by TDA, coupled with the challenges of an open border, should prompt immediate action from both Congress and the administration to protect our Nation’s law enforcement officers and the American people.

#### THE THREAT OF TREN DE ARAGUA

Tren de Aragua (TDA) originated in Venezuela’s prison system and has since grown into a powerful transnational criminal organization with an estimated 5,000 members. Amid the Venezuelan refugee crisis, TDA expanded its operations throughout Latin America and, unfortunately, into the United States. This gang is known for its involvement in human smuggling, human trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, and narcotics trafficking.

In early September 2024, 4 members of the violent Tren de Aragua gang were arrested in Aurora, Colorado, in connection with a shooting and attempted murder on July 28 at the Fitzsimons Place apartment complex, an incident that made national headlines. Earlier this summer, TDA was linked to a violent armed robbery in Denver, where a jewelry store owner was brutally attacked. This incident is a chilling reminder that TDA is not just a distant foreign threat—it is operating within our communities and targeting innocent civilians. The American Sheriff Alliance has expressed grave concerns about the growing influence of TDA and the real possibility that more such violent acts will occur if their presence is not curtailed. These violent acts underscore TDA’s presence within our communities and their willingness to engage in open violence on U.S. soil.

Sheriff Tyler Scott Brown of Arapahoe County, CO has said “The large influx of transnational individuals crossing our borders brings with it a heightened risk of organized crime activity. We are seeing significant participation in organized criminal enterprises like the Tren de Aragua. These groups are involved in drug trafficking, money laundering, and other serious offenses. Local law enforcement agencies are utilizing every available resource to address this threat, but we need Congress to act. Bipartisan legislation is crucial to provide the necessary funding and support for our local jurisdictions to effectively combat these criminal networks and protect our communities.”

What has made TDA particularly alarming is the credible intelligence that surfaced in July of this year. In July, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security issued a bulletin to State and local law enforcement partners regarding reported threats from Tren de Aragua (TDA) against law en-

forcement personnel. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) reported that TDA had issued a “green light” directive to its members in Denver and New York to attack law enforcement officers.

These threats are considered credible, and they signify a new level of brazenness from this criminal organization. The bulletin reminded agents and officers to remain aware of their surroundings, maintain a heightened sense of vigilance, and always wear their body armor. Since March 2023, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has apprehended at least 70 known TDA members in the United States. However, intelligence estimates suggest that more than 1,000 TDA members may be operating within our borders, posing a severe risk to law enforcement and public safety.

#### BORDER SECURITY FAILURES AND CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

The rise of Tren de Aragua in the United States can be attributed in part to our Nation’s failure to secure its borders adequately. Since fiscal year 2021, more than 10.5 million illegal immigrants have been encountered by CBP, with over 8.5 million encounters at the Southwest Border alone. Additionally, there are an estimated 2 million “got-a-ways” who have evaded border agents and are now in the United States. Among those crossing our borders illegally are not just vulnerable migrants but also members of dangerous criminal organizations like TDA and terrorist organizations.

The current policies of apprehension and release—where individuals who cross the border illegally are released into the United States to await immigration court hearings—have created a loophole that allows criminals to exploit our system. Many of these hearings are delayed by up to 11 years due to the lack of immigration judges. This delay provides ample opportunity for criminal organizations to operate, recruit, and spread violence in our communities.

Tren de Aragua’s presence highlights a larger pattern of criminal exploitation. They are just one of many transnational criminal organizations taking advantage of the porous Southern Border to infiltrate the United States, recruit new members, and carry out violent crimes. Without stronger border security measures, more dangerous individuals will continue to enter our country unchecked.

#### TDA’S CONNECTION TO DRUG TRAFFICKING AND HUMAN SMUGGLING

The illegal activities of TDA extend beyond violence and gang-related crime; they are also involved in the trafficking of dangerous drugs, including fentanyl. The flood of illicit narcotics into the United States, particularly fentanyl, has had devastating effects on communities across the country. Over the last 3 years, the United States has seen an average of 107,000 drug overdose deaths per year, most of which are related to fentanyl. TDA and other gangs have contributed to this epidemic by smuggling drugs across the U.S.-Mexico border, where cartels like Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation are capitalizing on weak border controls.

Additionally, TDA is heavily involved in human smuggling and human trafficking operations, victimizing migrants in their pursuit of profit. Migrants often pay large sums to criminal organizations like TDA, only to be subjected to further exploitation. The U.S. Government must recognize that this is not just a border issue but a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by the involvement of violent gangs.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE THREAT

In light of the clear and present danger posed by Tren de Aragua and the broader issue of border security, I urge Congress and the administration to take the following steps:

1. *Strengthen Border Security.*—Reinstating policies like the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), commonly known as the “Remain in Mexico” policy, which worked effectively in the past to deter illegal immigration. Completing the physical barriers along the Southern Border and increasing the personnel and resources available to CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is crucial.
2. *Support for Local Law Enforcement.*—As TDA and other gangs expand their operations into American communities, sheriffs’ offices and local law enforcement agencies are on the front lines of defense. Congress must provide additional funding and resources to help sheriffs hire more deputies, obtain advanced technology, and provide the necessary training to combat these transnational criminal organizations.
3. *Target Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs).*—I commend the U.S. Treasury Department for designating Tren de Aragua as a Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO) and the State Department for offering rewards for in-

formation leading to the arrest of TDA leadership. However, more aggressive action is needed to dismantle these gangs. Congress should pass legislation that ensures Federal agencies have the authority and resources to target and dismantle TCOs effectively.

*4. End Apprehension and Release Policies.*—The current system of releasing individuals who cross the border illegally is unsustainable. Congress must address the backlog in immigration court cases by increasing the number of immigration judges and prioritizing the adjudication of cases involving known criminals or gang members.

*5. Support Bipartisan Bills to Help Law Enforcement Investigate Fentanyl.*—H.R. 3148/S. 1507 Providing Officers with Electronic Resources (POWER) Act aims to establish a new grant program under the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). This program would support State and local law enforcement agencies in obtaining portable, high-tech screening devices that use laser technology to identify potentially dangerous substances.

*6. Enhance Access to Encrypted Communication for Law Enforcement.*—Criminal organizations like Tren de Aragua rely on encrypted communication to carry out illicit activities. Law enforcement must have lawful access to these devices to effectively investigate and prevent crimes. Providing the necessary tools and legal authority to access encrypted communications is crucial for combating organized crime and protecting our communities.

#### CONCLUSION

The threat posed by Tren de Aragua is clear and urgent. Their presence within our borders, combined with the broader issue of failed border security policies, places law enforcement officers and American communities at grave risk. Now is the time for Congress and the administration to take meaningful, bipartisan action to secure our borders, dismantle criminal organizations like TDA, and provide the resources our law enforcement agencies need to keep the American people safe.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I stand ready to work with this committee to address these critical issues.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

I now recognize Commissioner Ryder for 5 minutes to summarize his opening statement.

#### **STATEMENT OF PATRICK J. RYDER, COMMISSIONER, NASSAU COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT, STATE OF NEW YORK**

Mr. RYDER. Thank you, Chairman D'Esposito, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology.

I am Patrick Ryder. I've served with the Nassau County Police as commissioner for 8 years. This is my 41st year in law enforcement.

Throughout my tenure, I've witnessed the crack wars of the 1980's, cocaine usage of the 1990's, and the more recent devastating effects of heroin and fentanyl. Last year, Nassau County PD Narcan'd over 350 times, saving our residents from fatal overdoses. However, despite our efforts, we still lost over several hundred citizens to substance abuse.

Nevertheless, these times pale in comparison to the lawless society we are policing today. This turbulent environment emerged due to the lack of penalty for criminal activity, which directly affects the quality of life of our residents.

Security measures taken by corporate security in New York City are far greater than what is taken at our border. At our border, migrants are stopped, checked best as possible, review whatever paper they have, then offered a court date in excess of a year.

In the interim, there is nothing stopping these undocumented persons from entering our communities, committing crimes, whether violent or petty, joining gangs or preying on the Nassau County

residents. Today I will testify to several examples of crimes committed by migrants, but please know there are many more.

There are resources that are given by—Nassau County spans over the 4—excuse me—284 square miles and our residents of 1.5 million people. The ethnic and racial diversity of Nassau County citizens closely resembles that of our great Nation: 55.8 percent of Nassau County population is White/non-Hispanic, 18.4 percent is Hispanic/Latino, compared to the United States of 57.8 and 18.7 respectively.

New York City being a sanctuary city has a ripple effect on a non-sanctuary Nassau County. Nassau County Police Department is the nearest eastern jurisdiction of the NYPD. While New York City addresses the migrant housing crisis, it is reasonable to predict migrants would begin to journey away from the city, leaving New York's Nassau County Department to protect our border, spanning approximately 14 miles.

NCPD employs resources to address those increased number of undocumented persons within the county borders, addressing quality-of-life issues/concerns reported by Nassau County citizens for an overwhelming amount of peddling and soliciting, increase in aided and intoxicated persons, of undomiciled aided, who state they traveled from New York City. Most of these calls result in the aided being transferred to one of our local hospitals.

Nassau County Police Department utilizes Language Line and has seen a 95 percent increase in calls on that service.

Emerging trend for summonses on electronic mopeds, which are considered street-safe—not considered street-safe in Nassau County. Moped operators travel to Nassau from New York City, where they are considered safe. Since July of 2023, NCPD has seized approximately 150 mopeds for reasons such as no insurance, no registration, non-licensed operators. They, again, cause our victims a price when they are struck by one of these vehicles.

An uptick in auto accidents, uninsured and unregistered vehicles where vehicles' operators reside in New York City.

There are two major categories in the migrant crimes where the majority of allocated Nassau County resources are utilized.

Crimes that could be affected by patrol are instances that present—where the presence of police officers would have deterred the crime. Crimes affected by patrol are burglaries, robberies, auto crimes, drug activity, gang activity, and other violent issues.

Over the past few years, Nassau County Police Department has seen an increase in crimes committed by migrants. With bail reform changes in 2020, the NCPD is unable to utilize the incarceration as a crime deterrence for the overwhelming majority of offenses, including felonies. With no incarceration post-apprehension, no ICE notification without arraignment, and no threats of deportation, criminal migrants could be repeat offenders, leaving defenseless Nassau County residents.

Acting on intelligence provided by Homeland Security, detectives conducted a car stop. The undocumented migrant possessed 3 kilos of pure fentanyl. The NCPD has made great efforts in the opioid epidemic. Nassau County fatal overdoses have been trending down. But the amount of fentanyl seized in that case would have killed just about every citizen on Long Island, over 3 million people.

Nassau County has a notable increase in gang violence, including migrants aligning with MS-13 and Latin King gangs, since 2021. These crimes have included stabbings, vehicular assaults, shootings, and assault with weapons. These incidents are affiliated with MS-13 and Latin King wars, and arrestees are migrants and some illegal migrants.

Since October of 2022, a total of 43 undocumented migrants here in this county illegally have been arrested and charged with 93 counts of burglary. The South American Theft Group, which has hit Nassau County several times, has stolen over \$30 million to \$50 million of people's assets. Those \$30 million to \$50 million have not been recovered, but the 5 out of the 6 that we arrested were released without bail, asked to put on an ankle bracelet, and then, after putting that ankle bracelet on, cut that ankle bracelet off at the border of New Jersey and fled so we cannot get them.

There are migrant crimes that are not affected by patrol.

In 2014, an undocumented migrant affected—entered the United States illegally in the vicinity of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. That subject was placed under arrest, released, and told to come back for an immigration hearing. Ten years later, that undocumented 27-year-old illegal migrant just last month raped a 5-year-old girl in the confines of his bedroom.

A defendant, a migrant MS-13 gang member, raped his domestic partner on 2 separate occasions, with the threat of use of force and firearms.

The system has failed the victims of these crimes. The lives of a young child and a young woman have been forever altered, not because of the failure to deter crime, but because the perpetrators should've never been in this country in the first place.

The county is not a sanctuary county, yet we all still are faced with the defiance. The alternative would create an insurmountable challenge.

Again, I apologize for going over. I did have some slides, but I will hold them and turn them over.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ryder follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PATRICK J. RYDER

DECEMBER 5, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Thank you, Chairman Green, Chairman D'Esposito, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology, for affording me the opportunity to testify at this important hearing regarding "Given the Green Light: Open Border Policies and Threats to Law Enforcement".

I am Patrick J. Ryder and I have served the people of Nassau County as police commissioner for 8 years. This year is my forty-second in law enforcement. Throughout my tenure, I've witnessed the crack wars of the 1980's, the increased cocaine usage in the 1990's, and the more recent, devastating effects of heroin and fentanyl. Last year, NCPD administered Narcan 335 times saving our residents from fatally overdosing. However, despite our efforts, Nassau County still lost over 100 citizens to substance abuse. Nevertheless, these times pale in comparison to the lawless society we are policing today. This turbulent environment emerged due to the lack of penalty for criminal activity which directly effects the quality of life of our residents. Security measures taken by corporate security to enter New York business facilities is far greater than what is required to enter this country. At our border, migrants are stopped, checked as best as possible, review whatever papers are presented,

then offered a court date in excess of 1 year. In the interim, there is nothing stopping these undocumented person(s) from entering our communities, committing crimes, whether violent or petty, or joining gangs, and preying on Nassau County residents. Today, I will testify to several examples of crimes committed by migrants, but please know, there are many more.

#### RESOURCES IN SAFEGUARDING NASSAU COUNTY RESIDENTS

Nassau County spans approximately 284 miles and is a home to almost 1.5 million residents. The ethnic and racial diversity of Nassau County citizens closely resembles that of our great nation. Fifty-five-point-eight percent of Nassau County's population is White/Non-Hispanic and 18.4 percent is Hispanic/Latino, compared to the United States which is 57.8 percent and 18.7 percent respectively.

New York City being a sanctuary city has a ripple effect on non-sanctuary Nassau County. Nassau County Police Department is the nearest eastern jurisdiction to NYCPD. While New York City addresses the migrant housing crisis, it is reasonable to predict migrants would begin to journey away from the city leaving Nassau County Police Department to protect the border spanning approximately 14 miles. The NCPD employs resources to address the increased number of undocumented persons within county borders:

- Addressing quality of life concerns reported by Nassau County citizens for an overwhelming amount of peddling and soliciting in malls and shopping centers near the NYC border.
- Increase in aided and intoxicated person calls involving undomiciled aided(s) who state they traveled from NYC. Most of these calls result in aided transport to one of Nassau County's hospitals.
- Nassau County Police Department utilizes Language Line for language translation services whether in person or telephonically. There has been a 95 percent increase in Hispanic calls to Language Line from 2020 to 2023.
- Emerging trend of summonses to electronic mopeds which are not considered street safe in Nassau County. Moped operators travel to Nassau from NYC where these vehicles are legally allowed to operate in traffic. Since July 2023 NCPD has seized approximately 150 mopeds for reasons such as: no insurance, no registration, non-licensed operator, and traveling at speeds in excess of 20 miles per hour.
- Uptick in auto accidents in uninsured and/or unregistered vehicles where vehicle operators reside in NYC.

There are 2 major categories of migrant crimes where the majority of allocated NCPD resources are utilized. These categories are affected by patrol and not affected by patrol.

#### MIGRANT CRIMES AFFECTED BY PATROL

Crimes that could be affected by patrol are instances where the presence of a police officer would have deterred the crime. Crimes affected by patrol are burglaries, robberies, auto crimes, gang activity, drug sales, and other violent crimes. Over the past few years, Nassau County Police Department has seen an increase in crimes committed by migrants. With bail reform law changes in 2020, the NCPD is unable to utilize incarceration as a crime deterrence for the overwhelming majority of offenses, including many felonies. With no incarceration post apprehension, no ICE notification without arraignment, and no threat of deportation, criminal migrants could be repeat offenders leaving defenseless Nassau County residents to be victims. The following are a sample of crimes affected by patrol committed by migrant defendants:

- Acting on intelligence provided by Homeland Security, detectives conducted a car stop where defendant, an undocumented migrant, was in possession of 3 kilos of pure fentanyl. The NCPD has made arduous efforts in combating the opioid epidemic. Nassau County fatal overdoses have been trending down from 2021 through 2024. The amount of fentanyl seized had the potential to kill millions of people. NCPD narcotics enforcement will be fruitless if our borders are not secured.
- Nassau County has a notable increase in gang violence involving migrants aligning with MS-13 and Latin King gangs since July 2021. These crimes include stabbing, vehicular assault, shootings, and assault with a weapon. Three incidents are affiliated with MS-13/Latin King "war" and all arrestees are migrants, some were here illegally.
- Since October 2022, a total of 43 undocumented migrants, here in this country illegally, have been arrested and charged with 93 counts of burglary. These arrests are considered to be a part of the South American Theft Group (SATG).

- *SATG jewelry store burglary.*—Six South American illegal migrants were arrested for a jewelry store burglary in Nassau County and are suspected of targeting numerous jewelry stores along the East Coast. Of the 6 arrestees, 1 was remanded and 5 were released without bail. The whereabouts of all 5 released defendants is unknown. Two never reported to receive their ankle monitors and 3 cut off their devices.

## MIGRANT CRIMES NOT AFFECTED BY PATROL

The Nassau County Police Department also utilizes resources in an effort to combat crimes committed by migrants that are not affected by patrol. Crimes not affected by patrol would not be deterred by visual police presence such as domestic incidents, sex crimes, and any other crimes that occur outside an officer's field of view. To reduce crimes not affected by patrol, the NCPD relies heavily on crime trends and intelligence gathering. NCPD implements a focused deterrence strategy in identifying known offenders by analyzing prior police contacts, gang affiliations, major crime and felony arrests, as well as arrests involving weapons and reckless endangerment. Undocumented persons who have not been properly vetted before crossing the border, pose a threat to the residents of Nassau County because their intentions are unknown. Illegal migrants render NCPD unable to make an intelligence assessment of character based on the lack of prior knowledge. A lifetime of potential PD contacts such as school incident reports, domestic reports, traffic stops, field interviews, calls for service, and aided reports are missed. The following crimes not affected by patrol have been committed by migrants here illegally:

- In 2014 an undocumented migrant, entered the United States illegally in the vicinity of the Rio Grande Valley, Texas. This subject was placed under arrest and released, then failed to appear for his immigration court hearing. Ten years later, the same undocumented, 27-year-old, illegal migrant, raped a 5-year-old girl in the confines of his bedroom.
- Defendant, a migrant and MS-13 gang member, raped his domestic partner on 2 separate occasions. Victim continued the relationship in fear for her safety. Defendant continued violently threatening victim who knew defendant was in possession of multiple firearms. Subsequent to arrest, a search warrant was conducted and several firearms were recovered.

The above-mentioned crimes are atrocities committed by migrants who took advantage of our country's sanctuary status. The deluded migrant programs and the inadequacy in the vetting process leaves undocumented persons, whose true intentions are unknown, free to wander about our communities. The system has failed the victims of these crimes. The lives of a young child and a young woman are forever altered, not because of failure to deter the crime, but because the perpetrators should have never been in this country in the first place.

Nassau County is not a sanctuary county, yet we are still faced with defiance. The alternative would create an insurmountable challenge.

Thank you for your time and attention on this consequential matter.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you, Commissioner.

I now recognize Sheriff Chapman for 5 minutes to summarize his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL L. CHAPMAN, SHERIFF OF LOUDOUN COUNTY, STATE OF VIRGINIA, ON BEHALF OF THE MAJOR COUNTY SHERIFFS OF AMERICA**

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of this subcommittee. I am Sheriff Mike Chapman of Loudoun County, Virginia. I am here representing the Major County Sheriffs of America.

As a 46-year career law enforcement professional having served in local and Federal law enforcement, including 23 years with the DEA, as a 4-time elected sheriff of Virginia's largest full-service sheriff's office, as a former vice president of homeland security for the Major County Sheriffs of America, and as a 2-time chairman of the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA, I am astonished at how any elected official would support practices that would make their com-

munities less safe. The safety of our citizens should always be the No. 1 priority of Government.

Unfortunately, over the past 4 years, the United States has seen an unmitigated flow of undocumented and criminal aliens enter this country, with many localities throughout the United States encouraging their sanctuary despite minimal, if not a total lack of, proper vetting.

This has nothing to do with the efforts and desires of the brave men and women doing their best to secure our border.

Most notable are the millions of illegal entries to this country that include those associated with MS-13 and 18th Street gangs from El Salvador, the Venezuelan gang known as Tren de Aragua, and known terrorists.

No single issue has had more of an impact on crime throughout the United States than our open borders. The impacts are stark. From years in which over 100,000 citizens lost their lives each year due to fentanyl poisonings, to the increase in human trafficking, to unconscionable murders, to deadly threats against law enforcement, and to major retail theft operations, the scope of crime and violence related to undocumented criminal aliens cannot be overstated.

In Loudoun County, one of the safest localities in the entire United States, we have seen an increase in unprecedented violence in recent years. Of our last 5 homicides, 3 were committed by suspects in this county illegally, 2 of which were by a self-proclaimed MS-13 gang member. Just last week, a previously affiliated MS-13 gang member opened fire on another vehicle, resulting from a simple road-rage incident.

Addressing these increasing threats takes an all-hands-on-deck approach, one that requires all law enforcement to work together and respect the specific missions of our fellow agencies. First and foremost, cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, is a must. Border Patrol and ICE are the front lines, with the next line of defense being our locally-elected sheriffs.

It is imperative that we get the resources we need to work with our Federal partners to keep our communities safe, but it cannot stop there. All our Federal law enforcement agencies are part of the mix.

Working with the DEA, for example, in Operation Angel's Envy, our sheriff's office was able to arrest a multitude of violators, many in this country illegally, who were working with the Sinaloa Cartel to distribute fentanyl to the Washington, DC, area—enough fentanyl to kill every man, woman, and child in Loudoun County 2 times over.

Working with ATF, we have been able to focus on the guns being used and shared by MS-13 gang members.

Working with postal inspectors, we track packages and conduct controlled deliveries to stop this deadly scourge of drugs being distributed by mail.

It is critical that our Federal partners work more closely with local counterparts to put an end to this scourge that has killed hundreds of thousands of people over the past several years.

Starting with the border, we must continue to build a wall, refuse illegal entries, enhance technology, and encourage “remain in Mexico” policies.

If an all-hands-on-deck approach is not aggressively pursued, these problems will continue to migrate to our most populated areas, to our cities, that were once beautiful, which have now become unsafe.

As law enforcement officers, we have a duty and responsibility to work together to protect our citizens and keep them safe, and Congress has a duty to support these efforts. Consequently, sheriffs throughout this country support the following policy initiatives of the incoming administration. Just this week, Sheriff Mark Dannels of Cochise County, Arizona, summarized the incoming administration’s rule of law: prevention, enforcement, and consequences.

Our request consists of the following:

No. 1, Congress must prioritize our efforts to secure the border, enforce immigration laws, and strengthen information sharing among Federal, State, and local and Tribal law enforcement.

No. 2, Congress must increase our access to technology investigative tools among law enforcement agencies. For example, facial recognition software, license plate readers, and social media analytical tools are integral to generating investigative leads and preventing crime and acts of terrorism.

No. 3, Congress must support and adequately fund Federal law enforcement agencies to partner with and aid local law enforcement in solving crime.

Four, finally, all of us involved in enforcing the law and supporting our enforcement of the law must work together in the fight against cartels and illicit drug trafficking and provide enhanced funding for Federal, State, and local narcotic enforcement efforts.

Only by working together toward a common goal can we make these efforts and America safer.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Sheriff Chapman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHERIFF MICHAEL L. CHAPMAN

DECEMBER 10, 2024

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of this committee. I am Sheriff Mike Chapman of Loudoun County, Virginia. I am here representing the Major County Sheriffs of America.

As a 46-year career law enforcement professional having served in local and Federal law enforcement, including 23 years with the DEA, as a 4-time elected sheriff of Virginia’s largest full-service sheriff’s office, as former vice president of homeland security for the Major County Sheriffs of America, and as 2-time chairman of the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA, I am astonished at how any elected official would support practices that would make their communities less safe.

The safety of our citizens should always be the No. 1 priority of Government. Unfortunately, over the past 4 years, the United States has seen an unmitigated flow of undocumented and criminal aliens enter this country, with many localities throughout the United States encouraging their sanctuary despite minimal, if not a total lack of proper vetting. This has nothing to do with the efforts and desires of the brave men and women doing their best to secure our border.

Most notable are the of millions of illegal entries to this country, that include those associated with MS-13 and 18th Street gangs from El Salvador, the Venezuelan gang known as Tren de Aragua (TDA), and known terrorists. No single issue has had more of an impact on crime throughout the United States, than our open borders. The impacts are stark from years in which over 100,000 citizens lost their lives each year due to fentanyl poisonings; to the increase in human traf-

ficking; to unconscionable murders; to deadly threats against law enforcement, to major retail theft operations, the scope of crime and violence related to undocumented criminal aliens cannot be understated.

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Addressing these increasing threats takes an “All-Hands-on-Deck” approach, one that requires all law enforcement to work together and respect the specific missions of our fellow agencies. First and foremost, cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a must. Border Patrol and ICE are the front lines, with the next line of defense being our locally-elected sheriffs. It is imperative that we get the resources we need to work with our Federal partners to keep our communities safe.

But it cannot stop there. All our Federal law enforcement agencies are part of the mix. Working with the DEA, for example, in “Operation Angel’s Envy,” our Sheriff’s Office was able to arrest a multitude of violators, many in this country illegally, who were working with the Sinaloa Cartel to distribute fentanyl to the Washington, DC area—enough fentanyl to kill every man, woman, and child in Loudoun County 2 times over.

Working with ATF, we have been able to focus on the guns being used—and shared by MS-13 gang members. Working with Postal Inspectors, we track packages and conduct controlled deliveries to stop this deadly scourge of drugs being distributed by mail. It is critical that our Federal partners work more closely with local counterparts to put an end to this scourge that has killed hundreds of thousands of people over the past several years.

Starting with the border, we must continue to build a wall, refuse illegal entries, enhance technology, and encourage “Remain in Mexico” policies. If an “All-Hands-on-Deck” approach is not aggressively pursued, these problems will continue to migrate to our most populated areas, to our cities that were once beautiful which have now become unsafe. As law enforcement enforcers, we have a duty and responsibility to work together to protect our citizens and keep them safe—and Congress has a duty to support these efforts.

Consequently, sheriffs throughout this country support the following policy initiatives of the incoming administration. Just this week, Sheriff Mark Dannels of Cochise County, Arizona summarized the incoming administration’s Rule of Law: Prevention, Enforcement, and Consequences.

Our requests consist of the following:

1. Congress must prioritize our efforts to secure the border, enforce immigration laws, and strengthen information sharing among Federal, State, local, and Tribal law enforcement.
2. Congress must increase our access to technological investigative tools among law enforcement agencies. For example, facial recognition software, license plate readers, and social media analytical tools are integral to generating investigative leads and preventing crime and acts of terrorism.
3. Congress must support and adequately fund Federal law enforcement agencies to partner with, and aid local law enforcement in solving crime.
4. Finally, all of us involved in enforcing the law and supporting our enforcement of the law, must work together in the fight against cartels and illicit drug trafficking, and provide enhanced funding for Federal, State, and local narcotic enforcement efforts.
5. Only by working together toward a common goal can we make America safer.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chapman.

I now recognize Mr. Bier to summarize his opening statement.

#### **STATEMENT OF DAVID J. BIER, PRIVATE CITIZEN**

Mr. BIER. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For nearly half a century, the CATO Institute has produced original research showing that, in a free society, people, whatever their ancestry, background, or birthplace, are directed toward activities that benefit mankind.

Like they have for centuries, America's new immigrants are contributing to our success, working for us and with us to build a stronger, wealthier, and safer country.

But immigrants are people, and some people commit crimes. Is mass deportation the answer? No. Mass deportation would make Americans, including law enforcement, less safe.

In 2023, immigrants, legal and illegal, were half as likely to have committed crimes serious enough for them to be incarcerated in the United States. Data from Texas showed that, in 2022, the average illegal immigrant was 36 percent less likely to commit and be convicted of murder. Legal immigrants were even less likely.

Not surprisingly, crime rates and murder rates have been shown to fall in response to immigration. In my written testimony, I show that homicides have fallen in 83 percent of the 72 cities receiving most of the new illegal immigrants. Cities with more new illegal immigrants were slightly more likely to see a decline in homicides. Salt Lake City was the top city for immigration court filings as a percentage of its population, and its murders fell 53 percent, twice as fast as the national average.

CATO also reviewed every instance of a law enforcement officer being shot and killed in the line of duty in 2024, finding no illegal-immigrant shooters. We looked at every NYPD officer killed for the last decade—again, no illegal-immigrant killers. In fact, immigrants were more likely to be killed serving as NYPD officers than they were to kill NYPD officers.

We shouldn't be surprised by these findings. Immigrants are more likely to be engaged in activities not associated with crime, such as working, starting businesses, marrying, having kids, attending church, and avoiding drugs.

Mass deportation would remove a population less likely to commit serious crimes, which would increase the crime rate and victimization rate for Americans and U.S. law enforcement.

But let's suppose I'm wrong and immigrants are more likely to commit crimes. Mass deportation would still harm public safety. Mass deportation means indiscriminate enforcement. It means targeting peaceful people. It de-prioritizes serious offenders.

We saw how that played out during 4 years of Trump, who removed the requirement to target criminals in his first week in office. He doubled arrests of non-criminals—pizza delivery drivers, domestic violence victims, spouses of U.S. citizens—and he released twice as many convicted criminals from ICE custody as President Biden has.

Trump separated families, which U.S. attorneys said allowed sex offenders to go free.

When you're only interested in deporting as many people as possible, you'll downplay public safety. As a result, the number of criminals trying to enter illegally tripled to record highs under Trump.

The threat of mass deportation won't deter criminals, but it would threaten immigrant victims and witnesses who work with law enforcement to stop and solve crimes.

Let me be clear: When a non-citizen victimizes someone in the United States, their welcome is over. Even one such instance is too

many. That's why law enforcement should be focused on those threats.

Don't ignore illegal immigration; fix it. But, rather than mass deportation, what we need is legal immigration. Create legal ways for peaceful people to apply, get vetted, and live here legally. Then cops can be cops and focus on threats to public safety. That's something we all can agree on.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bier follows:]

**Testimony of  
David J. Bier  
Associate Director of Immigration Studies  
at  
The Cato Institute  
Before  
The House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology  
December 10, 2024  
RE: Given the Green Light: Open Border Policies and Threats to Law  
Enforcement**

Chairman D'Esposito, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is David Bier. I am the Director of Immigration Studies at the Cato Institute, a nonpartisan public policy research organization here in Washington, D.C.<sup>1</sup>

For nearly half a century, the Cato Institute has produced original research showing that a freer, more orderly, and more lawful immigration system makes the United States a wealthier, freer, and safer place to live. Our view is inspired by America's founding principles: in a free society, people, regardless of their background, ancestry, or birthplace, are directed toward activities that benefit mankind. In the words of the late great economist Julian Simon, people are the ultimate resource because it is only people's creativity and work ethic that turn natural resources into human resources.

Nearly all immigrants come to America seeking the freedom to improve their lives through hard work in their new country. As one recent immigrant said, "You have to come here to work. To work hard, long days, to work harder than you've ever been used to working."<sup>2</sup> The primary reason for the surge in immigration since 2021 was that Americans demanded more workers than were available domestically, leading job openings to surge to unprecedented levels. Recent immigrants went to states with more open jobs and are already employed at higher rates than the US-born population.<sup>3</sup>

The new immigrants have prevented the decline in the US labor force, helped stabilize the economy as we recovered from the pandemic, and are contributing \$1 trillion more in federal taxes than they are receiving in benefits.<sup>4</sup> They provide essential services in health care, elder care, childcare, construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and much else.<sup>5</sup> America is fortunate to have so many people who want to join us and contribute to this great country.

#### **Immigration Does Not Threaten Law Enforcement**

Immigrants are coming to work and contributing to US society, making the country safer. Murders surged in 2020 when immigration inflows were lower than at any point in a generation, and the recent surge in immigration inflows has coincided with the fastest decline in murders on record. With respect to law enforcement threats specifically, the evidence shows:

- 1) noncitizens are less likely to murder police than US citizens;
- 2) noncitizens commit fewer serious crimes, reducing risks to police;
- 3) noncitizens impose lower per capita fiscal costs on law enforcement; and
- 4) noncitizens work with police to stop crimes, convict criminals, and protect police.

Noncitizen crime could be even lower if the US immigration system explicitly focused on the exclusion and removal of public safety threats rather than peaceful people seeking safety, work, or family reunification. Mass deportation would not make the country safer.

Not only would it remove people who are making the country safer, it would divert substantial resources away from tackling serious threats to the public.

The Cato Institute reviewed records related to each individual arrested for shooting and killing a police officer as recorded on the Officer Down Memorial Page in 2024.<sup>6</sup> From January 1, 2024, to November 29, 2024, 45 officers were shot and killed in the line of duty. This review did not identify any illegal immigrant perpetrators.

Separately, the Cato Institute also reviewed records related to each officer of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) killed in duty from 2014 to 2024, and it also identified no illegal immigrant cop killers.<sup>7</sup> This implies that illegal immigrants are significantly less likely to murder police officers in New York and nationally than U.S. citizens. Appendix Table A contains the list of officers killed in New York (2014-24) and nationwide (2024). Meanwhile, multiple slain members of NYPD were immigrants themselves. Immigrants were more likely to be killed as NYPD officers than they were to kill NYPD officers.

Of course, there have certainly been tragic instances in US history where immigrants have killed police officers. The purpose of this systemic review was to provide evidence regarding whether illegal immigrants elevate the risk of violent deaths for law enforcement compared to the US-born population. They do not. Illegal immigration is adding a population less threatening to law enforcement than US-born Americans, reducing the risk that the average officer faces on the job.

#### **Immigrants Commit Fewer Serious Crimes**

These conclusions about crimes against officers are not surprising given that a substantial body of evidence indicates that immigrants are less likely to commit murder and other serious crimes than US-born people. The following datasets that contain direct information on immigrants demonstrate immigrants' lower rates of criminality:

- U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey;
- National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97);
- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health;
- General Social Survey;<sup>8</sup>
- Texas's Department of Public Safety arrest and conviction records; and
- The Department of Homeland Security's Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT)

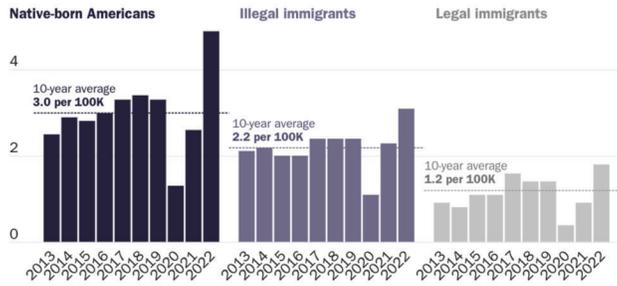
The best evidence concerning murder comes from the state of Texas, which is the only state that records both citizenship and immigration status for each arrest, as determined by investigations by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Texas.

The Cato Institute's analysis of this dataset shows that from 2013 to 2022, illegal immigrants were 26 percent less likely than native-born Americans to be convicted of homicide in Texas, and legal immigrants were 61 percent less likely (Figure 1). In 2022, homicide conviction rates for illegal immigrants and legal immigrants were 35.6 percent

and 62.3 percent, respectively, below those of native-born Americans. It is important to emphasize that the estimate of the number of total illegal immigrants is more uncertain than the number of illegal immigrants convicted of murder. If the number of illegal immigrants in Texas was higher than the Census Bureau data indicate—which is possible, especially given Texas’s location near the border—the murder rate for illegal immigrants would be lower.

Cato’s findings are also remarkable because they do not control for age, education, income, race, ethnicity, or any other variables correlated with higher crime rates. If such controls were introduced, which are common in criminology research, then the gap between illegal immigrant and native-born American homicide conviction rates would be even greater because illegal immigrants are more likely to be younger, less well-educated, poorer, and be members of racial and ethnic groups who have higher criminal conviction rates on average.

**Homicide conviction rates by immigration status in Texas per 100,000 residents in each subpopulation, 2013–2022**



Sources: Author’s analysis of data from the Texas Department of Public Safety and the American Community Survey.

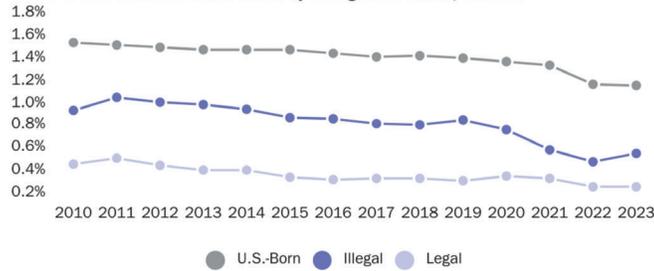
The second important source for information on major crimes comes from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS), which surveys prisoners and supplements responses with administrative records on citizenship status.<sup>9</sup>

The Cato Institute identified illegal immigrant prisoners in the Census ACS data, using a statistical technique that rules out likely legal noncitizens. The results indicate that legal and illegal immigrants were significantly less likely to have committed an offense serious enough to be incarcerated in the United States every year from 2010 to 2023. In 2023, illegal immigrants were 50 percent less likely to have committed an offense serious enough

to be incarcerated, while legal immigrants were 74 percent less likely. As Figure 1 shows, the rate of incarceration has fallen for all groups since 2019 but has fallen much faster for illegal immigrants than for others.

Although the data still indicate higher rates of incarceration for illegal immigrants than legal immigrants, many illegal immigrants are incarcerated solely for lacking legal status or crossing the border illegally. These are offenses that U.S. citizens and legal immigrants cannot commit. Removing these offenses would nearly eliminate the gap between legal and illegal immigrants. Moreover, the incarcerated illegal population is much easier to determine than the illegal population generally. If the Census ACS data understates the overall illegal population, the illegal immigrant incarceration rate would be even lower than it appears.

**Share of U.S. residents incarcerated by immigration status, 2010-23**



Notes: Ages 18-54

Source: American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024 analysis by Landgrave, Michelangelo, and Alex Nowrasteh. "Illegal Immigrant Incarceration Rates, 2010-2023: Demographics and Policy Implications," Cato Institute, 2024, Forthcoming.

A variety of other datasets and surveys confirm the findings that criminality is lower among immigrants, including among young immigrants and children.<sup>10</sup> A Cato Institute analysis of IDENT records showed that DACA applicants are about 85 percent less likely than the general public to have been arrested.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, about 30 percent of Americans have been arrested,<sup>12</sup> and about 5 percent will be imprisoned for a crime.<sup>13</sup>

Immigrants' lower crime rate has been considered a surprising "paradox" because immigrants have various demographic characteristics that correlate with higher crime rates.<sup>14</sup> They have lower levels of education, lower incomes, younger ages, and reside more frequently in higher-crime urban areas. However, immigrants also have a variety of characteristics that make them less likely to commit crimes, including higher rates of fertility, marriage, employment, business creation, and church attendance.<sup>15</sup>

Because immigrants commit fewer crimes, they lower the crime rate. When Americans victimize immigrants in their communities, the mere presence of immigrants can prevent an American from becoming a victim. For instance, an Afghan immigrant was killed during a botched carjacking in D.C. last year.<sup>16</sup> There is every reason to believe that had the immigrant not been there, an American would have been killed instead.

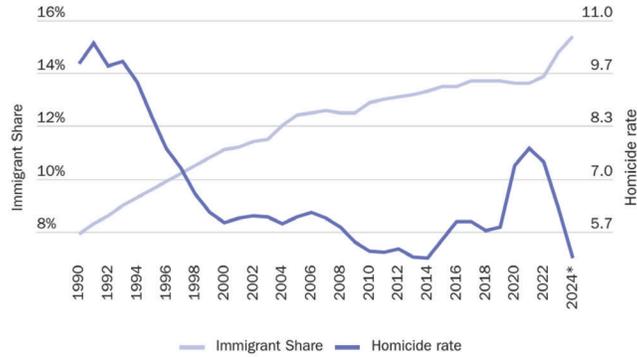
#### **Immigration Reduces Crime**

Another way to determine whether immigrants are causing more crime is to look at the overall crime rate. The rapid increase in the immigrant population in the 1990s and 2000s—legal and illegal—coincided with a rapid decline in violent crime in the United States. The homicide rate halved from 1990 to 2010, while the immigrant share of the population nearly doubled. In many U.S. cities, the increase was even more significant.

Immigration contributed to the great crime decline. Cities with larger increases in immigrants saw bigger declines in crime in the 1990s.<sup>17</sup> New York City, for instance, saw its homicide rate fall 69 percent from 1990 to 2010.<sup>18</sup> More than a dozen studies have confirmed this negative association between immigration and crime.<sup>19</sup> Research on more recent periods has also found an association between higher levels of immigration and lower homicide rates.<sup>20</sup>

Following the 1990s, the homicide rate remained low until the summer of 2020, when it spiked at a time when immigration—legal and illegal—was at a historic low. The murder rate has fallen since peaking in the second half of 2020. From 2020 to 2024, the immigrant share of the US population increased faster than at any time on record, and homicides fell at the fastest rate ever recorded in 2023. Data from a large subset of cities shows that 2024 has continued the precipitous downward trend in homicides.<sup>21</sup>

**US homicide rate and immigrant share of the U.S. population**



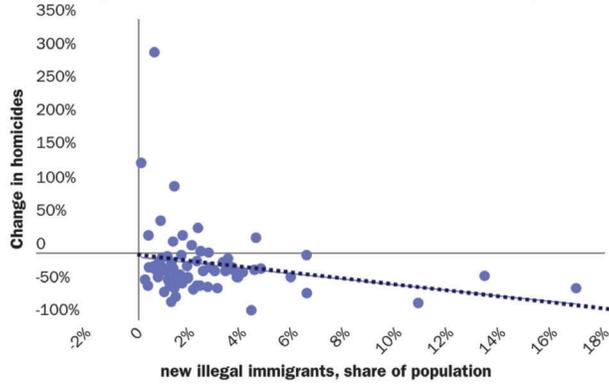
Sources: FBI via [Jeff Asher](#); AH Datalytics, "YTD Murder Comparison," 2024; Current Population Survey, ASEC, US Census Bureau, 2023; US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990 and 2000, interdecadal years interpolated.

To extend this analysis further, I reviewed the number of homicides in 72 major cities where the vast majority of notices to appear in immigration court have been filed for illegal immigrants entering from 2021 to 2024. The figure below compares the number of new immigrants as a share of the city population to the change in homicides in those cities, using the new Real Crime Index that collects data on crime rates directly from local governments.

From January 2021 to June 2024, 83 percent of the 72 cities saw a drop in the city's homicides measured over the prior six months (which makes sense since the 2020 spike started in mid-2020). Cities with more new immigrants saw somewhat larger declines in homicides, though the relationship is not statistically significant.

Nonetheless, nine of the top 10 cities with the most new immigrants saw declines in murders, and eight of ten saw above-average declines. Salt Lake City was the top city with immigration court filings equaling 16 percent of its population, and its murders fell 53 percent—twice as fast as the national average. Newark and San Bernardino were the next two, with illegal immigrant population increases of more than 10 percent of their populations and murder declines of 35 percent and 76 percent, respectively. Murders in Boston (#10) fell the farthest, 85 percent, from January 2021 to June 2024.

**Illegal immigrants are not associated with more homicides in 72 major cities**



Source: TRAC Immigration, "New Proceedings Filed in Immigration Court," Syracuse University, 2024; Real Time Crime Index, "Reported UCR Part One Crimes by Month," 2024.

Notes: Homicides are measures are a 6 month cumulative basis.

Immigrants also lower the crime rate indirectly. Research published in the *Journal of Criminal Justice* has shown that just filling abandoned buildings makes residents less likely to commit crimes,<sup>22</sup> and immigration is associated with fewer vacancies.<sup>23</sup> Research by economist Jacob Vigdor has shown that immigrants seek out areas where real estate prices are low or falling, which prevents community decay.<sup>24</sup> For example, over the last two decades, refugees and asylum seekers entered Buffalo's lower-cost and higher-crime West Side. They took over vacant lots and businesses, and crime fell by 70 percent.<sup>25</sup> This pattern has been observed in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other cities.<sup>26</sup>

Immigrants also bring more businesses to these areas as both consumers and entrepreneurs. Immigrants are 80 percent more likely to start businesses than the U.S.-born population,<sup>27</sup> and they make up a disproportionate 28 percent of brick-and-mortar "main street" businesses nationwide.<sup>28</sup> Immigrants account for about half of all main street businesses in many major metropolitan areas.

**Immigrants Help Law Enforcement to Stop Crimes**

Immigrants can also stop crimes by helping law enforcement bring criminals to justice. Immigrants are generally more likely to report crimes to police than the US-born population.<sup>29</sup> This may be because they trust US institutions more than other US

residents.<sup>30</sup> A significant source of funding for local police comes from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program. Byrne was a New York City officer killed guarding a Guyanese immigrant who had repeatedly reported criminal activity in New York.<sup>31</sup> The immigrant then again risked his life to testify against Byrne's killers.

There are numerous examples of immigrants helping law enforcement stop criminals or prevent crimes. Two international students stopped a sexual assault at Stanford, testifying against the rapist at trial.<sup>32</sup> Another immigrant (Patricio Salazar) lost his life stopping a rape in Virginia.<sup>33</sup> A video filmed on the phone of Feidin Santana, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, was the basis of a homicide conviction in South Carolina.<sup>34</sup> William Ramirez, a Colombian immigrant working boat maintenance in Miami in 2015, drove his van between an officer and an active shooter, saving the officer's life.<sup>35</sup>

In New York, two recent asylum seekers from Venezuela stopped a stabbing and held the perpetrator until the NYPD could arrive.<sup>36</sup> An illegal immigrant acting as a convenience store nightwatchman stopped a burglary in Texas.<sup>37</sup> Another in New Mexico chased down a child abductor, returning a 6-year-old girl to her parents.<sup>38</sup> This type of aid is not uncommon. About 100,000 illegal immigrants have obtained legal status through their cooperation with law enforcement over the last decade,<sup>39</sup> and local agencies have about 355,000 requests pending for illegal immigrants to receive legal status based on their cooperation with them right now.<sup>40</sup>

Many jurisdictions have created special programs to make it easier for immigrants to report crimes. Nassau County, New York has an Office of Immigrant Affairs that helps immigrant witnesses and victims.<sup>41</sup> Immigrants to New Jersey helped turn around South Paterson, an area once beset by crime and corruption. The Paterson police commissioner pointed to the willingness of immigrant business owners to work with police as one major reason why its crime rate fell.<sup>42</sup>

Immigrants can also affect the crime rate by becoming members of law enforcement. Over 80,000 immigrants served as detectives and police officers in 2021, and about 350,000 immigrants in protective service roles, including corrections officers, bailiffs, private security, firefighters, and other similar positions.<sup>43</sup> Training more police officers is a proven way to reduce crime,<sup>44</sup> yet many cities find it difficult to fill open jobs. In Tulsa, Oklahoma, for instance, there are 160 officer jobs unfilled.<sup>45</sup> In 2015, Nashville Police Chief Steve Anderson convinced legislators in Tennessee to open police recruitment to noncitizens with military service to help address the shortage, and other departments are opening to immigrants as well.<sup>46</sup>

Because of their lower crime rate, immigrants are less costly to police than the US-born population. Looking at the cost of incarceration, felony courts, and felony policing, noncitizen immigrants impose law enforcement costs per capita of about \$350 compared to \$528—34 percent lower.<sup>47</sup> This compares with tax revenues of \$8,147 per person. The average noncitizen contributed about \$80 billion more in taxes than they imposed in state and local costs in 2023.

### **Mass Deportation Will Not Increase Security.**

A policy of mass deportation would undermine public safety in three ways:

1. Mass deportation would remove a population less likely to commit serious crimes, increasing crime and victimization rates for the US population.
2. Mass deportation would undermine collaboration between immigrants and law enforcement in targeting serious criminals.<sup>48</sup>
3. Mass deportation would *deprioritize* serious noncitizen offenders for removal by not requiring agents to target nonserious offenders.

Immigrants have just as much of a stake in safe communities as Americans. Immigrants do not want thieves, rapists, and murderers free in their neighborhoods. When immigrants do commit crimes, their victims are usually other immigrants.<sup>49</sup> When people say, "If mass deportation was carried out, this crime would never have happened," it is usually wrong. The crime would have just happened in their home country because mass deportation would deport both the victim and the perpetrator.<sup>50</sup> Mass deportation means deporting victims of crimes.

Policies that indiscriminately target reduce the already higher-than-average cooperation among immigrants with police.<sup>51</sup> If we want to root out the bad apples, we should want to create policies that make it easier for immigrants to cooperate with law enforcement. That means providing a path to legal status for law-abiding immigrants and assuring that future immigrants can legally enter and reside in this country.

One negative side effect of attempting mass deportation is that it encourages cities with large immigrant populations to refuse to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. In 2017, for instance, New York City responded to the Trump administration's mass deportation promises by banning any communication between local law enforcement and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.<sup>52</sup> Other cities adopted similarly extreme policies.

Throughout the last four years, the Biden administration has attempted to restore trust between those cities and ICE<sup>53</sup> and has had several successes. Baltimore and Montgomery County in Maryland now notify ICE before releasing serious criminals who are in the country illegally.<sup>54</sup> The New York City mayor has also come out in favor of reversing the categorical ban on communication.<sup>55</sup>

### **Mass Deportation Deprioritizes Serious Offenders**

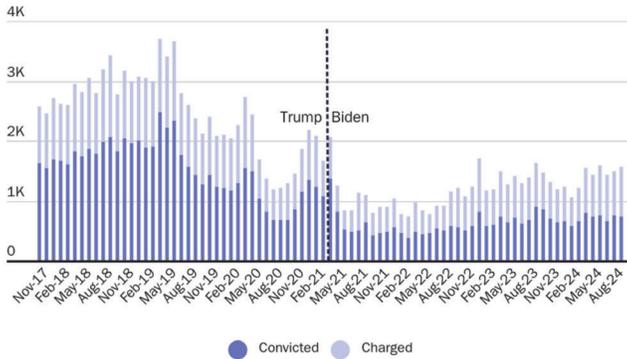
In his first week in office in 2017, President Trump removed requirements for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to target only recent border crossers and public safety threats. In response, ICE doubled arrests of noncriminals, including pizza delivery drivers, domestic violence victims, and spouses of U.S. citizens.<sup>56</sup>

President Biden reversed this decision to deprioritize criminals. As the figure below shows, the Trump administration released more than twice as many convicted criminals from custody as the Biden administration. These releases included numerous individuals

convicted of violent felonies.<sup>57</sup> The Biden administration has also reduced the percentage of criminals released. Matt Elliston, Director of ICE's Baltimore Field Office, told CBS News this year that "it doesn't make sense to waste a detention bed on someone like that [with no criminal history] when we have other felons to go out and get today. We use immigration law to enhance public safety."<sup>58</sup>

**ICE has reduced releases of people charged or convicted of crimes**

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) releases by month



Sources: DHS, "Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables"

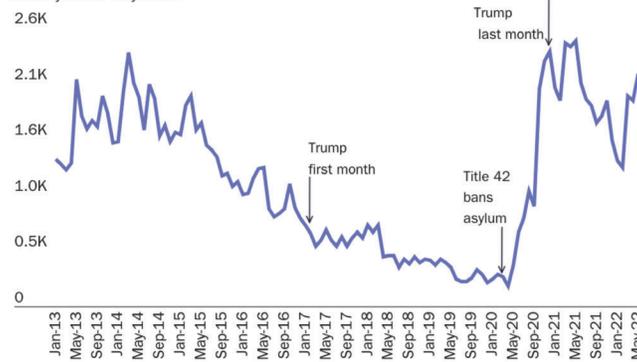
At the border, Border Patrol officials under President Trump separated children from their parents by targeting prosecutions against parents. They only ever prosecuted 32 percent of crossers at most, allowing numerous adults without children to avoid prosecution to prioritize locking up parents.<sup>59</sup> They deliberately targeted children. The courts found this policy of targeting children to be unconstitutional.<sup>60</sup> Worse still, U.S. attorneys reported that "sex offenders were released" to make room for prosecuting parents with children.<sup>61</sup> The Department of Justice Office of Inspector General explained:

When we asked the AUSA about this issue, he explained that the Border Patrol's intake processing was overloaded and there was insufficient "capacity to identify and screen the most serious offenders out because they were so pressed to do the [illegal entry cases]." In interviews with the OIG, multiple SDTX officials, including U.S. Attorney Patrick, raised similar concerns about the Border Patrol not identifying criminal histories after apprehension.<sup>62</sup>

Because DHS had no way to track separated children, it could not reunite them with their parents after prosecution.<sup>63</sup> It wasted enormous resources undertaking the tedious process of identifying separated family units under court order. As it separated families for crossing illegally, it blocked asylum-seeking families from entering legally, imposing more work on the entire agency.<sup>64</sup> The policy also failed in its goal of ending the release of asylum-seeking families into the United States.<sup>65</sup>

ICE ultimately replaced family separation with the Title 42 expulsion to Mexico policy in 2020. Although justified as a public health measure, the actual purpose of the Title 42 policy was to ban asylum and mass expel all crossers to Mexico. This meant that Border Patrol no longer singled out criminals for prosecution, detention, and deportation to their home cities, instead returning them immediately to the other side of the border with asylum-seeking families. This policy deterred families from crossing, but not criminals. Instead, it reversed a decade of progress in deterring criminals from crossing, causing an eightfold increase in criminal arrests from February 2020 to December 2020.<sup>66</sup>

**A decade of progress on deterring criminal crossings reversed under Trump**  
 Convicted criminals encountered by Border Patrol, monthly, Title 42 and Title 8  
 January 2013–May 2022



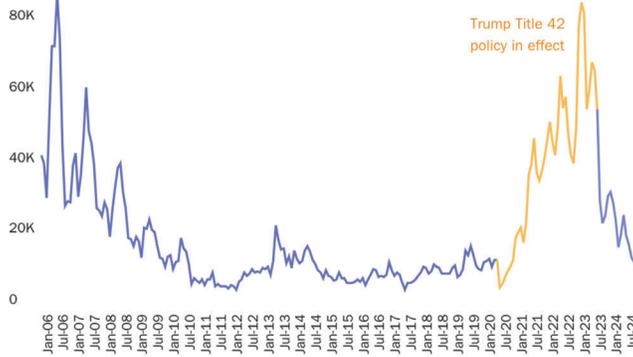
Sources: Customs and Border Protection, Freedom of Information Act request, August 8, 2022, August 3, 2022.

During Title 42, criminals who were crossing illegally could hide amongst many other people who would have turned themselves in to seek asylum but instead had to try to sneak in. As a result, Title 42 led to a sixfold increase in “known gotaways” or successful evasions of Border Patrol recorded through border surveillance. When President Biden

ended the Title 42 policy, gotaways fell by 80 percent.<sup>67</sup> Biden's action was the most significant improvement in border security in decades.

**Trump's Title 42 policy increased evasions of Border Patrol in 2020**

Border Patrol known "gotaways," Oct. 2005-Jul. 2024



Sources: Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Cato Institute, Freedom of Information Act request; Townhall via CBP sources (Jan\_2021 to August 2021); CBP via Benedict Smith and Ben Butcher, "The true scale of migrant crossings under Kamala Harris revealed," *Telegraph*, October 28, 2024.

**Immigrants aren't responsible for fentanyl deaths.**

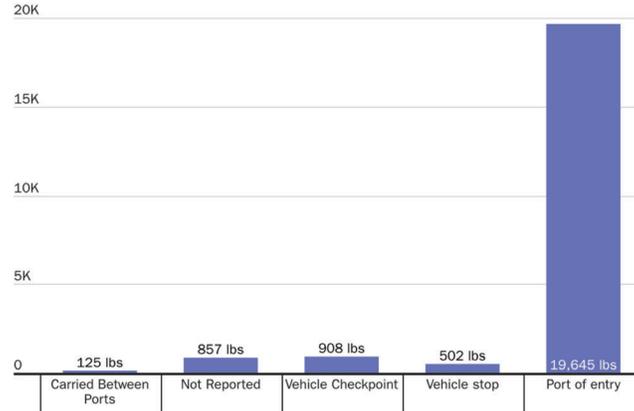
Immigrants are also not responsible for fentanyl trafficking. Fentanyl consumers fund fentanyl trafficking, and nearly 99 percent of the users are U.S. citizens.<sup>68</sup> It is not surprising that research has shown that "increases in immigration are associated with significantly lower homicide and lower overdose death rates overall and across substance type."<sup>69</sup> U.S. citizens are also the primary smugglers of fentanyl. In 2023, at southwest border courts, U.S. citizens accounted for 80 percent of fentanyl traffickers.<sup>70</sup> The same year, they accounted for 80 percent of the individuals stopped with fentanyl. Cartels employ U.S. citizen traffickers because smuggling is significantly easier at ports of entry than between them, and U.S. citizens have legal access to the United States and are subject to less scrutiny at ports of entry.

For this reason, from fiscal year 2019 to June 2023, 93 percent of fentanyl seizures by CBP have occurred at ports of entry or vehicle checkpoints, not along illegal migration routes.<sup>71</sup> The following graph displays the available data on seizure location for fiscal year 2023.

About 96 percent was seized from vehicles at checkpoints, traffic stops, or ports of entry, while one-half of a percent was seized on people carrying the drug over the border.

**Customs and Border Protection Fentanyl Seizures by Type**

Southwest Border, Fiscal Year 2023 (as of June 2023)



Sources: Customs and Border Protection, "CBP Enforcement Statistics Fiscal Year 2023," February 10, 2023; CBP, "Drug Seizure Statistics FY2023," February 8, 2023; CBP, "Border Patrol Seizes \$4 Million in Narcotics in One Day," January 27, 2023; CBP, "Border Patrol Agents Seize Over \$500,000 Worth of Fentanyl," October 19, 2022; CBP, "Del Rio Sector Agents Seize over \$100,000 in Mixed Narcotics," October 24, 2022; Chief Agent Gloria I. Chavez, Twitter, November 15, 2022; John Modlin, U.S. Border Patrol Chief TCA, Twitter, November 21, 2022.

Although CBP's data does not include the fentanyl that escapes their detection—both at ports and between them—CBP's seizures provide a sample to estimate the rate at which people who evade detection are carrying fentanyl. As of June 2023, Border Patrol had arrested about 9,000 people for every single event where fentanyl was seized at a location away from vehicle checkpoints. The people who are crossing between ports of entry are primarily seeking safety and opportunity, not smuggling fentanyl.

CBP has not estimated the quantity of fentanyl successfully smuggled through ports of entry, but for several years, it has calculated the probability of seizure for cocaine at ports of entry. In 2020, CBP estimated that it seized just 2 percent of the cocaine entering the country at ports.<sup>72</sup> Given its potency, significant amounts of fentanyl are even easier to conceal than cocaine. By contrast, CBP estimates that it interdicts a majority of the people

crossing the border illegally.<sup>73</sup> Thus, it is more than 90 percent easier to enter the country legally with hard drugs than cross the border illegally with them.

Border Patrol also does not seize any more fentanyl when arrests fall. Notably, despite a 42 percent drop in arrests in January 2023, Border Patrol seized almost no fentanyl (just 4 pounds) not at vehicle stops or checkpoints, the same amount as the prior month.<sup>74</sup> In June 2023, arrests again fell 42 percent, and the amount of fentanyl seized by Border Patrol not at checkpoints went down 67 percent.<sup>75</sup>

Qualitative assessments based on law enforcement intelligence also indicate that trafficking organizations understand that hard drugs are more easily smuggled through ports. The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National Drug Threat Assessment 2021 has said drug traffickers "exploit major highway routes for transportation, and the most common method employed involves smuggling illicit drugs through U.S. POEs in passenger vehicles with concealed compartments or commingled with legitimate goods on tractor-trailers."<sup>76</sup> DEA testified that its investigations have found that "the vast majority of fentanyl is coming in the ports of entry."<sup>77</sup> CBP and other agencies have made similar assessments.<sup>78</sup> It is precisely because these ports of entry are both scarce and incredibly valuable that cartels war for control over them.<sup>79</sup>

The reasons for the ease at which drugs enter through ports are multifaceted. Only as much as 17 percent of commercial trucks and 2 percent of passenger vehicles are scanned for any drugs.<sup>80</sup> CBP reports of drug interdiction arrests indicate that it is most often the driver's behavior that tips off agents to conduct a search, meaning that interdiction is dependent on a factor almost entirely outside of the agency's control.<sup>81</sup> The motivation for traffickers to innovate to evade detection is much stronger than the motivation to innovate to detect drugs crossing the border, which results in increasingly sophisticated smuggling techniques that quickly defeat interdiction efforts.

Even when a drug is easier to detect, the massive difference between the cost of production abroad and its value in the United States means that trafficking organizations can respond to greater interdiction simply by increasing production and smuggling more. From 2003 to 2009, for instance, Border Patrol more than doubled its staffing and built hundreds of miles of fences. As a result, Border Patrol marijuana seizures doubled, but cartels smuggled more to compensate, and the effort made no difference to the availability of Mexican marijuana in the United States.<sup>82</sup> In fact, the effort backfired. During the Border Patrol's hiring surge, the potency of marijuana increased by 37 percent.<sup>83</sup>

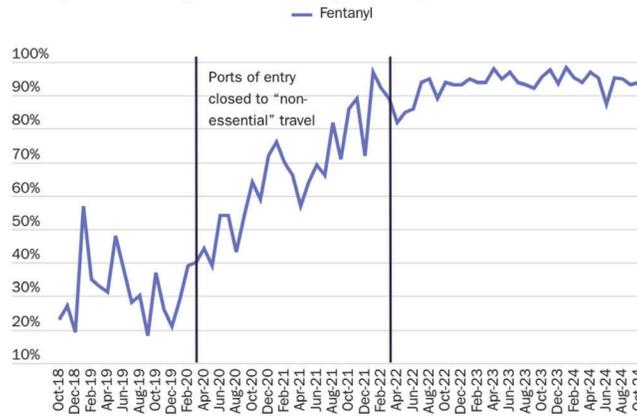
Fentanyl trafficking itself developed as a border-evasion measure to supply the market for heroin and other opioids. It initially had little natural demand because the fentanyl experience is so fundamentally different from that of heroin.<sup>84</sup> But fentanyl has 50 times the potency of heroin, which means that the same weight can supply 50 times as many consumers, creating a massive economic incentive for smugglers to prefer it to heroin.

**“Closing the border” increased fentanyl deaths.**

Despite fentanyl’s built-in economic advantage, it took the massive restriction on imports and travel during the pandemic—particularly the U.S. policy of limiting travel with Mexico—to force U.S.-Mexico border traffickers to shift from heroin to fentanyl. Within two months of the pandemic, fentanyl seizures overtook heroin by weight, and by the time the restrictions were lifted, fentanyl accounted for over 90 percent of the seizures.

**Fentanyl smuggling became more important after most legal travel was banned**

Fentanyl share of fentanyl/heroin seizures at ports of entry, October 2018–June 2024



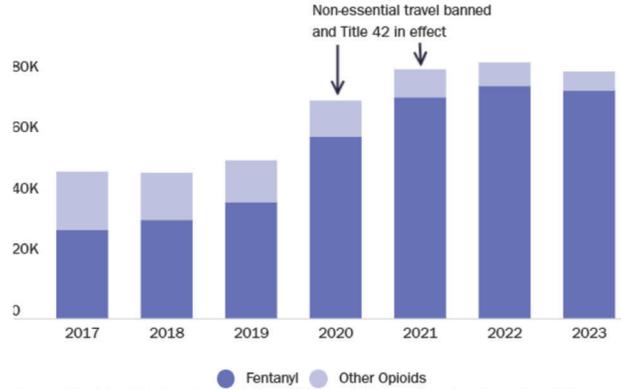
Source: “Drug Seizure Statistics.” Customs and Border Protection, 2024.

Tragically, the shift toward fentanyl and away from heroin caused a spike in fentanyl deaths. From 2019 to 2021, fentanyl deaths nearly doubled as trade and travel were restricted with Mexico. Unfortunately, additional efforts to restrict the trade in fentanyl will likewise backfire. There are already synthetic opioids many times more potent than fentanyl that cartels could switch toward if fentanyl trafficking becomes more difficult. For instance, the Tennessee Department of Health reported a fourfold increase in deaths in 2021 from Nitazenes—synthetic opioids 10 to 20 times more potent than fentanyl.<sup>85</sup>

This process of enforcement increasing the potency of prohibited items is called the “Iron Law of Prohibition.” It occurred under Alcohol Prohibition when liquor dominated wine and beer, and it has repeatedly played out under drug prohibition: crack cocaine as a substitute for powdered cocaine, heroin as a substitute for prescription drugs, and fentanyl

as a substitute for heroin. To stop drug deaths, policymakers must focus on demand, not supply.

**Deaths from fentanyl and other opioids, 2017-2023**



Sources: "Provisional Drug Overdose Death Counts," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024.  
 Note: 12-month periods before each January.

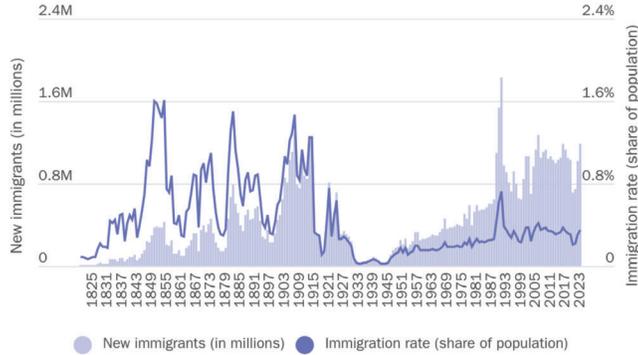
**Legal immigration increases security.**

Legal immigration would free law enforcement to focus exclusively on public safety threats. ICE should remove criminals, and Border Patrol should block their reentry. Despite the positive economic and social benefits of immigration, Congress's caps on legal permanent immigration will block about 97 percent of applicants in 2024—just 3 percent of applicants will receive a green card.<sup>86</sup> This restrictive system is the primary cause of illegal immigration, which diverts law enforcement resources away from serious threats to the country. America is just concluding a century of immigration restrictions that replaced America's traditional system of legal immigration.

Currently, the United States has a legal immigration rate—the number of new permanent residents as a percentage of its population—of just 0.3 percent. As Figure 13 shows, this rate was dramatically lower than in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, when it was consistently two to three times higher.

**The legal immigration rate never recovered from the restrictions in the 1920s**

Immigrants becoming legal permanent residents, share of population, 1820–2023



Source: Department of Homeland Security, "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics," 2023.

Legal immigration improves security by directing people to enter through a process in which they are vetted and screened before they enter. This is one reason why the legal immigrant incarceration rate is so low. DHS has made some efforts to increase the ability to vet people before they enter by creating parole sponsorship processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans. Unfortunately, the process's low cap of 30,000 per month and the uncertainty about its long-term future have undermined its effectiveness. Parole is only a temporary status, which may be canceled at any time.

Nonetheless, the process has still greatly increased legality among the four targeted countries. In March 2024, a majority of entries by all four nationalities were lawful. Cuban and Haitian illegal immigration has greatly diminished, with 96 percent of Cuban and 99 percent of Haitian entries being lawful. This processing change has given Border Patrol more resources to focus on other crossers.

Congress should make the parole sponsorship programs permanent, allow parolees to obtain permanent status, and require DHS to expand the process to other nationalities with a high likelihood of crossing illegally. These reforms would benefit the country's security while removing illegality and chaos from the border.

**Conclusion**

People who commit crimes that violate the rights of others should be punished, including through deportation if they are not citizens of the United States. However, each person should be treated equally. In America, we believe in individual accountability. We say, "You do the crime, you do the time." We don't lock up their families for what their relatives do. We don't target entire races, religions, or ethnicities. We don't ban childbirth for Americans just because they have higher rates of crime.

When a terrible crime occurs, justice demands that the person who committed it pays. Blaming whatever category an individual can fit into is not justice. It is unjust. Everyone knows this when the category is one they fit into or sympathize with, but it's quite easy to forget when it's not. It's one reason to have strong limits on power to force the government to only target those who violate others' rights.

It is also just bad policy to waste law enforcement resources going after entire races or categories of people. It's common sense to try to stop violence by catching and prosecuting violent criminals. Our justifiable fear of criminality should not cause us to forget the upside of people who, despite their flaws, are the basis of the greatest economy and society in the world. It is exactly because of this fact that so many people want to come to this country. We should create ways for them to do so legally.

Table A  
**List of New York Police Department members killed in action**  
 2014-2024

Date	Officer Title	Officer Name	Killed By
3/25/24	Detective First Grade	Jonathan E. Diller	Guy Rivera
10/10/23	Community Coordinator	Krystyna Naprawa	Hector Yepes
4/29/23	Detective	Troy D. Patterson	Tracy Clark
2/23/22	Detective Second Grade	Lawrence Bromm	William Ross Wakefield
1/25/22	Detective First Grade	Wilbert D. Mora	Lashawn J. McNeil
1/21/22	Detective First Grade	Jason Rivera	Lashawn J. McNeil
4/27/21	Detective First Grade	Anastasios Tsakos	Jessica Beauvais
9/29/19	Detective First Grade	Brian Mulkeen	6 NYPD Officers
2/12/19	Detective First Grade	Brian Simonsen	Jagger Freeman/NYPD officers
7/5/17	Detective First Grade	Miosotis Familia	Alexander Bonds
1/10/17	Detective First Grade	Steven D. McDonald	Shavod Jones
11/4/16	Sergeant	Paul J. Tuozzolo	Manuel Rosales
12/12/15	Sergeant	Donald Scott Conniff	Benjamin Feld
10/20/15	Detective First Grade	Randolph Holder	Tyrone Howard
5/4/15	Detective First Grade	Brian R. Moore	Demetrius Blackwell
12/20/14	Detective First Grade	Wen Jian Liu	Ismaaiyl Abdullah Brinsley
12/20/14	Detective First Grade	Rafael L. Ramos	Ismaaiyl Abdullah Brinsley

Source: NYPD, "Fallen Heroes," 2024.

Table B  
**List of law enforcement shot and killed in action, nationwide, part 1**  
 2024

Date of Death	State/City	Officer	Name of Perpetrator
11/29/24	Oak Park, IL	Allan Reddins	Jerell Thomas
11/25/24	Greenville, TX	Cooper Dawson	Christian Robert Sparger
11/4/24	Chicago, IL	Enrique Martinez	Darion McMillian
10/12/24	Jacksonville, FL	Brad McNew	Demaurea Grant
9/16/24	Russell County, KY	Josh Phipps	Joshua Arnold
9/11/24	Newton County, IN	Brandon Schreiber	Andrew Roselius
9/10/24	Philadelphia, PA	Jaime Junior Roman	Ramon Rodriguez-Vázquez
9/6/24	Phoenix, AZ	Zane Tristan Coolidge	Saul Aaron Bal
8/29/24	Dallas, TX	Darron Lee Burks	Corey Cobb-Bey
8/23/24	Carroll County, GA	Taylor Jaimeson Bristow	Christopher Bly
8/17/24	Paulding County, GA	Brandon Tyler Cunningham	James Samuel Atkins
8/9/24	Smyth County, VA	Hunter Reedy	Timothy Wayne Goodman
8/8/24	Summit, MS	Troy Floyd	Usher Leonard
8/3/24	Lake County, FL	Bradley Michael Link	Julie Ann Sulpizio
7/30/24	Cook County, IL	Rafael Wordlaw	Cordarrow Thompson
7/25/24	Lafayette, LA	Segus R. Jolivet	Nyjal Hurst
7/21/24	Melvindale, MI	Mohamed Said	Michael Lopez
7/11/24	Harris County, TX	Fernando Esqueda	Dremone Francis, Ronald Palmer
7/4/24	Cleveland, OH	Jamieson Ritter	Delawnte Hardy
6/27/24	Hillsdale County, MI	William Butler, Jr.	Michael Eric Fiddler
6/22/24	Oakland County, MI	Bradley J. Reckling	Raymone Raylee Debose, Marquis Lamar Goins, Karim Blake Moore
6/1/24	Gila River Indian Reservation, AZ	Joshua Briese	Joseph Nicholas Notah
5/30/24	Minneapolis, MN	Jamal Mitchell	Mustafa Ahmed Mohamed
5/11/24	Euclid, OH	Jacob Derbin	Deshawn Vaughn
4/29/24	Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC	Joshua Eyer	Terry Clark Hughes Jr.
4/29/24	NC	Samuel Poloche	Terry Clark Hughes Jr.

Source: Officer Down Memorial Page

Table B  
**List of law enforcement shot and killed in action, nationwide, part 2**  
 2024

Date of Death	State/City	Officer	Name of Perpetrator
4/29/24	NC	William "Alden" Elliott	Terry Clark Hughes Jr.
4/29/24	NC	Thomas M. Weeks	Terry Clark Hughes Jr.
4/24/24	Corpus Christi, TX	Kyle Hicks	Colton Foster
4/21/24	Ada County, ID	Tobin Bolter	Dennis Mulqueen
4/21/24	Chicago, IL	Luis M. Huesca	Xavier L. Tate
4/14/24	Syracuse, NY	Michael E. Jensen	Christopher Murphy
4/14/24	Onondaga County, NY	Michael Hoosock	Christopher Murphy
4/12/24	Memphis, TN	Joseph Russell McKinney	Jaylen Lobley
3/29/24	Puerto Rico	Eliezer Ramos-Velez	
3/25/24	New York, NY	Jonathan Diller	Guy Rivera
3/15/24	New Mexico	Justin Hare	Jaremy Smith
2/29/24	Independence, MO	Cody Allen	Larry Acree
2/28/24	Lauderdale County, AL	John Randall McCrary	Timothy Murphy
2/18/24	Burnsville, MN	Paul Eimstrand	Shannon Gooden
2/18/24	Burnsville, MN	Matthew Henke Ruge	Shannon Gooden
2/13/24	Sheridan, WY	Nevada Krinkee	William Franklin Lowery
2/8/24	Blount County, TN	Greg McCowan	Kenneth DeHart
1/4/24	George County, MS	Jeremy Malone	Rickey Powell
1/2/24	Stone County, AR	Justin Smith	Clinton Hefton

Source: Officer Down Memorial Page

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 John Modlin, U.S. Border Patrol Chief TCA, Twitter, November 21, 2022.  
<sup>75</sup> CBP, “Drug Seizure Statistics FY2023,” February 8, 2023.  
<sup>76</sup> “2020 National Drug Threat Assessment,” *US DOJ Drug Enforcement Administration*, March 2021.  
<sup>77</sup> Foreign Relations Committee, “Countering Illicit Fentanyl Trafficking,” February 2023.  
<sup>78</sup> Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Government Operations and Border Management, “Federal Government Perspective: Improving Security, Trade, and Travel Flows at the Southwest Border Ports of Entry,” November 17, 2021.  
<sup>79</sup> Salvador Rivera, “Murders pile up as cartels battle for control of Tijuana’s drug-trafficking corridor,” *Border Report*, August 22, 2022.  
<sup>80</sup> United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, “Securing America’s Ports Act,” September 9, 2020.  
<sup>81</sup> “The White House will work to add 123 new large-scale scanners at border crossings by September 2026. This would increase the number of scanned personal vehicles from just 2 percent to 40 percent, while expanding the number of cargo vehicles from 17 percent to 70 percent, CBP said.”  
 Paul Ingram, “In Nogales, White House official touts vehicle scanners to combat fentanyl smuggling,” *Tucson Sentinel*, July 3, 2023.  
<sup>82</sup> Angelina Hicks and Alex Riggins, “Border Patrol seizes \$3.7M-worth of fentanyl hidden in truck near Campo,” *San Diego Tribune*, July 20, 2022.  
<sup>83</sup> “Marijuana smuggling into the United States has occurred at consistently high levels over the past 10 years, primarily across the US–Mexico border”. See p. 19, Drug Enforcement Administration, “2013 National Drug Threat Assessment Summary,” November 2013.  
<sup>84</sup> See p. 12, Drug Enforcement Administration, “2013 National Drug Threat Assessment Summary,” November 2013.  
<sup>85</sup> Sarah G Mars, Jeff Ondoesin, and Daniel Ciccarone, “Sold as Heroin: Perceptions and Use of an Evolving Drug in Baltimore, MD,” *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 50, no. 2 (2017): 167-176.  
<sup>86</sup> Allison Roberts, Jessica Korona-Bailey, Sutapa Mukopadhyay, “Notes from the Field: Nitazene-Related Deaths – Tennessee, 2019–2021,” *MMWR Morbidity and Mortal Weekly Report* 71 (2022): 1196–1197.  
<sup>87</sup> David J. Bier, “Green Card Approval Rate Reaches Record Lows,” Cato Institute Briefing Paper no. 173, February 15, 2024.

Mr. D’ESPOSITO. Thank you, Mr. Bier.

Members will be recognized by order of seniority for their 5 minutes of questioning. An additional round of questioning may be called after all Members have been recognized.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Thompson, a recent article by the *New York Post* revealed that Tren de Aragua, its growing network now extends throughout 16 States. A leaked Homeland Security memo revealed that their “violent tendencies continue to evolve and have manifested through its expansion into the United States”.

How have your communities been impacted by TDA?

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman.

It's devastation, pure and simple.

I respectfully disagree with my colleague on the far end of the table. One life lost because of the TDA is preventable, but we're talking dozens, if not more. Now we're looking at the targeting of law enforcement across the country. It's not just in New York City. It is in nearly every location where TDA exists.

How has it affected our sheriffs and their deputies? I'm going to defer to Sheriff Chapman on part of the answer, but I can tell you, as recently as this past weekend, where I was in Missouri talking to 40 newly-elected sheriffs and, previous to that, on Thursday in Oklahoma, it's a problem. It is a serious problem. It is not limited to major cities. It is not limited to major-population-density areas. It is across the board.

TDA has become the most effective, well-financed, best-communicating business operation for a criminal enterprise we have ever seen. They are dangerous. They are everywhere.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you.

Commissioner Ryder, the DEA continues to seize records—record amounts of illicit fentanyl every year. This is because of the hard work of agents and local law enforcement throughout the country. Even when they're hindered by Democrat policies, they've been able to seize from 2021 6,875 kilograms of fentanyl to nearly twice that in 2023. In fiscal year 2023, CBP seized nearly 27,000 pounds of fentanyl at the Southwest Border.

I know you mentioned it in your opening statement, but how has fentanyl affected local law enforcement agencies, especially your agency and across Long Island?

Mr. RYDER. So imagine you're that mother or father come home and your son or daughter has overdosed and they're on the front—you're calling for an ambulance. With that ambulance is going to come 2 police officers. With those 2 police officers, 2 ambulances may show up. We're going to try to revive. We're going to give him Narcan. If we get the Narcan and we're successful, we're taking that person to the hospital.

The next day, you're back at the same house. That kid overdoses again, again on fentanyl. We Narcan him again.

By the third day, you come back, that kid is dead. Now, not only does the family live with the loss of that child, now the police officer has to look and live with the fact that he failed, he failed that family because back to the hospital 3 times. The system did nothing for him.

The fentanyl has saturated our communities. Massapequa is probably one of the most recognized middle-class American communities in the country, and it has the highest overdoses in our county, in Massapequa, because it's so available, it's so cheap, and it is so addictive.

It is affecting not only the families, not only the victims, but law enforcement is suffering too, because they've got to witness it day-in and day-out.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Sheriff Chapman, you shared in your written testimony that your county has seen an increase in violence in recent years, and you tie it back specifically to President Biden's open-border policies.

Can you tell me how Federal partners, including ICE, ATF, and the DEA, could better support counties like yours in the face of the influx of migrant crime?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you look at the surrounding counties that are in the northern Virginia/Washington, DC, area, most of them are sanctuary counties. We are not.

We work very closely with ICE. We make sure that anytime we arrest somebody, we run them through the system, and if the system comes back and they're—they're of interest to ICE, that ICE gets involved right away and they determine whether or not they want to pick somebody up or not. So, regardless of whether a detainer is filed or not, we notify them.

I think the key here is to make sure that any time we take somebody into custody, that we run them through the system, the IAQ system, ICE lets us know, and that we go ahead and we respond appropriately.

We can't get our job done unless we're working with our counterparts. I think it's a shame and it's really unconscionable that—we're all in this together, we all should be working with each other—and that some agencies choose not to do that.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Well, I think that's going to change come January. I hope that the agencies are able to work well with their local partners due to mutual respect and understanding that we all want to make this country safe again.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. I agree, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. I now recognize the Ranking Member for 5 minutes of questioning.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to all of our witnesses for joining us today.

Mr. Bier, does deporting people to another country require the country's cooperation? Are there some countries that won't accept deportations? Which countries are those? Do you expect that to change under the second Trump administration?

Mr. BIER. Yes, so you do need cooperation from the countries that you're sending these individuals to. They need travel authorization. They need to demonstrate that they are citizens of the country they're being sent to. If you have no diplomatic relations, like we do with Venezuela, you can't deport people very easily to Venezuela if they're refusing to cooperate in that process.

Now, for very serious offenders, the Biden administration has figured out ways to go through a third country to deport them. So they are trying to make efforts to get around that already, and I expect those efforts would continue under a Trump administration. But it's difficult if you're not going to reestablish diplomatic relations with the socialist government there.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Chapman, "Project 2025" calls for terminating funding for Criminal Homeland Security Grants, including the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Program, while advocating for State and local governments to bear the financial responsibility instead.

In your testimony—Mr. Chapman, in your testimony, you stated that Congress must increase our access to technological investigative tools for law enforcement. Will 2025's plan to terminate Homeland Security grant programs help to protect your community?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Mr. Ranking Member, I think it's important that we continue to work with Congress, that we continue to get as much funding as possible to help with our efforts there in protecting our borders and working with Homeland Security.

So I'm not really quite sure exactly what your question is there, but I do think it's imperative that we continue to work—

Mr. CARTER. Well, let me be clear what the question is. These projects that aim to dismantle these programs under "Project 2025," will they help you or hurt you?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Well, I'm not aware—

Mr. CARTER. If you're talking about taking—

Sheriff CHAPMAN. I'm not aware of what—

Mr. CARTER. Well, I'm sharing—I'm sharing with you now.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. OK.

Mr. CARTER. There is a 900-page manifesto that spells it out quite clearly. One of the things that it spells out is what I just suggested.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Well, I can't answer for "Project 2025." I'm not—

Mr. CARTER. Well, let's take "Project 2025" away and say, if these tools for law enforcement were taken away, regardless of how it happened, "Project 2025" or some other nefarious action that reduced your resources, does it help you or hurt you in your efforts?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. We continue to need resources to fight this—these efforts—

Mr. CARTER. I assume the answer is yes.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. The answer is, we would continue to need resources. However, I do agree that efficiency is important in anything that we do in the Federal Government.

Mr. CARTER. Will eliminating these resources further assist your community in preventing or responding to crime?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. Eliminating resources from the Federal Government that helps our local law enforcement would be a—would create difficulty for us, yes.

Mr. CARTER. OK.

If we go back and we talk about some of the things that were mentioned—Mr. Thompson, we've mentioned and we've said repeatedly that this committee should talk about this in not a partisan way but in a way that addresses the concerns of the American people.

Are you familiar with "Project 2025"?

Mr. THOMPSON. I am not.

Mr. CARTER. You're not? You've never heard of it?

Mr. THOMPSON. I've heard of it; I'm not familiar with it.

Mr. CARTER. You're not familiar with it.

Mr. RYDER, are you familiar with "Project 2025"?

Mr. RYDER. I have never heard of it. I have never read it. I—just on the news, when somebody mentions "Project 2025." No idea what it is.

Mr. CARTER. But—

Mr. THOMPSON. Can I interrupt, sir?

Mr. CARTER. Just a second, please.

You never heard of it? You never heard of "Project 2025"?

Mr. RYDER. No, I corrected myself. I said I've heard it on the news, but I've never looked at anything from "Project 2025," I've never read it, don't know nothing about it.

Mr. CARTER. You know nothing about it.

Mr.—I'll come back to you, sir.

Mr. Chapman, do you not know anything about "Project 2025" either?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. I have heard of it. I have never read it. So I don't know what the details are in "Project 2025."

Mr. CARTER. So you only know its title. You know none of its alleged impacts or intents.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. That is correct, just the title.

Mr. CARTER. Wow.

Mr. Bier.

Mr. BIER. Oh, yes, I know it well.

Mr. CARTER. Can you share with me the impacts that "Project 2025," if imposed, would impact our ability to secure our border and make it safer and do the things that we all talk about?

To be clear, we're all concerned about fentanyl, we're all concerned about the overrun border, we're all concerned about illegal immigration. There's no issue that there isn't—there are problems at the border.

But to somehow suggest that doing mass deportation without the steps—as I mentioned earlier, you just can't do it; you have to have relationship with the place you're sending them. You have to identify that they belong in the place that you're attempting to deport them to.

Can you, very quickly, in just a few seconds, tell me about "Project 2025" and as it relates to homeland security?

Mr. BIER. Yes, I mean, "Project 2025" is talking about essentially obliterating our legal immigration system, shutting it down; everything has a backlog, so we can't accept any new applicants.

I mean, these are the types of things that are going to result in chaos, with more illegal immigration. If you cut off any way for people to come legally, then you're going to get more illegal immigration. That's what "Project 2025" proposes.

Mr. CARTER. As I close, it's amazing that these esteemed gentlemen who are experts in this space have never heard of "Project 2025."

Mr. LALOTA [presiding]. The gentleman's time—

Mr. CARTER. I yield.

Mr. LALOTA [continuing]. Has expired.

I now recognize the gentleman from Alabama, Mr. Strong, for 5 minutes of questioning.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank those of you on our panel, those that serve as law enforcement officers throughout this country. Your job is hard enough as it is without massive numbers of illegal aliens in your communities and criminal organizations targeting you. Thank you for what you do.

Mr. Thompson, I want to discuss TDA specifically. In June of this year, DHS officials stated there was already over 100 on-going immigration or criminal investigations linked to TDA.

Mr. Thompson, do you think the Federal Government should follow Texas Governor Greg Abbott's lead to designate TDA as a foreign terrorist organization in order to provide HSA and other—I'm sorry—HSI, Homeland Security Investigations, and other Federal law enforcement agencies with an increased ability to combat these gangs' criminal operations?

Mr. THOMPSON. Sir, thank you for the question.

I think we all know that the designation of a terrorist organization has statutory and legal ramifications. I strongly, strongly endorse this Congress and the next to investigate how to do so. It can be done. It's the will of you, the Congress, that can affect that.

The answer to your question is yes.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you.

Mr. Thompson, I want to move on to sanctuary cities. As you know, the first Trump administration worked to crack down on them by issuing an Executive Order barring grant money from going to jurisdictions that prohibit law enforcement from cooperating with ICE.

In stark contrast, the Biden-Harris administration has supported and even incentivized sanctuary-city policies, hampering ICE's ability to identify and remove violent criminals from our communities.

Mr. Thompson, in your opinion, have sanctuary cities' policies facilitated threats to law enforcement?

Mr. THOMPSON. Sadly, yes, they have, absolutely, put more officers—

Mr. STRONG. For the record, he has said, definitely, yes, the Biden-Harris administration is working against law enforcement.

I want to also—aside from removing sanctuary-city incentives, what should the incoming Trump administration do to support State and local law enforcement?

Mr. THOMPSON. Uh, how much time do I have?

Mr. STRONG. Give us your best shot.

Mr. THOMPSON. I think it starts with the fundamental belief that we are a Nation of laws and the rule of law. I think it starts with the fundamental belief that borders are laws. There are laws that allow people to come to this country legally. They may be arcane. Congress can fix those. They may be inane, and Congress can fix those. But at the nascent, at the base level—at the base level, we either are or we are not a Nation of laws, pure and simple.

My colleagues may have a different opinion on this. But “mass deportation” is a misnomer. That's not against the law. Does that make it a good law? I can't decide. That's for you all to decide.

But the facts remain. We either are or we are not a Nation of laws. Coming to this country illegally is a—you are breaking the law. Now, some will say, “Oh, it's just a civil penalty.” It becomes a felony criminal act when you seek to do it more than once.

We have the technical means; we have the economic means; we must have the willpower to protect our borders, to allow immigrants to come here legally, as my great-grandparents did.

Mr. STRONG. We've got illegal aliens coming from—to our country from 160 different countries. Our border is wide open. I think the American people have had enough of it. January 20, there's a new sheriff in town.

While I live in a State that welcomes the removal of gangs, illegal aliens, there's nowhere in the Constitution that mentions sanctuary cities.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO [presiding]. The gentleman yields.

I now recognize the gentleman from New York, Mr. Goldman, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is quite shocking that we're having another hearing on this same topic. We have certainly exhausted it. I think we've probably had every single law enforcement official from Nassau County before this subcommittee. I can't say I'm going to miss that when the Chairman is not going to be with us next term.

But there's a lot that seems odd that we're not in any disagreement about.

Mr. Thompson, I'm going to start with you. You just said that we are a Nation of laws. You're familiar that there are laws governing asylum, right?

Mr. THOMPSON. I am.

Mr. GOLDMAN. OK. So, if the law says that if you come to our border and declare asylum, that there is a process and laws that governs that and that that is included in the Nation of laws that we are, correct?

Mr. THOMPSON. Sir, with all due respect, the way it's being implemented now by this administration has never been done before. You cannot—

Mr. GOLDMAN. But that's not—

Mr. THOMPSON [continuing]. Broadly—

Mr. GOLDMAN. That's not my question, sir.

[Crosstalk.]

Mr. GOLDMAN. Sir, hold on. I just don't have that much time.

That's not my question. The point is that we are a Nation of laws. If we want to fix our laws, there's only one body that can do that—Congress.

So you're saying we need to fix our laws. I agree.

You point out in your testimony that there's a loophole that allows migrants to come into our country and exploit our system. You say, quote, "Many of the immigration court hearings are delayed by up to 11 years due to the lack of immigration judges."

That's correct. There's a backlog of 2 million cases.

Let me ask you something. Would an additional 100 immigration judges and \$440 million to support them help address that loophole that you identify?

Mr. THOMPSON. Statistically, yes.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Well, that was in the bipartisan border security bill that Donald Trump killed.

Let me ask you another question. If the asylum applications were resolved within 1 year and there was no work authorization granted to the applicant until there was an adjudication granting asylum, would that help stem the pull of migrants coming to the borders?

Mr. THOMPSON. I'm sorry, sir. I missed the first part of your question. My hearing's a bit slow today.

Mr. GOLDMAN. All right. Well, I'll just make the point: 75 to 80 percent of asylum applicants are ultimately denied.

Mr. THOMPSON. Correct.

Mr. GOLDMAN. But because of this backlog and because our law allows for an applicant to get work authorization while they wait for an adjudication of their case—

Mr. THOMPSON. Correct.

Mr. GOLDMAN [continuing]. Then that creates a pull. Because 75 to 80 percent is a significant number that are not eligible for asylum.

So my question to you is that, if it were a 1-year limitation and no work authorization given, don't you—do you think that some of those 75 to 80 percent would not come to this country?

Mr. THOMPSON. Some, yes.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Right.

Mr. THOMPSON. May I just—

Mr. GOLDMAN. Well, the bipartisan bill—

Mr. THOMPSON [continuing]. Expand upon that for just a second, sir?

Mr. GOLDMAN [continuing]. The bipartisan bill that Donald Trump—

Mr. THOMPSON. Sir, may I just expand upon that? Because I was intimately involved in that bill's negotiation—

Mr. GOLDMAN. Well, hold on one sec. Hold on 1 second.

Mr. THOMPSON [continuing]. I, just for the record—

Mr. GOLDMAN. I don't have that much time.

Mr. THOMPSON [continuing]. Just for the record—

Mr. GOLDMAN. Sir, please. It's my time.

Mr. THOMPSON. You asked and I'm going to answer—

Mr. GOLDMAN. It's my time, sir.

The bipartisan bill actually set a framework—a time frame of 6 months, which I think is going to call into real question due process.

But the point is that, of course, if we spent money on revamping legislatively our asylum system and spent the money that will be spent on mass deportations to actually get at the root cause of the migration by spending that money on immigration judges and on a system that can quickly evaluate asylum claims, we won't have to have a witness here telling us that fentanyl is a problem. We all know fentanyl is a problem. In fact, we all know that the drug cartels control the border. And—

Mr. THOMPSON. They do.

Mr. GOLDMAN [continuing]. I think that—

Mr. THOMPSON. You're right.

Mr. GOLDMAN [continuing]. Mr.—I don't have a question, sir—Mr. Chapman, Sheriff Chapman, pointed that out in your opening statement.

Sheriff Chapman, do you know how many gun stores are in Mexico?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. No, I do not.

Mr. GOLDMAN. One. One.

Do you know what percentage of guns found in Mexico were originated from the United States?

Sheriff CHAPMAN. No, I do not.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Seventy percent.

H.R. 2 does not discuss gun trafficking from the United States to the cartels which allows them to control the border and control the fentanyl traffic.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GOLDMAN. So, if we want solutions, we ought to look at disarming our cartels—disarming the gun trade.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GOLDMAN. I hope my Republican colleagues will do that.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you, Mr. Goldman.

Commissioner Ryder, I'm sure Mr. Goldman means no absolute disrespect to the people of Nassau County, as he appreciates you keeping his summer home safe each year.

So, with that, I yield 5 minutes to my good friend from Long Island, Mr. LaLota.

Mr. LALOTA. Thank you, Mr. D'Esposito.

Mr. Thompson, do you want 30 seconds of my time to finish your thoughts there?

Mr. THOMPSON. Just real quickly.

I want to make very, very clear: The Senate language you are alluding to, sir, did not eliminate illegal border crossings, period. It did not.

Mr. LALOTA. Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

Chairman, the reckless open-border policies of the Biden-Harris administration have thrown New York City and its surrounding communities, like the ones I represent, into chaos, leaving law enforcement to deal with the devastating consequences of their failures.

Today's hearing is timely and necessary, given the on-going challenges posed by the unbelievable number of migrants crossing our Southwest Border and the transnational criminal organizations exploiting these policies.

One of the most alarming threats is Tren de Aragua, a violent transnational gang that has been making inroads into New York City. Their brutal tactics—human trafficking, extortion, drug smuggling—are fueled by the weak border policies of this administration, and their presence within our borders puts all of us at risk.

Policy makers here in Washington, from both sides of the aisle, must not sit back and allow these dangerous criminal organizations to expand into neighboring areas like Suffolk County. These gangs not only undermine public safety but also stretch the resources of our local law enforcement to the breaking point. This crisis necessitates action.

When the new administration takes office, we must come together immediately to crack down on these criminal enterprises and fix the chaos at our Southern Border. It's not just about securing the border; it's about protecting our families, restoring safety, and enforcing the rule of law.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses more today, as we have this dialog, about what they've experienced on the ground and how we can work together to make consequential and lasting policy decisions.

Commissioner Ryder, welcome back to Washington, sir, and thank you for joining us today and for your continued commitment to protecting Long Island and our Nation.

Your testimony highlighted the increased strain on Nassau County due to the migrant crisis. Commissioner, I was hoping that you could spend a minute or so further expanding upon that and telling us how the growing presence of the transnational criminal organizations like Tren de Aragua have impacted your department's operations.

Mr. RYDER. So the unvetted migrants that are in some of the housing that's given by New York City—example, there in the airport at JFK, there's a tent that houses over 400 migrants in it. They're at the Creedmoor, the old psych center on the Queens border of Nassau County where they're also housing the migrants. They're in what we call the Floral Park Hotel, which is on the city side of those areas.

We got numerous complaints of quality of life—outside urinating, drunk and disorderly. Then it got worse when it got into violence with those that are joining those gangs that are now trickling over into Nassau County and strengthening the gangs that we took down back in 2017 when then-President Trump came to Nassau County over the deaths of numerous people that were murdered by the MS-13 gangs. All of those individuals were migrants that were either undocumented or illegal in this country at the time.

Those attempts by law enforcement to shut them down were successful. We started to bring it down. We're seeing that uptick again because of what's coming over the border. It's a porous border. If you don't check those that are coming through, how are we going to defend ourselves against them?

That's the challenge with law enforcement. Law enforcement looks at a community, addresses a community, and is respectful and fair to that community. But then all of a sudden—inside that, 90 percent of crime is done by 10 percent of that population.

Mr. LALOTA. Thank you.

Mr. RYDER. All of the sudden, that 10 percent gets bigger.

Mr. LALOTA. Thanks, Commissioner.

We know where some of this crime is coming from—most of this crime is coming from. It's coming from the Five Boroughs. It's coming east, through Nassau County. I appreciate your leadership in holding it—holding the line in Nassau County and stopping some of those folks from coming further east.

Mr. RYDER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. LALOTA. I want to, with the little time that I have remaining, just say a few words about my best friend in Congress, Congressman Anthony D'Esposito, who's chairing his last meeting of this Congress. The clerk may want to distribute some tissues as I go through this.

Not only is D'Espo my best friend here, he's—no doubt about it, he's the best damn Chairman this subcommittee has ever had. He's a retired NYPD detective who brought to this committee and Congress as a whole unparalleled experience, grit, and dedication to public service in every aspect of his work here in Washington.

He's informed, of course, by 17 years of service in the NYPD, retiring with the rank of detective. He knows what it takes to protect

our communities, respond to emergencies, and ensure the safety and security of all Americans.

Under D'Espo's leadership, this subcommittee has tackled some of the most important and pressing moments of our Nation's time. The border crisis is our Nation's most important crisis of the time. He's also helped improve disaster preparedness and responses, to advanced critical technology to keep our first responders and communities safe.

D'Espo never wavered in his commitment to bipartisan solutions, always putting the safety of our communities and country before his own party.

I don't think anyone's going to miss D'Espo as much as I am, but this place is going to lose a phenomenal human, colleague, and Representative.

Thank you, my friend, Anthony, for your leadership and friendship. I look forward to seeing what the future has in store for you. Love you, man.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you.

Mr. LALOTA. I yield back.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. The gentleman yields.

I now recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Correa.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I also want to wish Mr. D'Esposito success.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you.

Mr. CORREA. Your career—it's been an honor to serve with you, sir. Your perspective has been a good one for us here in Congress.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you very much.

Mr. CORREA. I know you're not done. I just think you're turning a chapter, a new chapter in life. So—

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you.

Mr. CORREA [continuing]. The best of luck to you, sir.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Thank you very much.

Mr. CORREA. Gentlemen, I want to welcome you today to being part of the legislative process, so to speak.

You had a minute to speak a little while ago, and so I think what all of us have in common, we're all Americans looking for what's best for this country. That we can all agree on.

We are a Nation of laws, absolutely. Laws always change to fit what's best for this country.

All of our ancestors came to this country as immigrants. A lot of them came when the door was essentially open, when you could come, work, become an American. I know my grandfather came and helped build the railroads in western United States 100, 100-years-ago-plus. Today, there's no door to get into this country. I've had constituents living in my district 20, 30 years—clean records, not a DUI—can't figure out that front door.

Issues: Our immigration laws need to be fixed.

What do we do with deported veterans? I have a bunch of veterans that served this great country, green-card holders serving the country—Afghanistan, Iraq—honorably discharged, come back to this country, get in a barroom fight, they're deported. They can come back to the country once they die because they've earned the right to be buried in our national cemeteries.

What do we do about undocumented farm workers, farm workers with no documents? Something like 55 to 60 percent of our farm workers that feed us, no documents.

What do we do with our manufacturing sector in this economy? We're talking about near-shoring, bringing those jobs back from China. Who do you think is going to be at those factories?

Poultry plants in the South. You had a big—2019, you had a massive raid; 650 workers picked up, out. The whole economy there came to a standstill.

We need to calibrate.

Let me be clear: We're all for law and order. We're all for safe communities.

Sheriff Barnes, Mr. Thompson, my Sheriff Barnes back home, great man. I'll tell you what we've been doing in Orange County for 20 years: create a system where crimes are reported.

About 15 years ago, we discovered a man trying to rape a woman, an undocumented woman—an American citizen raping an undocumented woman. Found out 20-plus women, all undocumented, had been raped by this guy. Those are the ones that stepped up and said, "I got raped." So we worked on a system in Orange County to make sure these undocumented taxpayers stepped up and reported crimes.

I've got a minute-and-a-half, so let me get to my question here.

President Trump's talking about mass deportations. Steve Miller is talking about pulling 11,000 guns and badges to help with the mass deportations. How is that going to help our streets when it comes to Tren de Aragua, MS-13, the Romanian gangs in Orange County, Russian gangs? Pulling 11,000 HSI, DEA, ATF, FBI agents, how's that going to keep our streets safe?

Mr. Thompson—and I only have 45 seconds—and I'm going to ask the same question to each one of you—I'll give you 5 seconds, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. Or I could do that in about 4 hours, but I'll try in 42 seconds.

Mr. CORREA. Yes, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. First of all, Mr. Correa, I have to tell you how much respect I have for you as a Member. You are trying to find that middle road.

My answer is pretty—pretty simple. Laws are written by men and women. They don't have to be specific, but they can be, and they should be.

Immigration's complex. We're a Nation of 330-some-million people. How did we get that way? By immigration.

Mr. CORREA. Yes.

Mr. THOMPSON. That's a fact. It's just—we need immigrants in this country.

Mr. CORREA. I'm running out of time. I've got 7 seconds. Give me your answer.

Mr. THOMPSON. Write—but let me just—write the exclusions and permissions into the law.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Ryder—Mr. Chair, may I? Thank you.

Quick 10-second answer.

Mr. RYDER. It is complicated, but I believe the intent is going to go after the most severe and most illegal and crime—

Mr. CORREA. I would say go after the criminals, right?

Mr. RYDER. Absolutely.

Mr. CORREA. Yes. Thank you.

Mr. Chapman, Sheriff Chapman, beautiful stars, by the way.

Sheriff CHAPMAN. First of all—

Mr. CORREA. Love that.

Sheriff CHAPMAN [continuing]. I think we need to stop the bleeding at the border. I mean, these open borders are killing us, and I think we've got to stop the bleeding.

The second thing is—

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Bier—go ahead.

Sheriff CHAPMAN [continuing]. Deport criminal aliens first.

Mr. BIER. Yes, there are 350,000 witnesses and victims of crimes who are working with law enforcement that are in a backlog, called the U visa backlog, that would get them legal status to stay in this country. We need to do something about that backlog.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Thompson is agreeing with you. But, Mr. Chairman, I'm running out of time—I'm out of time.

Thank you very much, gentlemen, for your information. It's a very complex issue. That's our job, to try to make it a little less complex.

Thank you very much.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. The gentleman yields.

I want to thank the witnesses not only for being here today but for your commitment to keeping your communities and this great Nation safe.

I also want to thank all the Members of this committee on both sides of the aisle for working together over the 118th Congress to do great things in this subcommittee. I think that most of the work that we've done has been in a bipartisan fashion. We've passed some great bills out of this committee.

I want to thank my good friend and Ranking Member for all of the work that we've done together.

The Members of the subcommittee may have some additional questions for the witnesses, and we would ask that the witnesses respond to these in writing.

I also want to quickly thank the staff of the Homeland Security Committee for the great job that they do each and every day. It does not go unnoticed. And, of course, the leadership of Chairman Green.

Pursuant to committee rule VII(D), the hearing record will be held open for 10 days.

Without objection, this subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

