

consequences when the Biden administration simply refuses to enforce the law both at and inside of our borders.

Since President Biden took office, now about 2½ years ago, Customs and Border Protection has logged more than 5 million border crossings—an unprecedented number. Most of these individuals probably came to the United States for economic reasons, which, as we know, does not in and of itself qualify them for asylum. Some are probably escaping persecution, which will likely qualify them for asylum under the U.S. law. Some—although certainly another small percentage—are dangerous criminals who have been convicted of serious crimes.

Since October, Border Patrol has arrested more than 5,000 convicted criminals at the border who have been convicted of everything from burglary and assault to drug trafficking and murder. The big caveat to remember is, these are just the ones we know about. When thousands of migrants illegally cross the southern border every day, it completely overwhelms our border patrol and law enforcement authorities.

Law enforcement is pulled from the frontlines to help feed and care for these migrants, including unaccompanied children, creating a veritable gateway for dangerous criminals and drugs to make their way into the United States undetected.

Earlier this year, Border Patrol told news outlets that 1.2 million migrants had evaded law enforcement since President Biden took office. In other words, we know how many law enforcement encountered, but the so-called “got-aways”—1.2 million of them—we have no inkling what they are up to, whether they are economic migrants simply looking for a better life. My guess is, probably not. My guess is that they were probably either convicted criminals who knew they would not be allowed into the United States or they were people who were transiting the United States, carrying drugs into the interior.

These “got-aways”—that number is not just one pulled out of thin air. These individuals are detected by cameras, sensors, or other forms of surveillance but never arrested or processed by Border Patrol because they are simply overwhelmed. These are the ones who are running away from the Border Patrol instead of turning themselves in to claim asylum, like the majority of immigrants.

I have no idea where these 1.2 million people are or what they are doing, but neither does President Biden; neither does Customs and Border Protection; neither do any of our law enforcement Agencies know where these 1.2 million migrants are or what they are doing. Maybe, just maybe—I would say in all likelihood—inside of that number, some subset are probably murderers, rapists, child abusers with lengthy rap sheets. Maybe they are cartel members smuggling fentanyl and other dangerous drugs into our communities.

Maybe they are members of criminal gangs like MS-13 or other transnational gangs.

The truth is, President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas, as Secretary of Homeland Security, have no idea who or what is coming across our border every day.

When title 42, which, as we all know, is the public health title that has been used to expel some migrants during the pendency of the pandemic—when it expires next Thursday, the number of migrants coming across the border every day will soar, making it even easier for criminals and gang members to sneak into the United States, along with the drugs that have taken too many lives in recent years.

One hundred and eight thousand Americans died of drug overdoses last year, 71,000 from fentanyl. All that comes across the border. We know where it is coming from, but President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas have done too little to stop it. In fact, their policies have encouraged more and more people to come.

Law enforcement depends in part on deterrence, people knowing that “If I try, I am unlikely to be successful, so I am not going to try in the first place.” That is how law enforcement manages their business. But when people see no likelihood of negative consequences, they are going to keep coming, and we understand exactly why. Unfortunately, this allows dangerous individuals into the United States, and the odds of them being arrested and removed by the Biden administration are extremely low.

So this is a problem not only at the border, this is a problem once these individuals make their way inside the United States.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, otherwise known as ICE, is charged with removing individuals who are illegally present in the United States.

In fiscal year 2020, the Agency deported just over 100,000 individuals. That is fiscal year 2020. For context, U.S. Customs and Border Protection logged 458,000 border crossings during that period.

Once President Biden took office and the welcome mat came out and people knew that our borders essentially were open, things have changed dramatically. In fiscal year 2022, the number of deportations fell to just over 38,000—from 100,000 in 2020 to 38,000 in 2022—while the number of border encounters has skyrocketed. Customs and Border Protection logged nearly 2.4 million border crossings that year.

So day after day, the Biden administration is allowing more and more migrants to enter the United States illegally, despite the fact that the vast majority of these individuals have no legal basis to stay, but they are depending on their system being overwhelmed and so are the people who are getting rich, getting paid by the head to smuggle those individuals into the United States.

But at the same time, the administration is doing less and less to actually enforce the law and remove those who have been found to have no credible claim to remain in the United States. The Biden administration simply refuses to enforce America’s immigration laws, and its policies have real and deadly consequences.

It is dangerous for the migrants to make the long trip from their home in the hands of cartels who care nothing for them. They don’t care about people. They just care about the money and the drugs. As a consequence, many migrants are hurt and abused and extorted by the cartels and coyotes en route. Many girls and women are sexually assaulted in astonishingly large numbers.

It is hurtful to law enforcement who are overworked, unappreciated, and burnt out. These policies hurt the border communities like the ones I represent that are expected to shoulder the massive weight of this humanitarian crisis because the Federal Government and the Biden administration refuses to do its job. It hurts small towns, medium-sized towns, and large towns all across America that have been infiltrated by fentanyl and other deadly drugs. And as we saw again this weekend, the administration’s policies victimize people who are attacked by dangerous individuals who never should have been in the United States in the first place.

How much pain and suffering will our country have to endure before the Biden administration takes this seriously? It is past time to secure the border, enforce our immigration laws, and prioritize the safety and security of the American people. Until then, I am sad to say, innocent people will continue to suffer due to the administration’s failed policies.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JULIE A. SU

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I rise today to express my strong support for Julie Su’s nomination to serve as our next Secretary of Labor.

As we continue working to rebuild and strengthen our economy, it is critical that the Department of Labor is led by someone committed to protecting the rights of all workers, and that person is Julie Su. From combating wage theft to expanding workforce training, Acting Secretary Su has spent her life fighting for workers. For the past 2 years, she has served as Deputy Secretary of Labor alongside Secretary Walsh. Together they helped make life better for workers across the

country. Thanks to their hard work, our country has added a record 12.6 million jobs over the last 2½ years. What is more, unemployment is at its lowest level in more than 50 years, a testament to the hard work of Secretary Walsh and Deputy Secretary Su.

And before coming to Washington, Julie spent decades fighting for workers in her home State of California as Secretary of Labor in California, Commissioner of Labor, and as a civil rights attorney.

Beyond her stellar professional track record, Julie's personal history informs her commitment to building an economy that puts workers first. Like me, Julie is a daughter of immigrants. Her mother came to America from China on a cargo ship, unable to afford a passenger ticket. After arriving in the United States, she got a good job with a union with predictable hours, paid sick leave, and a reliable income. That job helped Julie's mother and father go on to become business owners themselves, ultimately running a franchise pizza restaurant and a laundromat.

Thanks to her parents' hard work, Julie went on to attend Stanford University and Harvard Law before receiving a prestigious MacArthur Genius award for her work fighting for undocumented garment workers in California.

Julie Su is a relentless advocate for workers, and she also knows how to build consensus. It is no wonder, then, that she enjoys broad support from business and labor alike, garnering the endorsement of groups including the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Majority, the AFL-CIO, and dozens of labor unions across the country.

She has the support of leaders like Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America, who said last month that Acting Secretary Su is "straightforward, very knowledgeable and a passionate advocate for workers and their families. President Biden has made the right choice for Secretary of Labor"—and Secretary Walsh himself, who said that he has "the utmost confidence in [Julie's] ability to sustain the work of the department and advance the President's vision of an economy that puts workers first and leaves no one behind."

I couldn't agree more. Confirming Julie Su should be a no-brainer, just like it was 2 years ago when every Democrat in the Senate voted to confirm her as Deputy Secretary of Labor. But special interests are working hard to block her nomination, lobbing unfair attacks and intentionally misrepresenting her record.

In States like West Virginia, Montana, and Arizona, massive billboards have been erected suggesting that Deputy Secretary Su's confirmation would harm our economy. They claim—outrageously—that she is somehow working to destroy franchise businesses like the one her own family ran. In reality, she has worked to ensure workers at

all franchise businesses have basic protections so that those businesses and their employees can thrive.

They claim that she has worked in the so-called gig economy—another lie. What she has done is crack down on corporations like Uber, exploiting hard-working Americans for their own profit, because Deputy Secretary Su understands that our economy can thrive only if workers have the dignity and support they deserve.

What we are witnessing is a coordinated campaign by those on the right to discredit Julie Su and her impressive record, but her credentials are as clear as can be. And as we enter Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, I would be remiss not to also mention the important role Acting Secretary Su will play as the only AAPI Cabinet-level Secretary in the Biden-Harris administration.

Confirming Julie Su as Secretary of Labor is one of the most important things we can do to support workers, strengthen small businesses, and ensure our economy works for all of us—for working people.

I look forward to voting for her nomination; and, for our country and our economy, I hope this body will confirm Julie Su without delay.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, last month, I continued my annual 95-county tour with a swing through East Tennessee. Over the past few years, this area has experienced both economic growth and a population boom. So the people who live there have seen firsthand what can happen when Tennesseans are allowed to build and nurture a community free from the heavy hand of government.

But they also know how fragile that stability can be, and they are just baffled by Joe Biden's determination to ruin what they and millions of other Americans have worked so incredibly hard to build. In just over 2 years, Joe Biden and the Democrats have sabotaged our national defense, our border security, and public safety in the name of dangerous woke agenda items that prioritize mandates and intellectual conformity over the safety and security of the American people.

Tennesseans are worried about the rise of the new "axis of evil." Joe Biden is allowing Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea to cross one line after another, and that is not going over very well. Neither is the Biden administration's neglect of a security risk that hits much closer to home.

So far this year, Border Patrol and other law enforcement officials have reported almost half a million encounters with migrants trying to illegally cross our border. Over the course of this fiscal year—now, the numbers I am going to give you are for this fiscal year. They have recorded 332 encounters with people who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. That is right. Three hundred thirty-two have been apprehended at the border. These are people who are terrorists. They are on the watchlist, which means, if you catch them, they cannot come into this country.

They have apprehended 330 dangerous gang members—that is MS-13 and that is other of these gangs—who are trying to get into the country, and they have seized almost 19,000 pounds of drugs.

Now, this is what we know, and we can only estimate how many other terrorists or gang members or criminals escaped into the country and how much deadly contraband did they bring with them because they are all in the category of "got-aways." They are the people that you see on surveillance, but you cannot get to them. They are "got-aways" or they are people who, after the fact—you don't see them, but after the fact, you find things that they have left along their path as they have escaped into this country. So think about those numbers and who might be coming in.

Now, when you look at it, this is a total neglect of our most basic line of defense, and it might be easier to comprehend were it not for this administration's betrayal of local law enforcement. The President has denied that he supports the anti-police movement, but I would remind the President and my Democratic colleagues that acting on anti-police sentiment behind the scenes is still anti-police.

Making the job of law enforcement harder to do every day is anti-police; using the bureaucracy to undermine access to grant funding and lifesaving resources—that is anti-police; and deliberately leaving our border wide open to the drug mules, bringing fentanyl into our backyards—that is anti-police. Allowing the cartels and the human traffickers to run rampant, turning human trafficking from a \$500-million-a-year business, which it was in 2018, to a \$13-billion-a-year business—that is anti-police. The damage that this administration has done in just under 2½ years will take a lot longer than that to repair.

But simply answering one sweeping policy change with another won't magically reverse the ripple effects of this complete breakdown in orderly governance. Yes, we have to reverse policy, but we must also pay attention to the problems that have left local leaders, law enforcement officials, and families begging for help.

So let's kind of work through these issues, because they are of concern to Tennesseans. Tennesseans feel like this administration is seeking to normalize