

far behind Russia in our icebreaker fleet, and the Arctic is quickly becoming a critical national security domain. A fleet of new Polar Security Cutters will allow us to maintain a heavy presence in polar regions and keep our adversaries at bay.

America needs a capable and growing Coast Guard, and the Coast Guard needs the support of this legislation. I look forward to working with my colleagues to provide the Coast Guard with the resources it needs to continue its exemplary service to our Nation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUNETEENTH

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the 156th anniversary of Juneteenth. On Saturday, we mark 156 years since June 19, 1865, when MG Gordon Granger announced in Galveston, TX, that the Civil War was over and that enslaved people were now free.

In his announcement, General Granger said:

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property.

In commemoration of this momentous day, June 19 became known as Juneteenth. In the years following the Civil War and in the early 20th century, Juneteenth has been celebrated as a holiday of independence.

While Juneteenth has been celebrated in States across the country, it carries a special significance in Texas, where Juneteenth celebrations began. In 1872, four men in Houston, my hometown, purchased the land for Emancipation Park, the oldest park in Texas, as the site for Juneteenth celebrations. In 1980, the State of Texas became the first State to make Juneteenth a State holiday. Today, 47 States recognize Juneteenth.

I am proud to cosponsor the Senate resolution designating June 19, 2021, as Juneteenth Independence Day to honor the historical significance this day has in the United States.

Juneteenth is an important day. It is a somber reminder of the original sin of slavery that our Nation inherited from colonial powers. Still, it is also a celebration of the fact that our country strives each and every day to make good on its promise to protect the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all men and all women, who are created equal. Our country was founded on that revolutionary idea, that revolutionary belief that all men are created equal, and

that means no matter where we come from or what we started with, any one of us can live freely and achieve great things.

The story of America and the story of Juneteenth is a story of freedom, and while we have had many troubled chapters along the way, I, for one, agree with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that the arc of history is long and that it bends towards justice, and we have made significant progress on that arc.

On Saturday, as we commemorate the long-overdue announcement of emancipation made in Texas 156 years ago, let us together remember the God-given freedoms we all cherish as Americans.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, on Sunday, June 20, Joe Biden will have been President for exactly 5 months. In these 5 months, we have seen crisis after crisis after crisis. We have experienced a gas crisis, where we had gas lines and skyrocketing energy prices. We are on the verge of an inflation crisis, where everywhere we look, prices are rising on food, on housing, and on lumber. We have already had a war in the Middle East, and we have a border crisis that has been raging so intensely that we are on pace to see 2 million illegal immigrants come through our unsecured border this year.

Just last month, 180,034 illegal immigrants crossed the border. To put that in perspective, that number is a 674-percent increase over the number of illegal immigrants that crossed the border last May—a 674-percent increase—and that number is a 21-year high. The reason for this is simple: The crisis that has unfolded is the direct result of political decisions made by Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS.

No. 1, the first week in office, President Biden immediately halted construction of the border wall.

No. 2, that same week, President Biden reinstated the failed catch and release policy.

No. 3, most inexplicably, the Biden administration ended the “Remain in Mexico” international agreement, a historic agreement negotiated by President Trump with the Government of Mexico whereby the Government of Mexico agreed that those who crossed illegally into Mexico would remain in Mexico while their asylum proceedings were pending in the United States.

That agreement was a tremendous success. It produced last year the lowest rate of illegal immigration in 45 years. Let me repeat that. Just 6 months ago, our country had achieved the lowest rate of illegal immigration in 45 years. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS come into office, they rip to pieces the international agreement that produced that success, and today we have the highest rate of illegal immigration in 20 years.

Meanwhile, as the crisis rages, Joe Biden is nowhere to be found, and

KAMALA HARRIS is nowhere to be found. In 5 months in office, Joe Biden couldn't be bothered to go down to the border and see the humanitarian disaster his policies have created. KAMALA HARRIS, who was designated “in charge of the border,” seems determined to go anywhere she can but the border.

In the 84 days since she has been tasked with handling the border crisis, do you know how many press conferences she has given? Not even one—not a single press conference in 84 days.

She can't be honest about what is causing the crisis so she hides from questions. The one time she sought questions was with NBC's Lester Holt, where he asked her about going to the border. She responded with that now characteristic and, quite honestly, creepy laugh, where she said: “We've been to the border.” I am not sure who the royal “we” was, but that “we” doesn't include Joe Biden, who hasn't been to the border as President. That “we” doesn't include KAMALA HARRIS, who hasn't been to the border as Vice President.

And Lester Holt—to NBC's credit, Lester Holt actually asked a followup question, and it was a very simple question: “You haven't been to the border?” To which she responded, oddly: “Well, I haven't been to Europe either.”

(Mr. VAN HOLLEN assumed the Chair.)

Mr. President, we are not facing a humanitarian crisis, a border crisis, a public crisis, a national security crisis in Europe. We are facing it at our southern border. We are facing it in my home State of Texas. And the Vice President, it seems, cannot be bothered to go and see firsthand the failures that President Biden's policies are causing.

I also want to touch on one issue that greatly affects border communities, and that is our land ports of entry.

While Joe Biden has repeatedly encouraged this crisis of illegal immigration, he is at the same time preventing lawful border crossing.

Border communities are suffering immensely right now because important land ports of entry in El Paso, in Del Rio, in Eagle Pass, in Laredo, in Rio Grande City, in McAllen, in Pharr, in Brownsville remain closed to everyone except those deemed “essential” traffic.

Basically, Mexicans who have a visa to enter the United States legally cannot do so through these land ports of entry unless they are going to school, working, or somehow considered essential. Nonessential travel from the United States—into the United States from Mexico for shopping, for visiting family and friends, for casual visits are not allowed by the Biden administration.

Instead, the Biden administration has decided to keep our land ports of entries closed for nonessential travel until at least June 21, ostensibly because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This