

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 704

Expressing concern about economic and security conditions in Mexico and reaffirming the interest of the United States in mutually beneficial relations with Mexico based on shared interests on security, economic prosperity, and democratic values, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 13, 2022

Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing concern about economic and security conditions in Mexico and reaffirming the interest of the United States in mutually beneficial relations with Mexico based on shared interests on security, economic prosperity, and democratic values, and for other purposes.

Whereas December 12, 2022, marks the 200th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Mexico;

Whereas, over the course of 200 years, the Governments and people of the United States and Mexico have developed deep cultural, economic, and diplomatic relations that have been instrumental in creating prosperity in both countries and throughout the hemisphere;

Whereas, according to the United States Trade Representative and the Department of Commerce, United States goods and services trade with Mexico totaled an estimated \$677,300,000,000 in 2019, and United States exports of goods and services to Mexico supported an estimated 1,200,000 jobs in 2015;

Whereas, according to the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis, the United States is Mexico's top source of foreign direct investment in 2019 with \$100,900,000,000, or 39.1 percent of all inflows (stock) to Mexico, according to Mexico's Secretariat of Economy;

Whereas the United States exports roughly \$20,000,000,000 in agricultural products to Mexico annually, nearly \$6,000,000,000 of which are biotech crops and derived products;

Whereas the government of President Lopez Obrador has pursued major legal and regulatory measures that pose significant risks and uncertainty to cross-border trade, including denying 14 biotechnology applications since May 2018, front-of-packing labeling requirements imposed in November 2020, unilateral certification requirements on all United States organic exports to Mexico imposed in December 2020, the December 31, 2020, Presidential Decree to phase out the use of glyphosate and genetically modified corn for human consumption, the February 2021 Electricity Industry Law, and the May 2021 Hydrocarbons Law;

Whereas the government of President Lopez Obrador has suspended import permits for more than 80 energy companies, has ended permits for energy import facilities, which puts United States investment at risk, and is advancing a constitutional reform bill that would dissolve

the power market in Mexico, eliminate independent regulators, and cancel contracts and permits granted to private companies;

Whereas arbitrary and punitive actions against United States businesses operating in Mexico by the government of President Lopez Obrador, such as the recent shutdown of a limestone quarry owned by a United States company that is a critical component of the construction aggregates supply chain for the southeast United States, are damaging the economic relationship between the United States and Mexico, disrupting North American supply chains, and threatening to undermine the confidence of United States businesses in Mexico as a viable and predictable marketplace and destination for investment;

Whereas United States law enforcement encountered over 1,700,000 migrants attempting to enter the United States illegally through the southern border with Mexico in 2021, and have encountered over 1,500,000 in the first months of 2022, reaching an all-time high of 239,416 encounters in May 2022;

Whereas United States law enforcement is seeing increasing numbers of criminals trying to enter the United States illegally, arresting nearly 6,000 in the first few months of 2022, compared to 10,763 in 2021 and 2,438 in 2020;

Whereas, in May 2022, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas declared with regards to encounters of illegal immigrants at the United States southern border, “We’re seeing about a seven-day average of over 7,500 people, so we have not seen a significant decrease in the flows.”;

Whereas U.S. Customs and Border Protection operational statistics showed fentanyl seizures at the United States southern border increased 56 percent in March 2022 compared to March 2021, with over a 300 percent increase from March 2020;

Whereas U.S. Customs and Border Protection noted a 1,066-percent increase in fentanyl seizures at 8 South Texas ports of entry during Fiscal Year 2021, and Texas law enforcement seized enough fentanyl to comprise over 36,200,000 lethal doses during the same time period;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a record of 106,000 overdose deaths in the United States, with more than 70,000 of those attributed to synthetic opioids, a substantial amount of which are illicitly produced in Mexico using precursor chemicals imported from the People's Republic of China and mixed or reshipped by Mexican drug cartels;

Whereas reports from the United States Northern Command indicate that Mexican cartels now control 30 to 35 percent of Mexican territory, with Mexico's midterm elections in June 2021 being the most violent on record driven by cartel violence and attempts to thwart the democratic process;

Whereas more than 80 politicians were killed prior to the June 2021 midterm elections in Mexico, with the Mexican cartels claiming responsibility for the killings of at least 35 candidates, according to several reports;

Whereas, according to the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors of the Brookings Institution, Mexico registered almost 35,000 murders in 2021 near an all-time high, representing 27 murders per 100,000 and primarily attrib-

utable to ties related to transnational criminal organizations, while the effective prosecution rate for homicides remains around 2 percent;

Whereas, according to the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors, the rivalry between the Sinaloa Cartel and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG) has violently spread to Colombia, one of the United States' closest allies in the Western Hemisphere, with CJNG deploying drone-mounted bombs to seize territory and Sinaloa taking over both the legal and illegal economies of the territories in dispute;

Whereas, in 2021, the government of President Obrador disbanded a select Mexican anti-narcotics unit that, for a quarter of a century, worked hand-in-hand with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to tackle organized crime;

Whereas President Obrador has spearheaded legal and regulatory measures to reduce or eliminate the independence of Mexican autonomous institutions and regulators, including the Federal Economic Competition Commission, the Federal Institute for Telecommunications, the Energy Regulatory Commission, and the National Electoral Institute;

Whereas, at a March 2022 hearing of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, United States Northern Command Commander, General Glen D. VanHerck, testified that “the largest portion of [Russian intelligence personnel] in the world is in Mexico right now” and “they keep an eye very closely on their opportunities to have influence on U.S. opportunities and access”;

Whereas Mexico voted in the United Nation’s General Assembly to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, while abstaining from suspending Russia as a permanent observer of the Organization of American States and from expelling Russia from the United Nations Human Rights Council;

Whereas President Obrador has increasingly turned to the People’s Republic of China to finance controversial infrastructure projects, including the Dos Bocas Refinery and the Maya Train, while the People’s Republic of China’s State Power Investment Corporation (SPIC) acquired Mexican renewables power company Zuma Energy during a time when private corporations were fleeing the sector; and

Whereas Mexico remains one of the world’s most dangerous countries for journalists and media workers, including the deaths of 12 journalists to date in 2021 alone: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) reaffirms the interest of the United States
3 in mutually beneficial relations with Mexico based on
4 shared interests on security, economic prosperity,
5 and democratic values;

6 (2) reaffirms support for stronger economic re-
7 lations with Mexico, including to strengthen the re-
8 siliency of critical supply chains in North America
9 and the Western Hemisphere in general;

10 (3) expresses deep concerns about the wors-
11 ening investment climate in Mexico, and calls on the

1 President to take meaningful actions to defend
2 United States economic interests in Mexico and up-
3 hold the integrity of the United States-Mexico-Can-
4 ada Agreement (USMCA);

5 (4) urges the President to address the humani-
6 tarian and security crisis at the border with Mexico
7 by—

8 (A) establishing effective immigration con-
9 trols in the United States;

10 (B) targeting United States foreign assist-
11 ance efforts to strengthen border security and
12 migration management capacities in the region;
13 and

14 (C) leveraging existing bilateral extradition
15 treaties and the Palermo Protocols to prosecute
16 transnational criminal actors facilitating illegal
17 migration to the United States;

18 (5) is deeply concerned about the growing so-
19 phistication and territorial control of transnational
20 criminal organizations in Mexico, and reaffirms the
21 urgent need to prioritize a detailed and well-
22 resourced plan to reduce the production and traf-
23 ficking of illicit narcotics in Mexico, including the il-
24 licit traffic of precursor chemicals imported from the
25 People's Republic of China for the manufacture of

1 synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl, and that such ef-
2 forts do not result in a breakdown in the rule of law
3 or respect for internationally recognized human
4 rights in Mexico; and

5 (6) urges the Government of Mexico to mean-
6 ingfully reduce the threat of deadly synthetic
7 opioids, uphold its domestic and international com-
8 mitments to legal, safe, and orderly immigration, up-
9 hold its obligations under the USMCA, respect the
10 independence of autonomous regulatory institutions,
11 and guard against the negative influence of the Peo-
12 ple's Republic of China and the Russian Federation
13 in North America and the Western Hemisphere in
14 general.

○