

EXHIBIT 6

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House Homeland Security Committee Holds Hearing on Border Security and Cartel Crime in America

LIST OF PANEL MEMBERS AND WITNESSES

MARK GREEN:

Committee on Homeland Security will come to order, and without objection, the chair may declare the committee in recess at any point. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas' open border policies and how they've advanced cartel crime in America. I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

The southwest border is wide open and the evidence is clear, more than 5.5 million encounters, more than 1.5 million known got-aways since FY 21, nearly 380,000 encounters of unaccompanied minors, a record number of fentanyl poisonings in the United States, largely driven by drugs flooding across our southwest border.

The crisis is a direct result of DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas' dereliction of duty. This committee's interim phase one report is being published later today and makes all of this clear. Today's hearing and subsequent hearings will examine the costs and the consequences of these policies. Now, before I get to the subject of today's hearing, I want to briefly talk about some of those numbers

because I'm sure we're in for a few days of some unjustified celebration about what they mean.

Keep a few things in mind. Every number that you hear the other side of the aisle talking about is still a number far above crisis levels, even by the measure of President Obama's former DHS secretary. We're still averaging more than 3,000 Border Patrol apprehensions a day. Jeh Johnson once said that a thousand overwhelms the system and is a crisis.

We're also seeing the number of inadmissible aliens arriving at the ports of entry continuing to skyrocket, jumping to more than 45,000 in June. Encounters at the ports this fiscal year already exceed last year's by more than 100,000. Last June they were around 15,000, and 10,000 the year before that. Why the change?

Well, because tens of thousands of inadmissible aliens are taking advantage of Mayorkas' new parole programs and his illegitimate CBP One policy, accepting his offer of no questions asked released into the United States. More than 170,000 people have used the CBP One app to schedule an appointment since January alone, 170,000, and the OFO numbers aren't even being released by the administration.

Everyone in this room knows these individuals have no lawful basis to enter the country. Everyone also knows that Mayorkas is playing a massive shell game by shifting encounters between the ports of entry to the ports of entry, again, not disclosing the OFO numbers. The outcome? Tens of thousands of inadmissible aliens entering Customs and Border Patrol and being released into the country.

It's the same. Let's just be honest about that simple fact. Further, Secretary Mayorkas' insistence that this is legal is a lie. Mass parole is against the laws passed by previous Congresses. And as we're going to

talk about today, the humanitarian costs of the secretary's policies are still horrific. The people flooding to our border, whether between the ports or at them, are still having to put themselves in the hands of the cartels, paying hundreds or thousands of dollars to get to the border, no matter where they cross.

The cartels are still raking in the profits and migrants are still being smuggled, trafficked and abused. Our focus today is on the Mexican drug cartels and how they're running wild under Secretary Mayorkas' policies. One thing is clear, the cartels have seized control of our border. These organizations are the most vicious, evil organizations in the Western Hemisphere.

What you will hear today from our witnesses will lay that out in eye-opening detail. As you listen, these groups are whom Mayorkas has turned our border over to. What is unprecedented is the level of control these evil organizations now exert at both our southwest border and in the interior of our country, the boldness with which they operate in open defiance of law enforcement and the profits they are raking in. Both Americans as well as migrants are suffering from their wrath.

It is virtually impossible to cross the southwest border without first paying the cartels. People are killed simply for trying to do so. While Secretary Mayorkas' policies have pulled thousands of Border Patrol agents off the line to process and release these aliens into the interior as quickly as possible, this is not the work they signed up to do, and the former chief of the Border Patrol recently told us, has made many agents feel like smugglers themselves.

Their words, not ours. Cartels purposely overwhelm Border Patrol agents with illegal crossers in one area as a distraction so they can

smuggle other aliens or drugs across in the areas just vacated by those agents. Amazingly, Secretary Mayorkas admitted to the Senate under oath in March that he was not aware of this strategy.

Meanwhile, his attorney general did know the tactic used by the cartels. Unbelievable. Business is so good that the cartels have devised a complex system for the massive number of people trying to illegally cross the southwest border. For instance, cartels use colored wristbands, as I'm showing here, to inventory those who are attempting to cross.

Secretary Mayorkas told the Senate in the same hearing he was unfamiliar with these wristbands too. The violence and atrocities are not just being felt along the border. Our American communities throughout the country are suffering as well. A lot of the violence can often be traced back to the cartels, because they often subcontract their mayhem to gangs that effectively function as the cartels' national distribution network.

Per a recent New York Post headline, quote, "Honduran migrants working for the Mexican cartels brazenly took over San Francisco's drug market thanks to lax policies." End quote. Another outlet reported in February that the cartels have started operating quote, "On a very large scale," end quote, in Montana, hundreds of miles from the border.

Drugs and the violence associated with them are engulfing communities across our country, and it can all be tracked back to the cartels. The tidal wave of human smuggling and trafficking has led to an increased number of car crashes on our streets, putting law enforcement, innocent Americans and the migrants themselves at risk.

One sheriff told us his department arrested 169 human smugglers in '21 and is on pace to arrest more than 900 this year. Another sheriff said his county deals with three to four chases per day involving groups of 20 people or more. The cartels are recruiting American teenagers to drive for them, implicating our youth in these horrendous crimes.

Meanwhile, innocent Americans like Maria and Amelia Tambunga have been killed in crashes by those smuggling illegal aliens on our streets and highways. Transnational gangs like MS-13 whose motto is kill, rape, control, are also taking advantage. A senior Border Patrol agent has said that gang members attempt to evade arrest by exploiting the influx of migrants attempting to enter our country.

These gangs work closely with the cartels to support operations on both sides of the border. According to ICE, 40 percent of MS-13 members they arrest arrived in the United States as unaccompanied alien children. MS-13 also forces women and girls into sex trafficking to make money for the gang. Cartels have made a record amount of money over the last two years.

In '21 alone, the cartels made an estimated \$13 billion just from human trafficking and smuggling. Then there's the fentanyl. It costs as little as 10 cents to produce a fake prescription pill laced with fentanyl, which can be sold for 10 to 30 bucks. 10 kilos of fentanyl is worth about \$20 million, but only costs about \$50,000 to produce.

Every dollar the cartels rake in comes at the cost of an American life or livelihood. There were more than 109,000 drug deaths in 2022, 107,000 in '21 alone, many of them from fentanyl, and the cartels are continuing to push fentanyl into our country in record amounts, destroying our communities one family at a time.

I'm sure we'll hear today the same tired talking points that quote, "Most fentanyl is seized at our ports of entry," end quote, but a couple of things are worth noting. The majority of fentanyl that is seized has come through the ports of entry, but by definition, that's what's apprehended. Cartels know there is a higher risk of getting caught at the ports of entry because our border isn't secure.

We don't know how much cartels are using unguarded entry points to smuggle drugs. My friends on the other side of the aisle won't tell you that while CBP reports the majority of drugs like fentanyl or seized at ports, they have also said they believe they only catch 5 to 10 percent of what's coming through, either at or between the ports.

That puts it into perspective. And finally the amount of fentanyl being seized between the ports is increasing. In March, seizures were up 100 percent from the previous year according to former-Chief Raul Ortiz, and that's just what's being caught. As I said earlier, migrants are also victims of cartel atrocities.

Once individuals are smuggled into the United States, the cartels often continue to extort and use them. According to Mayorkas' own department, there has been an increase in quote, "Alternative forms of payment in exchange for passage, including migrants being required to participate in smuggling controlled substances or other illicit items across the border, or to work off those debts through criminal activity after they arrive in the United States." End quote.

As many as 60 percent of unaccompanied minors are kidnapped and exploited by the cartels. Other migrants are sexually abused and assaulted. One victim told the New York Times, "You have to pay with your body," end quote, and some are even forced to allow their children to be abused. I can't imagine anything worse.

Secretary Mayorkas and President Biden's policies have encouraged record numbers of people to make the journey to the southwest border. This has represented a historic business opportunity for the cartels, who make thousands of dollars on every person they smuggle into our country. Their business model continues to work, because instead of enforcing the laws written by this body, or removing or detaining those who have no valid claim to enter, Mayorkas' DHS is flashing the neon sign, open, by releasing millions of inadmissible aliens into the United States.

Millions of people are willing to bet they'll win the lottery if they make it to the border under this administration's policies, and it's a winning bet, and the cartels are more than happy to assist. It's no wonder that a majority of Americans think the cartels now have more control of our border than the Biden administration, 61 percent of America, according to a poll last fall.

With Border Patrol agents so overwhelmed by the historic flow of illegal immigration on Mayorkas' watch, the cartels have filled the vacuum. While Mayorkas has implemented his open borders agenda, his boss in the White House has utterly failed to put meaningful pressure on the Mexican government to fight back against the cartels and deal with the violence and corruption impacting not just Mexico, but our country as well.

United States is the most powerful nation in the world and yet we do not control our own sovereign southwest border, according to Chief Ortiz. If that's not evidence of Mayorkas' failures, I don't know what is. I now recognize the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson for his opening statement.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, in nearly two decades that I've served on this panel, a panel created in the wake of September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, I've seen this committee come together to address some of the most important homeland security issues facing our nation, from supporting the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in its early days, to implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, and more recently, enacting significant cyber security legislation, this panel has built a record of bipartisanship in service to homeland security.

But over the past seven months, the character of the Homeland Security Committee has fundamentally changed from a bipartisan, solutions-focused committee to a platform for the most extreme MAGA schemes. To be honest, I'm embarrassed for the Republican majority wasting the committee's time on so-called investigations.

This entire endeavor is nothing more than a political stunt hatched in backrooms, so extreme MAGA Republicans can extract power over the speaker. Today's hearing is yet another stunt to appease that crowd who are demanding the impeachment of someone, anyone at all. That same goes for the sham quote unquote, "report" we're hearing from the press that Republicans plan to release today.

We've been given no time to review this document, much less offer any input, but if it's anything like the report Republicans released immediately before their last hearing, this one will be rife with errors and full of extreme MAGA rhetoric masquerading as fact. Meanwhile, the Republican majority is squandering the Homeland Security Committee's time and opportunity to deal with real work of our committee.

In the seven months since we took our oath from the 118th Congress, the Republican majority has proven itself to be uninterested in legislating and incapable of serious oversight. Instead of holding oversight hearings that would strengthen our nation's security and improve our Department of Homeland Security's authorities to carry out its complex mission, the majority is stuck in a southwest border Groundhog Day. The majority has held a variation of this hearing nine times, but repeating the same hearing over and over again until extreme MAGA members get their way is not oversight.

Dragging Border Patrol chiefs away from their job for politicizing interviews is not oversight. Don't get me wrong, addressing problems at America's border is a serious task, but oversight is about following the facts, not going on a fishing expedition when the facts don't fit an extreme MAGA narrative. The fact is that the administration plans to address the challenges at our southwest border and are working under Secretary of Mayorkas' leadership.

Unlawful entries between ports of entry along the southwest border have plummeted since Title 42 was terminated on May 11. The number of border encounters overall has plunged in that time, and between May 12 and June 2, DHS repatriated more than 38,400 non-citizens to more than 80 countries. The Biden administration has also taken unprecedented steps to combat the fentanyl crisis through a whole-of-government strategy focusing on disrupting the illicit fentanyl trade and traffickers' financial activities, and addressing substance use here at home.

Operation Sentinel, which Secretary Mayorkas stood up in April, has disrupted criminal networks and frozen TCO's financial assets.

Operation Blue Lotus established at ICE in June, has surged resources

to ports of entry and interior facilities to combat fentanyl smuggling and break the fentanyl supply chain.

Operation Artemis is leveraging intelligence to target precursor chemicals, pill presses and the movement of illicit fentanyl. And Operation Rolling Wave has surged inbound inspections at the southwest border, covering every sector. As recently named Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens said in a transcribed interview on May 5, "We have a very robust targeted enforcement effort, where we work hand in hand with our investigative partners to actively disrupt, degrade and dismantle those networks and those pipelines that are the smugglers." He went on to say, "because we've got more detection capability, because we've more on the way, we've got the additional processing coordinators, we are in a better situation than we were in years past." President Biden's and Secretary Mayorkas' leadership and hard work has paid off.

Our borders are not open and those arriving outside lawful pathways are being sent home. The facts do not support the Republicans' case. You don't impeach the President or a cabinet secretary because you do not like their policies, and you surely do not impeach any officer of the United States just to placate the most extreme wing of a political party.

It is time to move from this sham impeachment effort and do your duty as overseers and legislators. President Biden is fulfilling his duties. Secretary Mayorkas is doing his job. If the Republican majority doesn't like what they are doing or how they are doing it, they should get off their soapbox and work with Democrats to pass bipartisan border security and immigration legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. Other members of the committee are reminded that opening statements may be submitted for the record. I'm pleased to have a distinguished panel of witnesses before us today and I ask that our witnesses please stand, raise their right hand. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you will give before the Committee of Homeland Security of the United States House of Representatives will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God? Please have a seat.

Let the record reflect that the witnesses have answered in the affirmative and thank you. I'd like now to formally introduce our witnesses. Mr. Jones is an internationally respected border intelligence expert with decades of experience on the southwest border. He is a retired captain for the Texas Department of Public Safety's Intelligence and Counterterrorism division, and has supervised human intelligence operations in multiple nations, including leading the longest 24/7 border operation in Texas history, Operation Secure Texas.

He was responsible for leading multiple investigations targeting Mexican cartel leadership and collaborating closely with the US intelligence community to save numerous lives in both Mexico and the United States. Ms. Vaughan is director of policy studies for the Center for Immigration Studies, a DC-based research institute that examines the impact of immigration on American society, and educates policymakers and opinion leaders on immigration issues.

She's been with the center since 1992, and her area of expertise is immigration policy and operations, covering topics such as visa programs, immigration benefits and immigration enforcement. Ms.

Vaughan is an expert on immigration enforcement and public safety, having directed a Department of Justice funded project on the use of immigration law enforcement and transnational gang suppression.

Prior to joining the center, Ms. Vaughan was a Foreign Service officer with the State Department, where she served in Belgium, Trinidad, and Tobago. Mr. Maltz is a retired special agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration who dedicated 28 years of his life to service. He is currently working as a national security and public safety executive who appears on national news networks as a subject matter expert.

Mr. Maltz was the special agent in charge of the United States Department of Justice Special Operations Division for almost ten years before he left the federal government. Mr. Maltz also previously held the position as the chief of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, which is the oldest and largest drug task force in America.

Ms. Felbab-Brown, did I pronounce that correctly, is a senior fellow in the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy and Technology in the Foreign Policy Program at Brookings. She is the director of the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors. She is also the co-director of the Africa Security Initiative and the Brookings series on opioids, The Opioid Crisis in America, Domestic and International Dimensions.

Previously, she was the co-director of the Brookings project, Improved Global Drug Policy, Comparative Perspectives Beyond UNGASS 2016, U N G A S S 2016, as well as another Brookings project, reconstituting local orders. She is an expert on international and internal conflicts and non-traditional security threats, including insurgency, organized crime, urban violence and illicit economies.

I thank the witnesses for being here. I now recognize Mr. Jones for five minutes to summarize his opening statement.

JAESON JONES:

Chairman Green, Ranking Member Thompson and distinguished members of the committee, I'm truly honored to be here in our nation's capital to talk to all of you today about without question what is the most significant national security threat and public safety threat to the American people in this country, and that is our common enemy, the Mexican cartels.

After retiring from the Texas Department of Public Safety, I was so frustrated that what was not getting out about their evolution, I decided to do it publicly myself. And so today I am on your border every other week, riding with law enforcement, trying to illuminate their activities and the impacts to the American people.

What you have not been told is that these are no longer drug cartels. They have evolved from organized crime in 2006 into an insurgency in Mexico. And I was there on the ground with people, and we were stunned at what we were seeing, at 6 to 10-hour gun battles with 50 caliber belt-fed machine guns, 40 millimeter grenade launchers, RPGs and LAWs, rockets, as they truly were fighting back against the most elite special forces in the Mexican government.

This was the insurgency, and what brought that about were the Los Zetas. They brought two forms of discipline, the Los Zetas were former Gafe special forces who came to work for Cartel del Golfo, and what they brought was discipline and tradecraft. And from that, every other cartel was then forced to create an enforcement wing and rise to the occasion or fall.

And that is why you see such wide variety of violence, hyper violence across Mexico today. In 2010, another major tripwire and that is when the Zetas began executing mass migrants and Mexican citizens. You may remember the 72 migrants killed in San Fernando. I worked that. The 300 men, women and children killed in Allende, chopped into pieces and then [inaudible], because the Zetas had a saying that you can't count a body that doesn't exist, and then the final evolution as we see them today into a true parallel government in Mexico.

What was the indicator when that happened? 2015 Operation Jalisco, when their most elite soldiers went in to get El Mencho, the head of Jalisco New Generation and they were shot down. When we went after Ovidio Guzman in 2019, and the Mexican President of the country was forced to release him, what you weren't told is because the Sinaloa cartel, Ivan, the head of the Chapitos, had so many people's heads at knifepoint ready to cut them off if the President did not release him.

This is where Mexico is. So how does that impact you here and how does it impact Americans today? I am telling you with everything I am, if we do not designate these cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, or at least get the tools of national power, the 100,000 Americans that we are losing year after year to date is just the beginning.

The cartels will not stop because they can't stop. This is what you're not told. The US intelligence agency should be briefing you. They do not fear you. They fear their rivals and the reason they continue to escalate in hyper violence and in capability is because if they don't, then their rivals could completely take them over.

Today they've evolved again. In February of 2021, I broke this story. This is the adjustment, ladies and gentlemen, from the smuggling of

people by Cartel de Golfo into the trafficking of men, women and children. These are wristbands that Cartel de Golfo, and each one represents a different alien smuggling organization, who began moving them into the country under debt bondage.

We have never seen this before. What I'm holding in my hand before you today, I want to be very clear, this is America's new slave trade. And now we have moved these people throughout the country for the best means, but we have sent a virus of debt bondage across the nation. And I'm happy to talk to you about that as I broke that story in February '21. Finally, I want to say to you this, is they will continue to increase because they have to. Validation to all of you.

Look at fentanyl is a great example. The fentanyl that we're seizing mostly in the streets now is not regular fentanyl. They've gone from regular fentanyl to para-fentanyl, to sera-fentanyl and now introduction of xylazine. You've got four more xylazines coming on board. Get ready. China, they've already evolved around them.

The last part of this, I'll say, because I know I'm running out of time, is that you have to take aggressive action. Texas has spent \$9 billion to fight the cartels and it's still not enough. What we need are authorities beyond the law enforcement capability, and the mothers and fathers across this nation, the indicator to you that this government is on the right track to end this problem in this country is when we designate these cartels or at least get the tools of national power and go after them.

Thank you all for having me today.

MARK GREEN:

Thank you. Ms. Vaughan, you're recognized.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Good afternoon and thank you. President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas inherited the most secure border we've probably ever known, but they discarded that security in favor of what they want and what they call a more humane, more equitable system. What they seem to really want is to normalize illegal immigration.

Their system is far from humane. Plenty of people benefit from it to be sure, employers seeking exploitable workers, NGOs seeking government contracts, but the biggest winners are the criminal cartels who've been raking in huge profits made possible only because these policies give them an endless supply of vulnerable customers that they can exploit and abuse, and hundreds of thousands of them are children.

The human cost of these policies is unconscionable and for some, irreparable and indeed most worthy of a hearing. So the three main elements of the Biden-Mayorkas policies are the catch-and-release policies for illegal border crossers that have brought in more than 2 million people since January 2021, the CBP One program, which gives out about 1,500 appointments to inadmissible aliens to enter through the ports of entry, and importantly, the dismantlement of immigration enforcement in the Interior, so that there's next to no threat of removal for the migrants, including those who abscond from their proceedings, which is the majority, and importantly so that the employers and traffickers of these illegal workers can avoid scrutiny of their hiring practices.

Biden officials have claimed that that CBP One policy is a great success because the illegal migrants no longer have to do business with the cartels. We should be skeptical of this claim. First of all, CBP

One can only be used from locations in northern Mexico and the migrants still have to get there, and for most, that still means paying a cartel-approved smuggler, and the CBP One appointment itself turns out to be yet another opportunity for them to extort the migrants.

Of course, the got-aways and the runners who are the bad guys, are still coming in as are the unaccompanied minors. The situation now is nothing to brag about. We've merely gone from truly catastrophic to very bad. And to the extent that there is a decline in illegal entries is also helped by the efforts of Texas, of course, to block the most popular crossing points.

Biden and Mayorkas have been shockingly indifferent to the consequences of their policies for the migrants whom they are enticing into the cartels' web. The dangers begin on the journey with the high risk of robbery, assault, extortion, injury, illness, and as we've discussed, for many the abuse continues after they get here.

Some people pay a discounted fee and give up their children for the smugglers to use to give to other single adults. Others agree or are forced to be drug mules. A large number just make a down payment on the smuggling fee that's paid off in fear-driven forced labor, debt bondage arrangements that are difficult for them to escape from.

So we now have a thriving market for cartel-involved human trafficking, and according to one source, about one fourth of the victims are children, and part of this is because of the policies of how these kids are handled. Once they are brought into the country as unaccompanied minors, the Border Patrol has to turn them over to the HHS assembly line where the goal is to flip them over to a sponsor as soon as possible with few questions asked, and not surprisingly, they

end up in domestic servitude, working illegally at factories, poultry processing plants on farms, or in the worst cases, trafficked for sex.

These kids are vulnerable targets for criminal gangs like MS-13 and 18th Street, many of whom came here through the very same policies and are looking for new recruits or commodities to make money for the gang. And some of the worst cases of this I've ever seen are happening very close to here in PG County, Montgomery, Frederick, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William County have all had horrific cases.

The cartels are into the forced labor too, with some have called narco-slavery, not just drug mules, but farm workers on the illegal marijuana grows in Oregon and California. These public safety threats come on top of other significant costs to taxpayers, and we have effective tools to fight back against the cartels directly, but the most obvious step is to secure the border and control illegal migration to deny the cartels the opportunity to make money off the migration dreams of vulnerable people.

MARK GREEN:

Thank you, Ms. Vaughan. I now recognize Mr. Maltz for five minutes.

DEREK MALTZ:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today on this very important topic. After a 28-year career with DEA, I've been supporting law enforcement agencies all over the country and I also support the grieving families that are burying their loved ones on a daily basis. I believe the safety and security of America must be a top priority and the current border policies are placing every American at risk.

The Mexican cartels are taking over and taking advantage of the vulnerabilities at the border, but they're working with the Chinese transnational criminals at levels we've never seen in the country. They're operating with no fear. The brave men and women in CBP are doing tremendous work, but they're distracted every day because they're dealing with a tsunami of migrants coming in from over 150 countries.

How can any reasonable person in America think the current situation at the border, which is now impacting all of America, is safe and secure? Makes no sense. Look at the historic number of deaths, right? I deal with this every day, 9,161 dead Americans. Headline news today, nine in Cleveland, Ohio, most ever in a 24-hour period, dead.

Last month, another public service alert because there were five dead in a 12-hour period. This is what's happening. What about Ray Lewis, the legendary NFL player? Lost his son. What about this famous actor, Robert De Niro's grandson, dead. And what about baby Elijah in Florida with the fentanyl that a mother mixed in the blender?

Look at the escalating crime in the country. Look at the known got-aways, 1.5 million that are all over the country. We don't even know who they are, where they are, what they're doing here. Look at the 143 migrants have been apprehended this year at the border. Think about that. There was only 3 in 2020 during the last administration in the last year.

Think of how many terrorists and criminals are part of the got-aways. This is common sense. You don't have to be an expert to understand that. Look at the record number of migrant deaths, from them making treacherous journeys to get here, baking in the desert and in the back

of tractor trailers, and this man is pulling them off the desert with the sheriffs and stuff on the ground.

Look at the sexual assaults and the rapes and the migrants on the journey. Remember, depression, anxiety and mental illness are on the rise and all of our Americans are turning to drugs for help. But unfortunately, the cartels have tainted the illicit drug supply. Allowing Mexican cartel operatives and unidentified people from around the world to enter the country illegally at record levels is enhancing the ability of criminals to kill Americans.

This is not what the government should be doing to keep us safe. You don't have to be a border expert, an immigration expert to understand that the administration's policies related to the border are a recipe for disaster. And I'm not a MAGA lunatic OK. Look at the recent statement on China made by FBI Director Wray.

Now let's think about it, he said how China is the biggest national security threat to the long term of this country. Based on that warning, let's look at the facts. Already this year, 14,655 Chinese nationals, many of them military-age men, are being apprehended on the border. Let's look deeper. That's a 1,540 percent increase from last year, and over a 10,700 percent increase from '21. So my question to everyone here, what are they coming here for, military-age men from China?

And how many are in those got-aways? Remember, the bombing campaign from China continues from the Chinese labs with the xylazine. This is a tranquilizer for horses. It's rotten people from the inside out causing necrosis. Mike McCaul, thank you, sir, because you made this statement. I'll never forget it. Selling fentanyl to America is a great foreign policy for China.

He's right on point, and the man's been around homeland security issues a long time. Synthetic drugs made in labs in China and Mexico are record levels. Game changer for the US. The Chinese criminals are providing critical money laundering services, which I can answer questions about. This is a disaster for America and I'm concerned.

It's not a red or blue issue. It's a red, white and blue issue and every American should care. So in my view, it's a chemical weapon destroying our country rapidly. One of the biggest obstacles for US law enforcement is the corrupt, high-level government of Mexico corruption. We can't rely on soft on crime and corrupt leaders in Mexico to save our kids.

So as far as I know, there's never been a terrorist organization in the history of America that has killed this many Americans. The cartels must be dealt with accordingly and severely for what they're doing to our families and communities. Law enforcement's done tremendous work and my hat goes off to all of them saving lives every day.

DEA, last year, 58 million fake pills, 13,000 pounds of fentanyl, 400 million deadly dosage units taken off the street. Homeland Security Investigations, CBP during Operation Blue Lotus, 8,200 pounds of fentanyl two months at two POEs. The sad part everyone has to think about, how much is being produced and how much is already here?

So DEA wants Sinaloa and Jalisco the biggest threats, drug threats we've ever seen. So folks, where's the Operation Warp Speed COVID-like thing for fentanyl? Last thing. Without border security, we have no country. Thank you very much. And for the ranking member, sorry we're wasting your time.

MARK GREEN:

I now recognize --

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Hold on a minute. Why you reference me?

DEREK MALTZ:

Because in your opening statement, you said that this was a charade, it was a waste of time, whatever word you used and the kids are dying at record levels and I don't appreciate that.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Look, I said --

MARK GREEN:

Hold on. The ranking member is not recognized. We're going to continue on with our witnesses. Ms. Felbab-Brown, you're recognized for five minutes.

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. As was said, I'm senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. The Brookings Institution is a US non-profit organization devoted to independent research and policy solutions. My testimony represents solely my personal views and not those of anyone else. US domestic prevention treatment, harm reduction and law enforcement measures are fundamental and indispensable to countering the devastating fentanyl crisis.

Mexican criminal groups, particularly the Sinaloa cartel and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generacion source fentanyl and fentanyl precursors in China, synthesize them into fentanyl in Mexico and then smuggle

them into the United States. Some 90 percent of fentanyl seizures occur in legal ports of entry, and this is very likely where most fentanyl is smuggled through.

Mexican cartels predominantly hire US citizens to smuggle drugs across the border. US citizens represent more than 85 percent of those convicted of fentanyl charges. Drugs are hidden frequently in personal vehicles or within legal cargo. New ports of entry scanning technology authorized by the Biden administration are expected to significantly increase the percentage of inspected vehicles and cargo, a most welcome development.

A highly pernicious recent development is the establishment in Mexico of pharmacies that sell fentanyl-laced drugs and other dangerous substances, as well as drugs such as antibiotics and anabolic steroids without prescription. These are located in major tourist areas and very likely are linked to Mexican cartels.

Yet although they operate in plain sight of Mexican authorities, the Mexican authorities appear to take little action against them.

Increasing payments for precursors originating in China are now occurring in wildlife, a significant problem endangering public health and safety, as well as food security and global biodiversity with repercussions for the United States.

In Mexico, the collapse of rule of law is profound and goes far beyond the high rates of homicides and disappearances. While the administration of President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador persists in its do-little policy vis-a-vis Mexican cartels, the groups are increasingly resorting to more brazen violence, enjoying high levels of impunity, as well as governing large scope of territories, economies,

institutions and a significant number of people while seeking to influence elections.

In contrast, in the United States, because of the high effectiveness of US law enforcement and policies, Mexican criminal groups are far less violent and do not behave in the same way. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of violent serious crime in the United States are committed by US citizens. US counter-narcotics and law enforcement bargaining with Mexico is constrained by the US reliance on Mexico to stop migrant flows to the United States.

If the United States were able to pass the comprehensive immigration reform that would allow legal pathways for those seeking protection and opportunities in the United States, it would be far better able to induce the Mexican government to meaningfully cooperate on counter-narcotics and other law enforcement issues.

In its engagement with the Mexican government, the US should prioritize shutting down Mexican pharmacies that sell fentanyl and methamphetamine-laced drugs, the actual dismantling of drug trafficking networks, not merely seizures and busts of labs, and more effective Mexican prosecutorial action. Rather than designating Mexican criminal groups as foreign terrorist organizations, the United States should further significantly intensify border inspections that requires adequately resourcing US Customs and Border Protection both with resources and personnel for legal ports of entry, as well as developing packages of leverage such as indictment portfolios and visa denials against Mexican officials who sabotage the rule of law in Mexico and facilitate cartel activities.

The United States should also adopt true whole-of-government approach to countering fentanyl smuggling, authorizing a wide range

of US agencies, including the Departments of State and Defense, to support US law enforcement. Because the cartels are no longer specializing simply in drug trafficking, but a whole variety of legal and illegal economies, the approach needs to be multifaceted.

That means increasing intelligence collections against a wide variety of activities the cartels engage in, such as crimes against nature and consequently the number of US Fish and Wildlife special agents and investigators, as well as other specialists for other economies. And it also means bringing a wide set of law enforcement actors to organized crime drug force task forces.

Thank you.

MARK GREEN:

Thank you, Mrs. Felbab-Brown. I just want to make a statement here. Look, members of the witnesses as well as members of the committee, we have some rules, and those rules are that you direct your comments to the chair. So if you direct them to another member on the dais, or even within the committee, we don't do that unless we ask for time to yield, and then you can ask a question.

There are procedures on how to do that. Your comments, especially for the witnesses should be directed to the chair. I want to make sure that's real clear.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Mr. Chairman.

MARK GREEN:

Yes, the gentleman is recognized.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

I appreciate that comment, but I really want to raise a point of order here.

MARK GREEN:

OK.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

I don't think I've ever seen a witness personally attack a member like that at a hearing.

MARK GREEN:

OK, let me just, here, I'll clarify. You're no longer recognized. Mr. Maltz, the better way to have said what you wanted to say would have been to say, someone on the committee, or to say, it's been said that this is a waste of time, and you could say that's offensive to me. There are Americans dying. You could make the comment like that, but to direct it at the ranking member is inappropriate and I think everyone would agree with that.

With that, I recognize myself --

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Mr. Chairman.

MARK GREEN:

Mr. Carter, you're recognized.

TROY CARTER:

Thank you. Parliamentary inquiry. Shouldn't our role be to discourage disrespectful behavior and not coach on how to do it more appropriately?

MARK GREEN:

Look, no, hold on, hold on. Let me be clear here. In previous hearings, we've had individuals attack individuals on my side of the aisle and I gaveled them down. You can't, hold on, you cannot address your comments to an individual about an individual, but you can say, Secretary Mayorkas lied, but you can't say Secretary Mayorkas is a liar.

I know it's a subtle difference, but the rules are very clear. The rules of the House are very clear on that. And so the point is, you cannot direct anything other than to the chair, that's the rule and that's the rule we'll live by.

TROY CARTER:

And to preserve decorum and respect. Rather we agree or disagree, no member, Republican, Democrat or other, no member of the committee should disrespect a member of that's a witness, but what we witnessed a second ago was a direct attack. I appreciate you telling him he shouldn't have done that, but I'd like to go a step further.

May I, if I would very respectfully.

MARK GREEN:

Yes, sure.

TROY CARTER:

That we may --

DAN BISHOP:

Look, if we're going to entertain a debate on this, it needs to be two-sided.

MARK GREEN:

Hold on just a second.

DAN BISHOP:

If we're going to entertain a debate, I insist that it be two-sided.

MARK GREEN:

Mr. Bishop, you hold on just a second and I'll recognize you in a moment.

DAN BISHOP:

Very well.

MARK GREEN:

Don't do that again, please.

DAN BISHOP:

I will be heard if we're going to hear it from both sides.

MARK GREEN:

Mr. Carter, finish your comment.

TROY CARTER:

Mr. Chairman, thank you. My only comment is that we should always preserve decorum and respect. We can disagree without being disrespectful. If you think that's a debate, Mr. Bishop, I'm sorry.

MARK GREEN:

You're disagreeing with me, I appreciate that. And what I'm saying is there's a way to say things without directing your comment against an individual. You can say that Secretary Mayorkas lied. You can't say Secretary Mayorkas is a liar. You can say, I don't think this is a waste of time, and I'm offended when someone suggests that it is a waste of time.

I think making that point clear is important for the whole committee. Mr. Bishop, you're recognized.

DAN BISHOP:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the outset, the ranking member said that he was embarrassed that we would undertake this hearing, that it was so worthless it was embarrassing to him. That witness responded to that because it was an attack on that witness, every witness on this panel and every member on this side of the dais.

I'd like to know why a member of Congress, because he sits up here at this dais, can feel free to disrespect people who come at our invitation to testify by declaring what they have to say about youth being killed by fentanyl poisoning across this country, that that is not worth this committee's time, but a response to that is objected to. And I'll say another thing, forensically, in every hearing that I have attended where witnesses testify, they address their remarks to the chairman and to the ranking member.

I've never heard it done otherwise. I've never heard anybody remonstrated for addressing the ranking member, and I don't know why this would be the first time that would be brought up and I object to it.

MARK GREEN:

OK, thank you. Hold on. We're not going to --

BENNIE THOMPSON:

May I respond to that?

MARK GREEN:

No, I will advise members that under clause 1 of rule 17 of the rules of the House, they must observe the House standards of decorum in debate and conduct. They must speak and act respectfully and may not use disorderly words, unparliamentary language such as words and impugning the motives of their colleagues or words that are personally offensive.

I would encourage the members to adhere to the House standards of decorum and proceed in order. We need to get on with this and members will be recognized by the order of their seniority for their five minutes of questioning. An additional round of questioning may be called after all members have been recognized.

I now recognize myself for five minutes of questioning. My first question is to Mr. Jones. The cartels have essentially taken over a lot of the drug networks inside many of the United States cities. If you look at some headlines just in the past few weeks about San Francisco alone, they basically have seized control and are coordinating with the gangs to seize control of the drug trade in San Francisco.

They've essentially taken over all the criminal networks, much like a mafia. The attorney general, Merrick Garland, has admitted to the Senate that the cartel's strategy was to flood the Border Patrol, and by tying up border patrol because Border Patrol now is doing basically a catch-and-release system, then the drug cartels will slip people around the other side.

Can you tell us how this policy of the open border and this strategy of the cartels have combined to allow them to basically take over crime in the cities?

JAESON JONES:

Chairman, the way it works on your southwest border, you hear the term all the time, operational control. The problem is no one ever tells you what that means and how the cartels have it, and that's what I'm going to share with you here today to answer your question, and that is that they utilize a network known as the Halcone Network.

Halcones are scouts, they're lookouts. They check on and off just like law enforcement, anywhere from eight-hour shifts, 10-hour shifts, 12-hour shifts. I've seen them in South Texas as far as 30 miles into the United States. I have seen them in Arizona as far as 70 miles. They leverage two-way handheld encrypted radio, sometimes encrypted apps, and they communicate back to what is known as central.

So, what happens is you have these lookouts everywhere and when what they call the gate is open, the gate meaning a bend in the river or a bend at your border, when there is no law enforcement, they surge with whatever commodity it is that they want to push. So, when you're talking about based on the policies of all of these migrants that have come from all over the world, what is happening is the cartel by design

will push hundreds of people as you have seen on every news station over the last few years, and media focuses on that.

That causes the surge of local, state and federal law enforcement to that location, and they do that by design because it opens up the other gates. Now if they're going to move a commodity directly linked to a cartel boss, they'll shut down more gates to ensure that commodity makes it in. And what they do, Chairman, is they contract directly with US-based street gangs and what we call Tier 1 gangs.

Those are gangs which impact multiple regions in our country. They work directly with the cartels, and today it is very important to understand, your US-based street gangs are working side by side contracting with the cartels. And I could go on and on here, but in 2009, eMe, Mexican mafia, I was a lieutenant in Laredo, Texas over two major drug squads as the war broke out between CDG and the Zetas, and we were stunned at what we found.

We had Mexican mafia working in Mexico, working operations, going through basic, intermediate and advanced training from former special forces and law enforcement, conducting hits in the United States and getting reduced costs of cocaine for that. That is the way it really works. So when you wonder today why you are being overrun with drugs, it is because the Tier 1 gangs and US-based street gangs are contracting and working directly with these cartels, and I will go back to this, and that is that they will not stop.

They can't. They're going to have to be stopped, and we're going to have to really take extreme aggressive action to fix this.

MARK GREEN:

How has the open policies, the basic catch and release, and this stimulation of a mass wave of migration by having an open border facilitated this process?

JAESON JONES:

This is it. I want to be very clear here. Historically, your cartels, the Mexican cartels, we call them drug cartels because that's what they were, today they are in over 54 countries around the world. This is not a US-Mexico problem, ladies and gentlemen. Cartel Jalisco New Generation we know is in 48. This will not stop.

And now they've transitioned into the final version of human trafficking known as debt bondage and I am holding it in my hands. This is it. This is how emboldened they've become. So I can't stress to you that you have to take extreme, extreme action to go after these cartels and to truly create relationships with Mexico and the rest of the world in what we call a unified command and treat them as the dark networks that they are, and I'm happy to discuss that with you as to how to go after them.

MARK GREEN:

Thank you. I now recognize the ranking member for five minutes for questioning.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Jones, you talked about that Congress should take extreme action. Let me tell you what was in the last omnibus package that we passed in 2023. We provided \$17 billion for Customs and Border Protection, including an increase in spending by 17 percent over the previous year.

It allowed for hiring operations along the southwest border. We also provided funding for 19,855 Border Patrol agents, an increase of over 300 agents, the most since 2011. We also appropriated \$60 million more to hire 125 Customs and Border Protection Officers and mission support staff at our ports of entry.

But I'd also tell you, not a single Republican on this committee voted for it. It was passed only by Democrats. We're the ones who are trying to put back the resources to the good men and women along the border who are addressing this. Every time an opportunity presents itself to put resources on the border, Democrats are the one who vote for it. You know, you can talk tough, but when it comes time as a member of Congress, you really need to vote your conviction.

So, if you don't give the men and women the money they need to help protect us, then that's our fault. But thank goodness the Democrats in Congress gave the money that was asked for by the department. We need more, and I look forward to when the next time that people ask for money, like I hear you talking about resources, that they'll vote for it because that's the only way we can address this problem.

The other situation, as I said, I've been on the committee a long time, responsible men and women can disagree, but there's a way you can be disagreeable. I understand the witnesses on the Republican side. This is a great democracy and it's only great because of the men and women who live in it. It's not a personal attack.

It's just the facts, and I hope Mr. Maltz, you understand that, but be that as it may, there are some policy differences. I think nine hearings on this subject is a bit much. I am embarrassed at that because we are wasting time trying to impeach a secretary when we ought to be providing our men and women along the border resources.

I've never voted against a Homeland Security budget since the department was created. I don't plan to ever vote against it because it's not the right thing to do. Now I'll disagree with this Chairman. I disagree with that Chairman, and we'll probably continue, but we are adults and I just think as long as we act as adults, we'll get things done.

People around the world look at us. They want to be like us, but what I see happening and trying to disagree and trying to somehow take it to another level, it's just not who we are. And so Dr. Felbab-Brown, can you tell me what kind of programs you've seen that have been helpful along the border in addressing this problem?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Certainly. Improving technologies so that inspections of vehicles, cargo and people crossing the border can be intensified is a very useful measure. The CBP several years ago stated that it is only capable of inspecting about 2 percent of personal vehicles crossing and about 17 percent of cargo vehicles.

Raising that number to a much higher level, especially because the vast majority of fentanyl is seized and very likely smuggled through legal ports of entry is a good way of reducing the amount of fentanyl coming into the United States. It's not a sufficient policy. A whole-of-government approach needs to be adopted, increasing collection intelligence on a variety of activities that the criminal cartels, Mexican cartels engage in, deploying various tools, various agencies of the United States to be able to facilitate US law enforcement work.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Thank you. Yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. McCaul.

MICHAEL MCCAUL:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Mr. Jones and Mr. Maltz for your service, your law enforcement service in the line of duty in very dangerous conditions. Mr. Maltz, I want to thank you also for your comment about foreign policy because I can't think from a China, communist China standpoint, a better foreign policy than introducing poison through Mexico into the United States, killing Americans and making money off it. It's almost like a reverse opium war, and they see it that way.

It's killed 70,000 young people, 20,000 pounds of fentanyl seized, enough to kill 4.6 billion people. My children have been to five funerals of their friends who thought they were taking Xanax or ADD medication and they never woke up. And Mr. Jones, I know I commend you for being, number one, my great state of Texas what you've done.

We know this better I think than anybody and I remember going down after Mayorkas rescinded Remain in Mexico, and I talked to the Border Patrol chief and it was chaos. And I said, what do you attribute this to? Is there any cause and effect, a direct cause and effect between what you're seeing now and the policy change of this administration?

And he said, Congressman, there's no question there's a direct cause and effect between the rescission of Remain in Mexico and what we're seeing today. What else are we seeing? A human trafficking event of

my lifetime. I've never seen anything like this. I was a US attorney Western District of Texas at the Texas border.

I was chairman of this committee. We were, Ms. Vaughan, getting this under control. We were controlling political asylum because the cartels manipulate political asylum claims, and when Remain in Mexico went into place, they couldn't manipulate anymore. You know why? Because they couldn't get into the United States.

Their claims were adjudicated with them in Mexico and therefore catch and release was ended finally, the very first bill I introduced in Congress 20 years ago, imagine, and here we are today. It's alive and well and this secretary is responsible in my judgment. And the rising crime and the women go into sex trafficking, the unvetted homes that these kids go to and the men go to MS-13, there is a criminal enterprise now, not just in Mexico and Latin America, but right here in the United States, and it was created by this administration's policies.

So my question to the three of you, Mr. Jones, Ms. Vaughan, Mr. Maltz, do you believe that the actions of this secretary by rescinding Remain in Mexico, the policy that was effectively working, that has created this criminal enterprise? Do you believe that this secretary is responsible for and complicit with the criminal enterprise that has resulted as a result of these policies being rescinded?

Mr. Jones.

JAESON JONES:

Yes, I do, and that is validated by not only the data from the United States Customs and Border Protection that validates the numbers that crossed into our country as a result of the exemptions created under Title 42, which Secretary Mayorkas is the architect behind that. In

addition, the overdose deaths in this country due to the sheer impact to mothers and fathers and families across this country.

The data validates it.

MICHAEL MCCAUL:

And one thing to add, the district court said, you must re-implement Remain in Mexico. The secretary did not comply with that order. He failed to comply with that order. Ms. Vaughan.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

I do believe that the Biden-Mayorkas policies are responsible, a disaster. They're what's responsible for the situation that we have today and no amount of money that is funneled to these agencies is going to help the situation until the officers and agents are allowed to do their job. The policies at this point are more important than the money.

MICHAEL MCCAUL:

In fact, they said, sir, we're turning our backs on you because you turned your back on us, as I recall. Mr. Maltz.

DEREK MALTZ:

Well, I say it starts at the top with the President and it comes down, and I just want to say that I make these collages of these dead kids on my own time to help spread the awareness, so the results are just dead children and families going to funerals. That's what it comes down to. I'm not an expert on immigration law or Border Patrol policies, but I know what's going on in America, and that's why I'm here today, so thank you.

MICHAEL MCCAUL:

That's why we marked up a bill in my committee to designate fentanyl as a chemical weapon under the Chemical Weapons Convention, Mr. Jones, will give us more authorities to go after them. I yield.

DAN BISHOP:

Former chairman yields back. I now recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Correa for his five minutes of questioning.

LOU CORREA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I start with my comments, I wanted to submit for the record without objection a CBP release June 20, '23, just came out yesterday, showing the lowest southwest border encounters since February 2021. If I may read, "Total southwest border encounters in June, including individuals who presented at ports of entry with or without CBP One appointments were down 30 percent to 144,000. If I could submit that for the record.

DAN BISHOP:

Without objection.

LOU CORREA:

And I just wanted to first of all thank our witnesses are being here today. I want to quote General John Kelly when his secretary of homeland security would say, border security does not end or begin at the border. And Mr. Jones, I want to say I heard your testimony, I listened to it very carefully. I tell you, I really don't like what you said.

But as an individual that's worked a lot on both sides of the border, I have to tell you, you have some valid points. We do need some extreme solutions. We need to coordinate with Mexico. We need to get it right. Speaking to Mexican officials recently and they reminded me that just recently they had seized 46,000 bank accounts or blocked the equivalent of almost \$700 million of money from organized crime, have entered into an anti-money laundering by national group with the United States.

1,600 members of the Mexican military today are deployed at 55 security points along the border. Seizures recently, 7.5 tons of fentanyl, 1,700 labs shut down, almost 74,000 criminals arrested in Mexico. And then of course in January this year, the arrest of Chapo's son, Ovidio Guzman, that erupted into one of those gunfights that you were describing where 12 Mexican Marines were killed.

So I think the effort is there, but I just don't think it's enough, because this is an effort that is going to require all of us working together. Last week, Chairman Higgins and I introduced the bill, legislation to really enhance, support Homeland Security's investigation of transnational criminal units, I should say investigations of transnational criminal units, Mexico, Central America and South America.

Is this a kind of efforts do you think that would help us really drill down and work with other countries south of the border to identify some of these folks?

JAESON JONES:

Thank you for the question, Congressman. I will tell you that those statistics you gave are fantastic and I applaud the efforts of all of those in Mexico who are in harm's way. They have some incredible people

working to try to fight for their country, but none of this matters if you notice, not one cartel has fallen.

As a matter of fact, more Mexican citizens and more migrants have fallen to these cartels and been brutalized like we've never seen before in Mexico. You also see violence now spreading across the country at levels where historically, sir, it was along our frontera with our border. Today it is across the nation of Mexico.

And where I'm going with that is I want you to know that the effort is not near enough, not even close.

LOU CORREA:

If I may interrupt you because I only have a minute left, but there's a new dynamic emerging, leverage partnership dependence. Mexico is now our largest trading partner in the world. We are going to depend on each other for economic success, livelihood and we need to work together to address these common issues.

I have 44 seconds, but very quickly, any thoughts how to move forward on that?

JAESON JONES:

And I think that's a great point about how we can leverage and work together because of that exact reason. They are dealing with guns going south and military grade weapons coming north. We have a lot of areas that we can work with the Mexicans and we should, as somebody that has done. It is all with relationships.

But I wanted to tell you and be very honest, there is a lack of effort in Mexico right now. They put a lot of pretty paint on the wall. It means nothing and it is doing nothing, and you see it in the deaths of

Americans, you see it in the deaths of Mexican citizens and it's just pretty pain on the wall and it doesn't amount to anything.

LOU CORREA:

I do hope we can engage in a transparent manner to address these issues that do affect my citizens on Main Street on a daily basis in terms of fentanyl deaths. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield. My time is up.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Higgins from Louisiana.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you ladies and gentlemen for being before us today. Let's see if we can clarify for the American people. Mr. Jones and Mr. Maltz, I'm going to go to you in my limited time. Mr. Jones, confirm please your former title in law enforcement. We have here you're former captain of intelligence and counterterrorism with Texas Department of Public Safety.

Is that correct?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, it is.

CLAY HIGGINS:

You have a great deal of expertise in law enforcement, do you not?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

You're a resident of Texas?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

You know what's going on down there, don't you brother?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Roger that. Mr. Maltz, according to my information, you're a former special agent in charge of Special Operations division with the Drug Enforcement Administration at DEA. Is that correct, sir?

DEREK MALTZ:

That's correct.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Have a long history in law enforcement, do you not?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Where do you live, sir?

DEREK MALTZ:

I live in Virginia now.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Well, congratulations, living off of the border. You spent a lot of time down there in DEA operations, did you not?

DEREK MALTZ:

Absolutely, yes sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

You know what's going on down there?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Let's get to it, shall we? Since President Biden was inaugurated and made perhaps the poorest decision in the history of poor decisions by hiring Secretary Mayorkas, enacts his policy, because although Secretary Mayorkas has a great deal of expertise as you gentlemen do as well, he has the added responsibility as a secretary to advise the President if the President's policies are injurious to America.

And once those policies have been demonstrated to be clearly injurious to our country, the secretary further, reflective of his oath, has a responsibility to step away from that administration if the President does not abide by his advice, when the President's policies

that the secretary is enacting are clearly hurting our country and they absolutely are.

Gentlemen, I'm going to ask you a little bit about cartels' access to our country. You both have conducted United States operations in and with Mexico, have you not?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Mr. Jones, yes. Mr. Maltz.

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Yes and yes. The United States operations in Mexico, must they follow United States law and be organized with the Mexican government and Mexican law enforcement? Mr. Jones.

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Yes and yes, of course. So we have operations in Mexico, law enforcement operations in Mexico, but we have to follow the law, do we not?

DEREK MALTZ:

Right, if I may add, the best example is that is the unified operation to capture Chapo Guzman on two occasions working with the Mexican Marines, and they did the operation, not the US. They went out and they grabbed and they had the courage to do it.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Understood. I like your spirit. So, let's compare that to the cartels. Gentlemen, would you consider it a true statement that the cartels have gained unprecedented access and networking within the United States of America? Mr. Jones.

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, I do.

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Have you seen this increase incredibly over the last two years, Mr. Jones?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Mr. Maltz?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Roger that. Do they have to follow our laws?

DEREK MALTZ:

No way.

CLAY HIGGINS:

Absolutely not.

DEREK MALTZ:

There's no fear. They're not going to go to jail.

CLAY HIGGINS:

They have unfettered access to the communities of America and they traffic in two things, drugs and human beings, and this administration has accommodated their efforts. Oh, how can you say that, Congressman Higgins? Well, let me give you an example. We've spoken a great deal about technology on the border.

My colleagues across the aisle stated, we don't want to wall. Wall is old-tech. We don't need a barrier system. We have technology. OK. First of all, that's in denial of the fact that a physical barrier is part of a security system that includes physical barriers to deter and delay an attempted criminal crossing or trafficking of human beings and drugs into our country.

And secondly, let's talk about the technology. Much has been said about drones being used. We have technologies on the border, was requested by law enforcement on the border during the Trump

administration, approved by Congress, funds appropriated, contracts arranged for to detect and take down cartel drones.

That's called the detection and mitigation capabilities of our anti-drone tech, deployed on the border, called the defensive and offensive operations at an anti-drone tech. Somewhere, since Secretary Mayorkas has been in charge and I promise you we will, we will find the smoking gun, since Secretary Mayorkas has been in charge the offensive capabilities or the mitigating capabilities of that anti-drone tech has been suppressed.

Mr. Chairman, my time has expired, but my passion has not. I yield.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. Sometimes Clay Higgins just says it the best way. I now recognize Mr. Carter, I think is who's up next, from Louisiana.

TROY CARTER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record an article titled, Cadre of Nativists Groups, figures have long pushed replacement by immigration ideas into mainstream, which explains how the replacement conspiracy theory has inspired domestic terrorism and documents that the Buffalo mass shooter cited by Ms. Vaughan's research is justifying his domestic terror attack.

Mr. Chairman, this hearing is unfortunately a sham. It's a dangerous national platform that risks legitimizing the extremist idea terrorists latch on when carrying out attacks on the homeland. In this

committee, all of us should frown on that. So I'd like to enter this to the record so everyone will have an opportunity to read it, sir.

MARK GREEN:

Without objection, so ordered.

TROY CARTER:

Most migrants coming to our border have no other legal pathway to the US for citizenship and are seeking asylum here because they have no other legal pathway, which is their legal right. However, our system was not set up for this kind of volume that we're experiencing and it is absolutely unsustainable, I think we all agree.

Dr. Brown, as a director of initiatives for Nonstate Armed Actors at the Brookings Institute, what are recommended practices that can be used at our ports of entry to put human rights at the forefront?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Congressman, thank you for your question. Certainly passing a comprehensive immigration reform that would allow legal paths of entry into the United States would immeasurably improve US law enforcement domestically, as well as it would improve capacities to induce partnership and meaningful cooperation from vital partners and countries such as Mexico.

In the meantime, increasing inspection is what is an important measure, as well as recognizing that the cartels are no longer singularly focused on smuggling drugs, but are engaged in a whole variety of activities that require all of US government response.

TROY CARTER:

Thank you. We're witnessing a shift around the world of people seeking asylum, safety and economic prosperity. Individuals are fleeing economic uncertainty, government corruption and violence. This is not only a struggle here in the United States, but worldwide. Ms. Vaughan, with your work at the Center for Immigration Studies, would you agree that there is an unprecedented movement of vulnerable people in the Americas and worldwide?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

There certainly is unprecedented movement of inadmissible migrants into the United States. That is for sure, yes.

TROY CARTER:

And how is that impacting our points of entry?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

It is overwhelming the men and women of the Border Patrol and CBP to the extent that they cannot adequately talk to migrants to detect trafficking for example. They are forced to process and release them as quickly as possible. It is distracting them from preventing got-aways, who are often the bad actors and the drug loads from coming into the United States, and it is creating chaos in border communities and impacting the safety of those communities.

It is compromising the safety of the people who live along the border, who have to deal with the cartels bringing loads of people and drugs through their private property and threatening their lives and well-being. I mean, the problems created by this open border are just incalculable.

TROY CARTER:

And so how would we, we're all ears now and we are presumably here to listen, to learn and to do better, so now we're all ears. How should government interact with our regional partners to make a difference?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Well, I think that the United States needs to make it clear to our international partners that this level of migration, illegal migration into the United States cannot be sustained. It's causing problems with our country and that we need to work together to address it and stop it, because to the extent that the criminal cartels are enriched and emboldened, it affects civil society in their countries as well.

It's destabilizing to Mexico and to some of the other - Panama is terribly destabilized because of the trafficking that occurs through the Darien Gap.

TROY CARTER:

Thank you.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

So they have an interest in working with us too.

TROY CARTER:

Thank you very much. My time is expired. I yield back. Thank you, ma'am.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Bishop from North Carolina.

DAN BISHOP:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Jones, you're the witness I've been waiting to hear for months and months in this committee. You talked about the, and I forgot how you described it, ultra violence. What did you say about, how did you call the violence?

JAESON JONES:

Hyper violence.

DAN BISHOP:

Hyper violence among Mexican cartels. I've questioned witnesses here before about in January, in Culiacan I believe, there was open warfare, 50 caliber machine guns being used, narco-tanks driven by cartel soldiers against Mexican army. This is the second taking or the second effort to take Ovidio Guzman, I believe.

And you have said, I think it certainly is, I have some concern about militarizing this dispute and having the United States military take on the Mexican cartels. I'm open to the debate on that, but there's another aspect of this that is of interest to me and I wonder if you can comment on it, because the wristbands that you hold up testify to it. You talked about bond -- What did you call that, bondage slavery?

JAESON JONES:

Debt bondage, sir.

DAN BISHOP:

Debt bondage. Yes, sir, and so you got hundreds of thousands or at least 150,000, 200,000 migrants entering per month. Mexican cartel

has tabs on all of them. We saw the headline the chairman put up during his opening statement from The New York Post that Honduran migrants were operating the drug trade or I believe is what they said in San Francisco, very troubled place as you know.

What prevents, as they bring these very vulnerable human beings, that they have absolute control over and knowledge of, into the United States are keeping tabs on them, these criminal organizations, could they not develop the same sort of hyper violence in the United States that we're seeing in Mexico given sufficient time?

JAESON JONES:

And they will. I can assure every member here, if you do not take action on this and change what we are doing and look at them not as you are hearing as criminals, but truly as terrorist organizations and leverage the full weight of this government, it is coming here. I worked in 2015 the beheading of an individual in Port Isabel, South Padre Island that was committed by a US Border Patrol working directly for the Gulf Cartel.

He was gutted from the navel up, all the way up. His entrails were removed and his head, as far as we can tell, was taken back to Mexico. I worked the 2013 lawyer where El Gato spent a million dollars putting tracking devices all over his family's vehicles and then were able to locate him in South Lake Texas and then executed him.

So they are here, sir. They are here, they are among us the people.

DAN BISHOP:

The people who've raised our borders as a means of improving their voter population already have gotten more than they bargained for, I'd

say in the fentanyl deaths I'm going to ask Mr. Maltz about next, but they also may see yet more. We may see the same sort of open militarized conflict with our own law enforcement and military resources here in the United States.

That's what you're saying.

JAESON JONES:

I have video that I've submitted to this committee of 50 caliber rifles, fully kitted individuals on Interstate 10 going from Tucson to Arizona, passing two Arizona state troopers.

DAN BISHOP:

And the only thing I can --

JAESON JONES:

I can go on. They are here sir.

DAN BISHOP:

My fellow lawmakers only decry the fact that we're not spending more money, letting that happen. Mr. Maltz, I want to ask you, have you ever been to Charlotte, North Carolina?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, sir.

DAN BISHOP:

You know the community just north, very affluent community just north of there called Cornelius?

DEREK MALTZ:

Not aware of that, no.

DAN BISHOP:

Huff High School, a member of a sports team up there, young man died a week or so ago. They say that fentanyl has pierced Huff High School in Cornelius, North Carolina. It's happening everywhere, not just at the border, everywhere across this country, but there's something even, I don't know if you can say more disturbing than that.

I just watched the movie Sound of Freedom, and I urge everybody to go see it, but the problem of child sex trafficking is I understand at epidemic levels as well, been fed from places south of the United States, but now in the United States, we have children, 600,000 children, minors coming to the United States under the policies Democrats have advocated, Secretary Mayorkas has overseen, 85,000 we've lost track of. These people are showing up in factories and the like, but that's not even the worst of it. It's the people being sold into another form of bondage, Mr. Jones, sex trafficking.

You keep up with that at all, Mr. Maltz, the sex exploitation of children?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, sir, because the cartels control it all at the border. They have total control of the border, so they're making money on all those young kids, those innocent kids. And that's why I commented before because of all these rapes and these assaults on these young children as they make the journeys up into the United States.

But one thing I would want to add is that Secretary Mayorkas did say that the fentanyl overdoses are the single greatest challenges that we have in America. But my question to everybody is then, why would you reverse the policies that were working before to keep that stuff out, to keep those people out? It's the operatives that are all over our country now running the business of collecting money, of pushing the poison on the streets and they're getting right over the border.

They have total control.

DAN BISHOP:

If you think the problem is so insignificant that it embarrasses you to consider it, Mr. Maltz, that would be your answer. I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Thanedar.

SHRI THANEDAR:

Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the witnesses who are here today. Two months ago, the DEA confirmed the interception of a massive shipment of over 20 kilograms of fentanyl during a routine traffic stop in my beloved city of Detroit. Now just think about this for a moment, a fatal dose of fentanyl is only two milligrams.

Now if you look at this 20 kilogram seizure of fentanyl and if I do a quick math here, that 20 kilogram is enough to kill 10 million people. That's almost the entire population of my state of Michigan. But let me clarify. This deadly drug finds its way to my district because there is a name, an unattended addict, a path of destruction waiting for it. That is the root cause of this fentanyl crisis, demand for the opioid.

My message to my Republican colleagues is that the opioid epidemic does not begin or end at our borders. This crisis is not a border crisis. It is a public health crisis. We need to focus on health care. By doing so, we not only save lives, but also disrupt the profitability of these cartels. It's a win-win situation.

We can cripple their operation while healing those trapped in this grip of addiction. Dr. Brown, can you discuss how treating demand for these drugs would hurt cartel operations while saving lives?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Thank you. I stated at the beginning of my testimony that focusing on treatment, demand reduction and harm reduction approaches is absolutely critical and indispensable. This is indeed what will save US lives. Law enforcement actions both on the US side of the border and internationally are also very important, because we do want to minimize the amount of flows to the United States, and also because the objective should be dismantling the drug trafficking groups.

However, expanding access to insurance so that more people in the United States could receive treatment, adopting the smartest most-proven evidence-based approaches so that people are not dependent on sourcing illicit drugs on the illegal market, so they are not dependent on sourcing illicit drugs period, is crucial.

And with that and very important element of that, is also treating the underlying cause, which is still a significant over-prescription of legal opioids. And I want to go back to emphasizing another point from my testimony, the real big danger currently of pharmacies in Mexico that are brick and mortar buildings, look like any pharmacies and are selling all kinds of drugs, including fentanyl and meth-laced adulterated drugs to international tourists such as US citizens.

They need to be shut down.

SHRI THANEDAR:

Thank you, Dr. Brown. My understanding is that the administration is working to expand its public health initiative to combat the fentanyl epidemic. Do you view this as a necessary step?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Yes. The Biden administration deserves enormous credit for framing a lot of our drug policy in terms of public health. Significant genuine progress has been made and some of them precedes initiatives already from during the Trump administration with states, state legislature and members of Congress, the US Congress recognizing the need to adopt much smarter, much wiser strategies such as the availability of medications that reverse overdose.

SHRI THANEDAR:

Thank you, Dr. Brown. And Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Gimenez from Florida.

CARLOS GIMENEZ:

Thank you. Thank you very much. About in September, September 11, 2001, terrorists killed around 3,000 Americans and we way we went 7,000 miles and we waged war for 20 years because 3,000 Americans were killed. 70,000 Americans are being killed every single year by fentanyl and we're doing nothing about it. I had the director of the FBI sitting in that chair and I asked him, do you think

that we should be labeling the Mexican cartels and multinational cartels as terrorists?

And he says, well, it's a technicality. Well, they're terrorists. They're killing us. As a matter of fact, we only lost 60,000, close to 60,000 people in Vietnam in ten years of war. We're killing 70,000 Americans every single year and they're right across the border. So my question to you, Mr. Jones, is this.

Do you believe that the Biden administration policies have strengthened the Mexican cartels?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, I know they have.

CARLOS GIMENEZ:

Do you believe that by strengthening the Mexican cartels, we are actually not only destabilizing the United States of America, but we're also helping to destabilize Mexico?

JAESON JONES:

Yes.

CARLOS GIMENEZ:

And that is the crux of the matter. And so we can fund \$10 billion and put CBP agents locked in arm 2,000 miles on the border, and unless we change the policy, nothing changes, is that correct?

JAESON JONES:

That is absolutely correct. This is an authority issue. This is not a money issue any longer. We as lawmen do not have the authorities we have needed to go after these cartels. That is the problem. And I don't believe in going to war with the cartels. They are dark networks, Congressman, and the way we win against them is giving us the authority for full spectrum operations, leveraging our full US intelligence agencies, law enforcement and military, but mostly clandestine operations.

How you go after the Sinaloa Cartel as a network will be much different as to how we go after the Gulf, Cartel del Noreste and many others, because these networks are different and we have to fight in the future differently than we have in the past.

CARLOS GIMENEZ:

I agree, but also we need to change our policy so that the migrants who are coming through, who think they can get into the United States, that are paying them their passage, deprives them of that revenue and makes them weaker. Is that correct?

JAESON JONES:

It does, but you also need to understand, these cartels are global. You hear all the time that right now they're making billions of dollars off of the human trafficking of people. That's absolutely true and they're making more than they are off of drugs. But when you look at them in their totality today, look at why Cartel Jalisco New Generation has risen so quickly so fast, because they began moving their narcotics overseas to Europe, Russia and Australia, making hundreds of thousands of dollars, literally one kilo at one time in Australia was \$180,000. This is why their rise is so massive.

But what are you always told by these so-called experts? That these cartels, listen, if you just legalize it, it'll all go away. Look at what has happened to us.

CARLOS GIMENEZ:

You're right, and this is not a simple answer to the problems that we face in the United States, but we need to view them as adversaries. We need to view them as people that are killing Americans, 70,000 a year. Look, I was in the streets of Miami, I'm a paramedic, that's my craft. And so in the '70s and in the '80s, I responded to overdoses left and right all the time, and overdoses with opioids, but they weren't laced with this poison.

This poison hooks them, makes it much more addictive, and then it kills us, and we have to do something about it. And what the Biden administration is doing is not doing very much to protect American lives. And that's the duty of government. The duty of government is to protect the lives of American citizens.

And in this respect, the Biden administration and this secretary is failing miserably. Much has been said about the decrease in the number of migrants that are coming through the border now from the height. And yeah, maybe it was, but the number that I got, the last, in February 2020, only 36,000 migrants were encountered at the border.

Now we're looking at is 100,000 as being a good number, 150,000 being a good number. It's an utter disaster what's happening at the border. It's an utter disaster what's happening at the border. And one final thought. My colleagues across the aisle think that everything can be solved by throwing money at it and it cannot.

In this case, the best thing we can do is change the policies, and by changing the policies you will then disincentivize the migrants from coming into the United States, deprive the cartels of the money that they get from them, and then we can start focusing in on destroying the cartels, which are the source of the fentanyl, which is killing 70,000 Americans every single year and I yield back.

Thank you.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. Without objection, the title of Mrs. Vaughan's testimony submitted for the record has to be stricken. The wording of that title makes an accusation against the President and the secretary that they're accomplices to crime and we have to strike that. So without objection, the title of that testimony is stricken.

And we'll move to the next question. I now recognize Mr. Magaziner for five minutes.

SETH MAGAZINER:

Well, thank you, Chairman. You know, the American people want us to work together in a bipartisan way to solve the nation's problems and to strengthen our security. But instead, we are here for yet another episode of impeachment theater, the latest installment in House Republicans' plans to impeach someone, anyone from the Biden administration.

And it's disappointing and the facts don't support it. The premise of the argument, and we all know that this is where this is headed, the premise of the argument is something like this, that Secretary

Mayorkas, President Biden are breaking the law because they're not attempting to stop transnational criminal activity at the border.

But unfortunately for my colleagues, the facts are not on their side. Here is just a sample of the actions that the Biden administration has taken to combat transnational criminal organizations at the border. In 2021, Secretary Mayorkas launched Operation Sentinel, a collaborative interagency effort to disrupt logistical networks of criminal organizations.

Also in 2021, the administration launched Joint Task Force Alpha to enhance US enforcement efforts against smuggling and trafficking groups operating in Mexico and in the Northern Triangle countries. December 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14060 establishing the United States Council on Transnational Organized Crime.

The Executive Order outlined a policy for the United States to combat TCOs and establish a council to monitor the production and implementation of coordinated strategic plans to do just that. Last year, Congress passed and President Biden signed legislation to increase funding for border security, for better technology at points of entry, for more Border Patrol agents.

And in almost every case, our Republican colleagues who were there last year, voted against this legislation. This year, the Biden administration launched Operation Blue Lotus and Operation Four Horsemen, interagency surges of operations to seize narcotics, investigate crimes and investigate dangerous individuals associated with TCOs. In just two months, those operations seized nearly 10,000 pounds of fentanyl and more than 10,000 pounds of other narcotics like cocaine and methamphetamines.

In the last week alone, Operation Blue Lotus arrested 284 people on fentanyl charges. I can keep going. Secretary Mayorkas launched Operation Artemis to target precursor chemicals, pill presses and parts and finished substances involved in fentanyl. Secretary of State Blinken, who some of our colleagues are also trying to impeach, organized a ministerial meeting with more than 80 countries to launch a global coalition to address synthetic drug threats, a worldwide effort led by the United States to disrupt fentanyl supply chains.

In April, the Biden administration's Justice Department announced charges against 28 Sinaloa Cartel leaders. And of course, most importantly, since the expiration of Donald Trump's Title 42 policy, illegal border crossings are down more than 50 percent. That is on President Biden's watch. So listen, we can all have our own opinions about whether the administration is doing a good job or not.

Everybody is entitled to those opinions, but if your core argument is that the Biden administration is breaking the law by not trying to disrupt TCOs, the facts don't support it and we're going to keep having this debate apparently for months to come, but that is the central point. And here's what it all boils down to. Even though the President and his administration have taken numerous actions to address the challenges at the border, detaining criminals, seizing drugs, some of our colleagues are just hell-bent on impeaching a cabinet secretary for the first time in 150 years.

And for some, this has been the plan all along. House Republicans first introduced articles of impeachment against Secretary Mayorkas two years ago when the guy had only been in office for a couple of months. They have been gushing to their donors about impeachment behind closed doors before they even took control of the House and before

any of these investigations even began, even though there's no legal basis.

So look, the American people want us to work together to secure the border on a bipartisan basis. There are things that we could be doing. We should invest in technology and personnel. We should strengthen our relationships with allies in the region who are key partners in this fight. We can reform the immigration system to make it more orderly.

We can finally do something about the flow of illegal guns across the border from the United States to Mexico, which is a part of this problem that our colleagues don't ever want to talk about. But in order for us to move forward in a productive way, impeachment theater has to stop so that we can get to work for the American people.

And I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize Ms. Lee from Florida for five minutes.

LAUREL LEE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Vaughan, I'd like to return to your testimony. You touched on a subject that I think is a very important aspect of what we're here to discuss today, and that is human trafficking and how these policies are affecting women and girls and children who are being trafficked. Specifically, you used the phrase in your opening that these kids go into the HHS assembly line with few questions being asked.

And I'd like to focus a bit there. It is correct, is it not that when that happens, we've seen numerous incidents of children who are actually

put into placements in homes that prove to be unsafe?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Absolutely, yes. There are a number of instances where for example, girls have been placed with older men in what is clearly an exploitative situation. There are kids who have been turned over to labor traffickers. There are kids who get turned over to gang members. There are kids who get placed into domestic servitude and other forms of abuse.

It's really quite horrific.

LAUREL LEE:

Well and I know we have also seen cases where, and this happened even in my own state, if the children themselves aren't screened, that can pose a danger or an inappropriate circumstance for a host family. Is that also correct?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Yes, there are problems at some of the shelters, sometimes incidents of predatory behavior on the other kids who are housed there until they're released. There was the case in Jacksonville where the alleged minor, who turned out to be 24 years old because the Border Patrol is not able to really screen people, murdered his sponsor.

LAUREL LEE:

And in your opinion, after children are placed in these sponsor homes, is there an adequate level of follow up and supervision that is occurring by HHS?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Absolutely not. There's almost no supervision or follow up that goes on. These standards that they have for not only placements but also post-placement services are way, way inferior to the procedures that every state in the union uses for foster care placements, for example. It's been said that it is harder to adopt a cat than it is to sponsor an unaccompanied minor because there are rarely background checks done, almost never home studies, no financial assessments.

The Biden administration has stopped doing background checks on other people in the households to make sure that the placements are safe. This is something that simply would not be tolerated in our foster care system.

LAUREL LEE:

And you also mentioned that roughly a quarter of the trafficking victims were children. Would you tell us a little bit more about that and the patterns that you see that are affecting young people and children that are coming to this country?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Well, what happens is the smugglers often either convince the parents of these kids that they're going to have a better life in the United States, so pay us a down payment on the smuggling fee now and the child will make enough money or be able to go to school or some other tale to get the parents to release the kid, who when they get to the United States, are often released to a sponsor who turns out to be a trafficker or are put directly into trafficking situations.

Sometimes it's forced labor trafficking, sometimes it's commercial sex, sometimes it's domestic servitude, but the child is isolated from their family members in the complete control of the people who have custody of them. There's no monitoring of the situation by the federal government that put them in this situation.

There is very little opportunity for seeing what's going on in some of these workplaces to rescue the kids. It's a lot of frankly, hear no evil, see no evil, there must not be any, really deliberately kind of looking the other way at what is happening.

LAUREL LEE:

Thank you, Ms. Vaughan. Agent Maltz, I want to return to you. You used a phrase in your written testimony that I think is important and I want to be sure that we today hear the distinction that you make as someone who spent so many years with DEA. The distinction is between drug traffickers, which is something that we've seen obviously for many decades coming across our southern border, but you use the phrase narco-terrorists.

Would you please explain to us the distinction between a drug trafficker and a narco-terrorist?

DEREK MALTZ:

Well, a drug trafficker is in the business to make money only, and the cartels, when I first started to work, we known them as drug traffickers, right? But they've evolved from drug traffickers to transnational criminals, but now they're narco-terrorists. Just look at the death and destruction and what they're doing in that country.

I mean, when I was the head of the Special Operations division, I kept on my phone the greatest hits of the violence in Mexico with the decapitations, the chopping off limbs, throwing people in acid. They used to have a guy called the stew maker. He would drop 300 people in acid pits so they were never found.

That's why in Mexico today there's so many disappearances. They don't want to put that out because it's going to deter any tourism in Mexico. But these cartels, I mean, Jaeson can tell you, he reports on it every week, every two weeks. They got tanks, they got rockets, they got drones that drop explosives.

That's another thing that makes me concerned as a citizen, because as our brave men and women are on the border, what happens if one day they drop the explosives on our own people, right? So these guys have evolved to the point where, I mean they're a multibillion-dollar enterprise, they have plenty of money, they have no rules, they have no bureaucracy.

So, I'm very concerned about their evolution and the lack of the way we deal with them.

LAUREL LEE:

Thank you Agent Maltz. I'm out of time. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentlewoman yields. I now recognize Mr. Ivey.

GLENN IVEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. Got a lot of ground to cover. I do want to start off with agreeing with Mr. Magaziner with respect to

the impeachment issues. We've got sort of two tracks of things going on here. One is there's an impeachment track that's pretty obvious, the dereliction of duty language dovetails exactly with Mr. Green's H.Res. 598, which has articles to impeach President Biden.

And so we know that's part of what's going on, but the fact that you all are here as a panel, I do have some questions I want to ask you. I appreciate we may have some differing views, but I do want to try and figure out some of the things that are going on here because I do think we have a duty to try and address the problems that we've got.

Ms. Vaughan, you mentioned Prince George's County and I was the state's attorney there, the local prosecutor and one of the groups that we prosecuted was MS-13 repeatedly. In fact, we did a joint prosecution with the US attorney at the time who later ended up being President Trump's deputy attorney general.

A lot of the stuff that they were doing looks a lot like some of the things we're talking about now, the human trafficking piece, the prostitution up and down the coast, the enforcers, the money and all of that. So Mr. Jones, I want to come to you at some point too, but I do wonder about some of the differences that seem to be there.

And Mr. Maltz, I think you kind of touched on this, but in the old days and I'll put myself in that category, the sale of drugs, they weren't trying to kill their customers basically. So they would sell addictive drugs, cocaine, heroin, whatever, but they weren't necessarily killing them off. Fentanyl seems fundamentally different to me in the sense that, yes, it's extremely addictive, more addictive than those, but it's also, the fatality rates are incredibly high.

So one of the things I'd like to try and figure out if we get a chance to move to a hearing on that front would be why that change in the

business model is taking place. Mr. Jones, I want to get a - I might have to ask you all to send in a written response or something just because I'm almost halfway through my time.

Mr. Jones to you, you've made a couple references to I think essentially military action I think was the way you phrased it, need more authority and more tools beyond law enforcement was one. And then in your last answer that you gave a few minutes ago, you mentioned explicitly wanting to have the military get involved in the pushback against the cartels.

I'll pause for this answer. What exactly do you have in mind on that front?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, what I'm talking about is the tools of national power and here's what I mean by it. Our system by design, as you know, as a former prosecutor, moves very slow. It's exactly how we want it under our Fourth Amendment.

GLENN IVEY:

Let me ask you to cut to the chase because I'm down to a minute and a half. What exactly? Because military involvement is a very big step.

JAESON JONES:

If we operate beyond the investigative model, what it allows us to do is go after their assets and their money real time versus work in two year cases. It allows us to limit their mobility globally around the world just to Mexico, because now you can't get on aircraft, you can't get on boats. And third, it allows us to remove them who are here on visas, because most of you would be stunned.

They have the money for visas. So it puts speed in the system and gives us tools. Now we go after the network and that's how we win.

GLENN IVEY:

Let me reclaim my time. I don't know that you need the military to do any of those three things. I think the Department of Justice does that currently, but we can maybe discuss that at another time. I also had a question to Mr. Maltz. You mentioned working with China and I think Mexico. Here at a previous hearing, I can't remember if it was Mr. Higgins or Mr. Bishop, but we had someone at the, I want to say it was the White House, that also said the importance of getting involved with China, especially in blocking the amounts of precursors that are coming out of China and going to Mexico, because when the relationship between the United States and China broke off a few years ago, China didn't, they stopped enforcing the exportation of precursors that led to the really explosion of the availability of that in Mexico.

And that witness thought was that part of the answer was going to be that we needed to work with China to address that. With respect to Mexico, I'm running out of time, but Mr. Jones, you mentioned another issue too, which was money. You're the first witness I've heard in one of these hearings to say more money isn't the issue.

You know, we've had CPB and those guys come up and talk about we need more agents, we need more drones, we need everything really because they're outgunned in a variety of ways. So I guess we'll have to get that from you later on. I'd ask for unanimous consent to offer a couple of articles. How to stop the Mexican Cartel, stop supplying them with guns, which I think was a point you made, Mr. Jones.

On Biden's border policy, critics both left and right are wrong.
Southern border eerily quiet after policy shift on asylum seekers.

MARK GREEN:

Without objection, so ordered.

GLENN IVEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Garbarino from New York.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the witnesses for being here today. Mr. Jones, in its own 2021 Border Security Metrics report, DHS documented an increase in alternative forms of payment in exchange for passage, including migrants being required to participate in smuggling controlled substances or other illicit items across the border or to work off debts upon arrival in the United States, as well as reports of harsh negotiations concerning payment plans with family members.

Can you talk about the rising prevalence of debt bondage and how the cartels are using those they smuggle and traffic into the country do the work on their behalf?

JAESON JONES:

Absolutely. The Gulf Cartel specifically has a saying and that is that people are the gift that keep giving because they can make them move the commodity, just as you just acknowledged, but we have seen that

on the border where they're now making migrants carry narcotics. We have seen where they then exploit them.

We've seen where other migrants are now being used to transport migrants themselves because you can truly make this commodity do what you want it to do. And what these really represent, that's the most important here to understand is this is a process, because just as Border Patrol was being absolutely overwhelmed with these people, so were the cartels.

And the Gulf had to come up with a process that worked and you're seeing it in my hand. There's a number on each of these, and you've got some that you can look here and you'll see. That number goes into a database. And if you, at the time that we broke this story, if you were a Mexican citizen, it was \$2,500 just to cross the river in south Texas.

If you were Central American, it was \$3,000. If you were Chinese \$5,000, and if you were Russian or Middle Eastern, \$9,000. I've never seen money like that ever. It was always \$100 if that and they didn't care where you went. Now think of this. Now these people are moved throughout our nation, but yet they are indebted to these people for years, if not decades to come in a foreign country.

This is where we really are now.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

You talked about how you've seen this before, but lower numbers. With these higher numbers and the amount of people, is this relatively a new phenomenon under Secretary Mayorkas?

JAESON JONES:

It is. Now the smuggling of people has always been there, but the adjustment from smuggling into the trafficking through debt bondage because due to the sheer numbers, they thought to themselves, my God, we can make so much money and we can do it for the long run. This is the game changer. When you think of human trafficking, most people think of commercial sex.

That's one piece of it. Don't forget you have forced labor and this is your final form, debt bondage and now it's nationwide.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

Mr. Jones, I want to continue with the profits on fentanyl and human trafficking. In July 2021, you said I can without any doubt tell you that the profits they're making today are like nothing we've seen prior. This is a major revenue stream. How have those profits increased since Secretary Mayorkas took office and how much do you think the cartels are making annually on human trafficking and smuggling alone?

JAESON JONES:

We don't really know what the exact amounts are. I mean, look, this is going to go on for decades. Many of us will be dead and gone before we clean this up. But I can tell you this, there will not be a law enforcement agency in this country that is going to be doubling down on the threat that we are now facing from trafficking as a result of what Secretary Mayorkas is the architect behind these changes.

When he took power and he created the three exemptions under Title 42, allowing UACs, unaccompanied alien children into the country, when he allowed pregnant mothers to come into the country and when he allowed family units, this was the game changing moment

and it's validated by the data. If you just look at CBP, when these people began pouring across the country.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

I was trying to do some numbers before with what you said. You said went from 100 bucks to \$3,000 for some, \$2,500 for others, \$5,000 up to \$9,000.

JAESON JONES:

That was just at the river, sir, just at the river, never mind what country of origin where you came from. Right now if you're Chinese to cross from China to Ecuador and then make your way up, they're charging \$35,000 a head. They're moving 35 at a time in Fronton, and then the Cartel del Noreste literally takes all of their ID before they let them into the US and they drop it on the mike side, so that when it comes across, it holds up border patrol longer so that they can then move weapons south and as much commodities in as they need to.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

So over the last two and a half years, it seems that the profits for these drug cartels have increased immensely.

JAESON JONES:

Agreed.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

How are these profits giving these cartels more power and making them more dangerous?

JAESON JONES:

Well, look at the military grade weaponry they're now using. Look at the level and span of control in Mexico. Mexico, the people of Mexico have taken the brunt of this. They've lost over 340,000 citizens since 2007. In the last national election, CNN did fantastic work. There was 132 politicians and staffers killed.

Anybody can Google it. Mexico has truly fallen to these cartels. And when I tell you they're a parallel government, you are truly looking at a narco-state. The problem is when you're killing journalists in Mexico and they can't get the information out, this is why we are so far behind what these cartels are doing, and that's why we and Americans are feeling the impact in every part of this nation today.

ANDREW GARBARINO:

I'm out of time, but if you could respond in writing about more about what is happening to the American citizens because of this, the cartels, that'd be great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. I now recognize Ms. Jackson Lee of Texas.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I'm kind enough to yield to the next individual and come back after that.

MARK GREEN:

We can go out of order, absolutely.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

Thank you.

MARK GREEN:

Ms. Garcia, you're recognized.

DELIA RAMIREZ:

Ramirez, Ms. Ramirez.

MARK GREEN:

Ms. Ramirez, I'm sorry.

DELIA RAMIREZ:

Thank you. Thank you, Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson. We've been here for about an hour and a half, and I want to thank you for this hearing. Today's hearing should be shedding light on the pressing issues surrounding immigration policies, what is causing migration and how do we make sure the children that we talk about, the children that I actually know personally, are cared for?

Instead, I think we continue to politicize an issue that actually both sides need to address, which is immigration reform. But I actually want to get back to why we're all here today. The American people expect us to do our job and to solve the problems. They expect us to have unbiased people who are witnesses here and provide us an opportunity to shed light on how we move forward.

And as I think about the hearing now and hearing the witnesses, I think about just last year how a horrific domestic terror attack at Buffalo, New York supermarket left our nation reeling. My colleagues

across the aisle offered up their thoughts and prayers, but they offered no actions to address racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism.

It is not lost on me that before murdering ten people at the supermarket last year, the shooter wrote and I quote, "We are experiencing an invasion on a level never seen before in history." However twisted justification, the shooter believed he was repelling an invasion of the United States by immigrants from Latin America.

Does that sound familiar? Mr. Maltz, in your testimony, you said I know what's going on in America. So let me ask you, do you support the assertion that the United States is experiencing a historic invasion by immigrants? That's a yes or no question.

DEREK MALTZ:

Illegal immigrants, immigrants from around the world.

DELIA RAMIREZ:

Yes or no.

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, yes.

DELIA RAMIREZ:

So you believe that we are experiencing a historic invasion of immigrants.

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes.

DELIA RAMIREZ:

So, despite knowing that the Pittsburgh shooter justified his actions based on the idea of an immigrant invasion to replace white people, despite knowing that invasion ideology was used to justify the shootings in El Paso and Buffalo, you continue to espouse this great replacement theory and extremist ideology that people like me, when my mother crossed the border pregnant with me, don't deserve to be here because we are invading the country?

Mr. Chairman, this hearing is not a fact-finding mission. It's a raw political sham to stoke fear and it will continue to justify the violence against immigrant communities and I find that unacceptable. This body's job is to address the problems in our country not to spew more hate. That's what we should be focusing on, legislative solutions, not divisive distractions and prioritizing the expansion of resources for immigrant communities and comprehensive immigration reform, that's how we address public safety.

So let me just end by saying, let us direct our efforts towards meaningful action that upholds our values and ensures the security and well-being of all of us, regardless of immigration status. That is the America that I know. That is an America that I love. And with that, Chairman, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentlelady yields. I now recognize Mr. Ezell for his five minutes.

MIKE EZELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you panel for being here today. I know it's a lot going on and we appreciate your time here. I spent 42

years in police service, three-term sheriff and enjoyed every day of it. And I'll tell you, the safety and security of people has always been on my mind, not only if my home state of Mississippi but across this nation.

I want to be clear that due to the Biden administration's open border catch and release policies, cartel crime is transitioning from a border issue to a national issue. Every state is a border state. Border Patrol agents have arrested more than 30,000 illegal aliens with criminal backgrounds since Joe Biden took office.

While this is a staggering number, it does not even consider the illegal aliens with criminal backgrounds that have evaded Border Patrol and entered the country illegally. Mr. Jones, in your estimation, how many criminals, gang members or suspected terrorists are now in the United States among the 1.5 million got-aways that have evaded Border Patrol agents?

JAESON JONES:

Congressman, thank you for your service. We have no idea the border is so wide open.

MIKE EZELL:

That's exactly right. What threats do these individuals pose to communities, not just at the border, but throughout this country?

JAESON JONES:

Everything from terrorism to the unprecedented amounts of deaths that we're seeing of American citizens from fentanyl and the many other drugs that are crossing that southern border.

MIKE EZELL:

Mr. Maltz, we know cartels are the leading criminal organizations that manufacture and distribute illegal fentanyl in our country. Over the past three years, Border Patrol has seized over 45,000 pounds of fentanyl, enough to kill over 10 billion people. Most of that fentanyl has been seized at the ports of entry on the border.

However, the sheer amount of this drug on our streets shows that the ports of entry aren't the full story. Can you walk the committee through how cartels are using Mayorkas' open border between the ports of entry, where there is little infrastructure stopping them, to smuggle these drugs into our country?

DEREK MALTZ:

So I would say, first of all, they're making billions of dollars, so funding is not an issue, and then they're flooding the zones. They're sending massive amounts of migrants to certain areas where they know Border Patrol has limited resources, and then they're using the open border area to just smuggle in unlimited amount of people, unlimited amount of drugs and of course, bringing the weapons south and the money south.

So, it's basically they're just taking full advantage of the vulnerabilities and the weaknesses, and the poor Border Patrol is out there and they don't have the personnel. They don't have enough people in certain sectors. I mean, obviously this document, and I deliberately attached this into the record, it's all the news stories around America, headline news of all the mass poisonings.

So that's the ultimate impact when the cartels have such control at the border to send their people into America to set up operations and

move this poison all over the place.

MIKE EZELL:

Do you believe a border wall would deter the flow of fentanyl in this country?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, because the border wall would then force everybody to go into the POEs where we could put the best and brightest and resources and technology and scanning and K-9s and do much more thorough searching. We wouldn't have to worry about our manpower running around the open border trying to chase people down, sometimes one and two guys.

It's very, very dangerous to be out there when you don't have the manpower. So I would prefer to focus everybody into the POEs. That's not going to solve the problem, but it's going to help and that's what we're looking to do.

MIKE EZELL:

Very good. From what we've heard today, it's completely irresponsible that President Biden from his first day in office, he signed an executive order pausing border wall construction. The 70,000 fentanyl deaths in America are directly attributed to this open border policy. Mr. Chairman, I will not stop working with you to protect our nation's families.

And with that, sir, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize Ms. Jackson Lee from Texas for five minutes.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I've been in this committee and I've watched Chairman Green and Chairman Thompson work very well together on a number of issues. In fact, they have shown themselves to be respectful of each other. For that I say thank you. I've had the ability to monitor what has been going on in this room and I frankly believe that problems don't get solved by castigating and making incorrect statements.

I also have a 28-year history in this Congress and have been involved with the issue of immigration for at least that long a period of time. The Judiciary Committee, as ranking member of the Immigration subcommittee, in this committee, as chair of the Transportation Security Committee, ranking chair of the Border Security Committee, and as a Texan have been to the border many times.

I do believe that we can do this and solve the problem of immigration reform together. What I also know is at least the border in Texas, there are many who are on the border that don't want a border wall because of its intrusiveness. In addition, because of topography and design, the border wall sometimes is not effectively put in the right place to be able to create any kind of criminal incident.

After Title 42, we have found statistically, as answered by those at CBP, Customs Border Protection and the Border Patrol, that numbers have gone down. It is clear that we have work to do together on those who are coming across. It is clear that not one American, no matter what their party affiliation, abhors cartels, violence and viciousness, and will come together to work on that issue.

But it does no good for any of us to suggest that the President of the United States and the Secretary of Homeland Security are the key and only reasons for migration. I take offense and it is wrong, frankly, because migration is a worldwide concern, some would say problem, others would say crisis. People desperately come even if it's for their economic goodness and they argue something else.

We well know that immigrants contribute \$1.3 trillion in spending power to the economy. We also realize that not one single person sitting in this room was an indigenous person in the United States of America. Your ancestors came from somewhere. Mine came unwillingly in bondage, but it is clear to me that we have to find a better way.

Let me quickly raise this question. Let me quickly do so. In 2018, the nation was horrified when a domestic terrorist shot down 11 worshipers at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Before going on this rampage, the shooter shared a manifesto alleging that quote, "The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society likes to bring invaders in that kill our people.

I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered." Two weeks before that he called immigrants hostile invaders on social media. Ms. Vaughan, do you believe there is a flood of immigrant invaders at the southern border who are slaughtering victims in American communities? This is a yes or no answer.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

No, they're taking advantage of the opportunities that are offered by the current policies.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

So, you've answered no, so let me just say this. In your testimony on page eight of your written testimony, you say there is a flood of people to the border brought on by the Biden-Mayorkas policies and that these careless policies have created scores of new victims in American communities, all of which were preventable crimes.

Ms. Vaughan, the issue of your partisan extremism goes beyond your testimony today. On November 4, 2021, you alleged that the tragic murder of a man in Florida that year was another casualty due to Biden's open border. And two years before that on January 8, 2019, you laid blame for the horrific murder of a police officer, Mr. Singh in San Joaquin Valley, at the feet of Democrats' border weakening and sanctuary policies.

I find this very dangerous because we need to come together as Americans frankly, to be able to work, not name call, but to be able to say none of us wanted those kinds of incidents. How dare you say that any of us would want to have an officer killed or family killed? It is untenable, neither does the chairman, neither does the President, neither does the secretary.

Let me move quickly to something that's very important, Mr. Green and I appreciate if you would allow me to do that. I happen to be someone who knows that there barriers that can be utilized in certain ways, being a Texan, and I also know that we need to stop penalizing non-profits for trying to help persons so that cities wouldn't have to put person somewhere because the non-profits haven't. But let me raise this to a former DPS. I want to applaud a DPS officer who is on duty today in Texas who became a whistleblower, to ask the question, why is state government and this Lone Star effort causing immigrants

to die in the water, causing a pregnant woman to miscarry over the razor wire, and the buoys that are there forcing them to go into deeper water?

Why a mother lost her life, her child's life and another child is missing? Why a little four-year-old was denied water? This is the words of a DPS whistleblower right on staff today. And the question would be to all of you as I ask the question, this is not America, and the Border Patrol agent saying that the razor wire and the buoys are creating a difficult situation for them, because as sworn officers of the United States of America, they are sworn to protect these people even as they will send them back, and they are going into deeper water to save lives.

MARK GREEN:

Gentlelady's time is expired.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

So, I'm putting that on the record, Mr. Chairman, because I want an investigation. These are not governmental witnesses. They are witnesses who have come to share their stories, but I want an investigation.

JAESON JONES:

Can I respond to that?

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I want an investigation.

JAESON JONES:

Is there availability for me to respond to that accusation, Mr. Chairman?

MARK GREEN:

Hold on. Hold on. I am taking control back. The gentlelady's time has expired, and Mr. D'Esposito is recognized from New York, and you may yield if you'd like to Mr. Jones.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

Gentleman is not on staff at this point.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to yield 30 seconds of my time to Mr. Jones.

JAESON JONES:

I am the only one sitting in this room that's been exactly where those accusations were made. On my phone, I've got video of what the men and women of law enforcement at local, state and especially the Texas Department of Public Safety and National Guard are going through. As hundreds of people, three miles from the closest port of entry are being crossed by the cartels.

And to say that the men and women of DPS are throwing babies into the river is absolute absurd and that they would do that.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I didn't say that.

MARK GREEN:

Hold on.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I didn't say that.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman is recognized. The gentleman may --

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

The gentleman may not malign me in this room. I did not say that.

UNKNOWN:

Ms. Jackson Lee did not say that. Ms. Jackson Lee.

MARK GREEN:

Mr. D'Esposito, you've reclaimed your time.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Thank you. So the name of this hearing, Biden and Mayorkas' open border, advancing cartel crime in America. I've heard this described as a sham. I've heard it described as theater. I heard it described as a complete waste of time. It's beyond explanation. People are dying and crimes are being committed. How is that a sham?

How is that theater? How is any of that a waste of time? I want to thank all of you for being here today. Mr. Jones, Mr. Maltz, I want to thank you for your service in law enforcement. I too spent a career in law enforcement and retired from the NYPD as a detective. There is no doubt there is a crime crisis in America, thanks in part to the dereliction of duty of Secretary Mayorkas' wide open southwest border.

I'm going to ask all of you. It's a yes or no question. Do you believe the Biden administration's soft-on-crime policies, such as their efforts to limit law enforcement access to surplus federal equipment and their restrictions on federal grant dollars to police departments worsen our nation's crime crisis?

Mr. Jones, yes or no.

JAESON JONES:

Yes.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Ms. Vaughan, yes or no.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Yes.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Mr. Maltz, yes or no.

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Ms. Felbab-Brown, Doctor, sorry, yes or no.

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

No.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: OK. So I've heard this also mentioned that we should be thankful that the numbers have fallen to such a low level. They're not low. There's still thousands upon thousands of people coming to this country illegally, and thousands and thousands more that we don't even know about. Quite frankly, it's like

celebrating a Category three hurricane instead of a Category four hurricane.

It's absurd. I want to focus on the law enforcement for a second. Mr. Jones, what are some of the main consequences for local law enforcement of increased cartel activity in their jurisdictions?

JAESON JONES:

They are completely overrun on the southwest border. If you go to Arizona right now and you sit back with Sheriff Mark Lamb, let me tell you, I've embedded with his law enforcement agency. You realize out of one out of every ten traffic stops here that man is making and his personnel are in pursuits, 70 miles into the country on Interstate 10. These agencies are overrun.

The Texas Department of Public Safety has spent \$9 billion from the state legislature to try to support operation between the ports of entry because we are overrun with crime.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Mr. Maltz, do you believe that law enforcement throughout this country faces more threats of violence because of our open borders?

DEREK MALTZ:

Absolutely, and I also know that retiring at record levels at the executive leadership level because they can't take it anymore. The mixed messages are overwhelming.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: So you don't believe the lines at the pension section just happened to happen?

DEREK MALTZ:

I just know that I talk to people every day, and they're leaving law enforcement because morale is at the lowest level because it is. They signed up to keep America safe.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: I agree and it's because of exactly failed leadership like this. Mr. Jones and Mr. Maltz, I'm going to ask you a question. Both of you have served in leadership capacities in law enforcement. Have ever and would you ever make a decision that would put any of your officers in danger?

JAESON JONES:

Never.

DEREK MALTZ:

Never.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Right, and that's why we're here today because we're talking about cartels. We're talking about crime that's being committed, and we're talking about Secretary Mayorkas and his dereliction of duty. Why? Because he makes policies and carries out policies that have put people in danger, has put law enforcement in danger.

I only have 40 seconds left. A general question to Mr. Jones and Mr. Maltz. What are the broader impacts on first responders, law enforcement, fire service because of the cartel along the border? And please if you could do 10 seconds apiece.

JAESON JONES:

Completely overrun. When you look in South Texas right now, you've got Texas troopers who've been deployed for two and a half years,

12,000 plus Texas National Guardsmen completely overrun and overwhelmed, exhausted.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Thank you. Mr. Maltz.

DEREK MALTZ:

The criminals don't fear any repercussions of their actions because they're not being held accountable.

ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO: Exactly, so what we're seeing here today, we're answering the question to this hearing. So it's not a sham, it's not theater, it's not a waste of time. It's actually a mission. It's a mission to make this homeland, our homeland, the United States of America, safer for our children and our grandchildren. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. I now recognize Mr. Menendez of New Jersey.

ROB MENENDEZ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can all agree that Mexican cartels pose a direct threat to US interests. We can all agree that we need to fight the scourge of fentanyl in this country. We can also agree that this body and the United States government should prioritize addressing these issues, but today's hearing has not been a serious discussion of ways to protect American families from cartel activities or fentanyl trafficking.

How can we engage in good faith discussions of border policies when this committee's majority is using this committee to arrive at a predetermined destination, the impeachment of Secretary Mayorkas,

a designation they have said both publicly and behind closed doors they are set on reaching, no matter what the facts are, no matter what the administration has done to address these critical issues, when witnesses confirm what the majority already believes instead of engaging in actual fact-finding.

Ms. Vaughan, you work for the Center for Immigration Studies, is that correct?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Yes, I do.

ROB MENENDEZ:

Ms. Vaughan, yes or no, did you speak at an event organized by the Social Contract Press?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Look, I --

ROB MENENDEZ:

Yes or no. Yes or no. Yes or no. Yes or no. You were able to answer other questions in a yes or no fashion. Yes or no.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Look what I [inaudible].

ROB MENENDEZ:

You did.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

[Inaudible].

ROB MENENDEZ:

Did you appear, did you appear -- Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, this is my time.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

You're attempting to smear me.

ROB MENENDEZ:

No, I'm just asking you questions.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman reclaims his time.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

[Inaudible] denigrating --

ROB MENENDEZ:

Did you appear alongside an editor of Chronicles Magazine? Yes or no.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Could you repeat it please?

ROB MENENDEZ:

Did you appear alongside an editor of Chronicles magazine? Yes or no.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Not that I know of.

ROB MENENDEZ:

Did you give an interview to the American Free Press?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

I've never heard of it.

ROB MENENDEZ:

You've never heard of the American Free Press.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

No, sir.

ROB MENENDEZ:

You've never done work with the American Free Press. OK, well, we'll go back to the record.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Explain to me what --

ROB MENENDEZ:

I think it's important that -- Excuse me, I'm reclaiming my time. I think it's important that we shed light on the organization you work for, as well as the three organizations that I believe you have either worked for or appeared alongside. The Center for Immigration Studies has been labeled an anti-immigrant hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

That's a complete --

ROB MENENDEZ:

The Social Contract Press, a white nationalist publisher has been labeled as a designated hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, Chronicles magazine's a publication with strong neo-Confederate ties that caters to the white nationalist movement, and according to the Anti-Defamation League, the American Free Press is an anti-Semitic newspaper founded by a Holocaust-denier.

On the day that Congress welcomed the Israeli President to address us, we have someone who has contributed to an anti-Semitic newspaper founded by a Holocaust-denier, a witness who makes nine assertions in her written testimony about the administration's policies, assertions the majority will likely rely on to further their cause for the impeachment of Secretary Mayorkas.

Yet only two citations were provided for those nine assertions, both of which were provided by the Center for Immigration Studies, where you work, again an organization that's been labeled an anti-immigrant hate group. I also think it's important that we discuss some of these issues through the lens of our values.

Members of the majority, along with some of our witnesses, have mentioned their concern for the safety of migrants. Ms. Vaughan, you contend that the administration's policies expose migrants to abuse by the cartels. I'm glad that you recognize that the long and difficult journey that migrants face is an issue of concern.

Immigrants travel to the United States by any means they can in search of a better life for their family, including on foot for hundreds,

if not thousands of miles, enduring exposure to injury and illness along the way. That's why it's unconscionable to me that you also go out of your way to praise what Governor Abbott of Texas has done.

You say in your testimony that quote, "To the extent there is any improvement at all, it is most likely due to efforts by the state of Texas to physically block the entry points, such as by patrolling the Rio Grande River, installing razor wire and buoys." I'm sure that many of us saw the reports this week about how Texas is telling their medics and the Department of Public Safety to treat migrants inhumanely.

There has been a soaring heatwave in the Southwest, yet medics have reportedly been told not to give out water. Governor Abbott has made crossing the Rio Grande River a more dangerous and even deadly proposition by adding the buoys and razor wire mentioned, that you alluded to in your testimony, including in areas of the river with high water and low visibility.

This report included a story of a 19-year-old woman trapped in the wire who was having a miscarriage. Five immigrants have drowned in one-week period in the area near where this wire was installed. Where is the humanity for these people? Where is your outrage when you hear these stories? What are you doing to change the outcome for the people trying to get to this country, our country, to live their American dream for the betterment of their families?

Where is your outrage when they have to encounter these conditions trying to get here to seek asylum? I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I recognize Mr. Brecheen of Oklahoma.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Mr. Chairman, at the onset of my time, I'd like to yield 30 seconds to Ms. Vaughan.

MARK GREEN:

Ms. Vaughan, you're recognized.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

I am outraged, because I cannot imagine a more inhumane policy than one that entices vulnerable migrants to turn over their life savings, their families, their kids to criminal smuggling organizations because they believe that they will be allowed to stay in this country, and end up in debt bondage and other horrific situations.

And frankly, I'm saddened that members feel the need to distract from this horrific treatment of people by impugning my motives, insulting me, smearing, repeating lies about me to distract from a horrible problem. I said and testified at a witness at a hearing about a year ago that Ms. Jackson Lee held and she brought in three survivors of human trafficking.

It was a very well-done hearing. We heard their stories. They were brave. This is a real issue, a real atrocity that is occurring at our border and to act like this is some kind of political stunt is a shame.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Mr. Chairman, if I may. I want to give you some time. If I may reclaim my time.

MARK GREEN:

Gentlemen reclaims.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Look, let's just talk about the difference of where we've come in two years. Historic lows in 45 years of illegal immigration, historic lows by the person at the helm who enacts laws in response to we, the people, historic lows of illegal immigration. Now we have the most illegal immigration in our country's history.

Decisions matter. A lack of leadership on this front matters. People are losing their lives. Children are being sold into the sex traffic slave trade because of decisions that are being made. In 2022, human trafficking arrests have increased 50 percent, 72 percent of trafficking victims are immigrants. Mr. Jones, a minute ago you talked about some things that we have to be concerned about, the new mob, the cartel coming into the United States.

The new mob. I want you to recite the fact that you said a minute ago. How many politicians were killed in Mexico?

JAESON JONES:

In the last national election, if you look up, CNN did some great reporting on this, 132 including their staff.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Mr. Jones, are they coming to a state near you? Are the cartels richer and more powerful because of this administration, President Biden's decision and Secretary Mayorkas' decision? Are they more powerful and richer today?

JAESON JONES:

This is a whole new scheme that has resulted in them getting richer right here in debt bondage.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Are they more powerful in America because of the decisions at the executive helm?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

In America. Debt bondage. We keep hearing about debt bondage. \$35,000 if you're coming from China the cartel is charging you to come into this country, and do we not think that they're going to employ not only the tactics of the employment, but what about prostitution to repay that debt?

JAESON JONES:

In every form that you can think of, they're going to require these people, and then when they've paid it, they're going to say they did something wrong and now they owe another five, ten, \$15,000 because that's what they can do. You see, they know where their families are in their country of origin and they know where they're going here in our country.

And it's all right here and the numbers in their database.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I'm concerned about the Biden administration, as I know many of us in this committee are, their policies, these

unaccompanied, alien children, and it's run by the Department of Health and Human Services. And so some of you have some great insight on that, fraudulent use of that UAC program, children that are being trafficked, they're being abused, they're being sold into sex trade.

I want to ask Ms. Vaughan, what do you know about children that have been involved in the sex trade because of the UAC program implementation?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Well, in many cases, their lives are ruined. In some cases it happens because they get preyed on when, for example, they're in shelters in places like San Antonio or New York or Chicago that are overrun. They're by themselves.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Is this administration making sure that those children who may be forced to say they're related, is this administration making sure that they verify that they're those children? And what change over the policy, prior policy is not making sure that they're the children?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Well, previously the policy was that no child would be released without a certain level of vetting of the sponsor.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Does that include DNA test to make sure if that child is being forced?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

OK, well, DNA testing was done at the border because there was a problem.

JOSH BRECHEEN:

Has that been changed under this administration?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Yes, it has. They eliminated --

JOSH BRECHEEN:

So are we complicit, is this administration potentially complicit in children who are being forced to claim they're related, being sold into a sex trade and we could have caught them at the border if we'd have done DNA analysis, and this administration is undermining that process?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Cartels and smugglers are thrilled that the DNA testing policy has been abandoned, because it makes it very easy for them now to rent, kidnap and use children to assist other inadmissible illegal aliens in crossing into the United States.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman's time has expired. I now recognize Ms. Titus from her five minutes.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to introduce into the record, please just briefly.

MARK GREEN:

Ask Ms. Titus to introduce that for you, Ms. Jackson Lee. Ms. Titus has been recognized.

DINA TITUS:

[Inaudible].

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

The Texas trooper's accounts of bloodied and fainting migrants on the US-Mexico border, also in the Houston Chronicle, The Washington Post, these were not my words, the words of a Texas trooper. Words.

MARK GREEN:

Without objection, so ordered.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

I thank the lady. Thank you.

DINA TITUS:

[Inaudible] cartel members are thrilled. Have you done polling of these cartel members or something to figure out how thrilled they are about this?

SHEILA JACKSON LEE:

That's OK.

DINA TITUS:

That's a rhetorical question. I just sit here one more time and listen to one more hearing trying to attack the secretary, trying to attack the President, talking about the border with inflammatory titles like the open border, advancing cartel crime. Meantime we got domestic terrorism, we got anti-Semitism, we got Asian hatred, we got cyber security, all of that is being ignored and all of those things are serious problems.

It's so easy just to point a finger at one person and say, oh, it's his fault for being a bad manager. But if you look at the issue from a historical, sociological and economic standpoint, you'll find that it's much more complicated than that. You can look at the complex history of Central and South America.

You can look at our currently strained relationship with Mexico. You can look at the broken immigration system that we don't seem to be able to fix. You can look at the immense power of the cartels and their abuses at every level, using guns that they've mostly gotten from across the border, and selling drugs to people in the US because we have customers here who want that, so we have a decades-long opioid crisis and there's no agreement on border policies.

We hear from some members of the border what we need are more resources. We hear from whatever your sources are from disgruntled people at the border that it's all management's fault. Let's look at this comprehensively. And I would ask you, Doctor, you mentioned in your report that there's a difference between the way the cartels work in Mexico and when they come to the United States, and largely that can be credited to our law enforcement doing a good job.

They are not as violent. They don't infiltrate governments. They don't raid villages here. But we don't have a very good relationship with

Mexico on this front like we do on some other diplomatic fronts. Could you talk a little bit about how we could maybe improve that relationship so we can jointly go after some of these cartels?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Several years ago, the US government and the Mexican government established a policy or basic understanding of shared responsibility. This notion of shared responsibility carried across both Republican administration and Democratic administration on the US side and across several Mexican governments. Unfortunately, although this notion is still in rhetoric, the current Mexican government of President Lopez Obrador has significantly walked away back from it, and we have seen really during his administration a very profound hollowing out of cooperation.

He is also adopting policies, or the lack of policies in Mexico, that are enabling in their lack of response, the Mexican cartels. It is difficult to see how this could be changed during the last year of his administration, but there will be elections in Mexico. It is clear that any kind of effective policy requires respect and recognition of interest on both sides.

But unfortunately this is not happening with the current Mexican government. The Biden administration has done its best to try to induce better cooperation from Mexico, but we have very far to go.

DINA TITUS:

Thank you. I hear from your other panel members that the way to solve this problem is get rid of Mayorkas and maybe build a wall. Are there other things more realistic that we could do to make the situation better just on our side?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Absolutely. Certainly there are many opportunities to strengthen both treatment, demand reduction and address those important dimension, as well as access to medications such as overdose medication, other medication for those that have substance use disorders, and there are other opportunities to strengthen law enforcement actions.

These include resourcing far better legal ports of entry, so more inspections can take place, and this include expanding the view, expanding the policies how we tackle the cartels, not simply thinking of them as smuggling entities or drug smuggling entities only, but targeting their many dimensions, including their other access to money through joint task forces that have US law enforcement agents, as well as other members of relevant agencies.

So whole-of-government approach that expands authorities for departments of State, Department of Defense, that expands authorities of agencies such as US Fish and Wildlife.

DINA TITUS:

Well, we also hear that some of the Mexican pharmacies are selling drugs laced with fentanyl and that's to a lot of American tourists who are down there. That's not the cartels, but there may be a connection. And also, these retail crimes here in this country often use what they sell on the Internet or sell wherever to fund some of these things like trafficking.

That would be kind of part of the all-of-government approach that we might address. Is that right?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Absolutely.

DINA TITUS:

Alright. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

The gentlelady yields. I now recognize Mr. Crane from Arizona.

ELI CRANE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for coming here today. I continue to hear the same thing. I want to echo what my colleague, Mr. D'Esposito was saying. I can't help but notice, this is a sham, this is more impeachment theater. This is the Homeland Security Committee. If we're not talking about this, I don't know what else we're going to be talking about.

If we're not talking about trying to hold the individuals that are in charge of leadership on homeland security accountable, I don't know what else we're going to be talking about. I wish you gentlemen were here yesterday. Some of my colleagues on the other side were trying to undermine how effective walls and barriers are.

It's sad. I spent a lot of my life in the military and I worked in Special Forces, so I understand security, I understand security systems. We talked about overlapping deterrents. We talked about using trained personnel, technology, barriers, intelligence, all of these things together, overlapping deterrence and security systems to secure whatever you want to secure.

And it's sad to me that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can't even acknowledge that barriers, whether it's around their house, their schools, these complexes, whatever it is, are effective. Mr. Jones, I want to ask you about that sir, because I know you understand security a lot better than the average individual.

Do you find individuals that isolate barriers and walls and say they're archaic and ineffective, do you find those individuals serious when it comes to actual security?

JAESON JONES:

I think they don't understand what's taking place. In south Texas, for example, you can be inside a stash house in a matter of seconds. So it's not about an electronic wall for detection, it's about how fast can you get a law enforcement personnel there.

ELI CRANE:

Yeah.

JAESON JONES:

Now when you go to Arizona for example, you've got a lot of space there. You still have the challenge that where we are in 2023, where we are today, it's not about the detection issue, it's about how you get law enforcement able to respond before they're picked up or inside these stash houses. That's the core fundamental problem [inaudible].

ELI CRANE:

And these overlapping deterrents help give our law enforcement officials time to respond. Is that correct?

JAESON JONES:

It's correct, it helps.

ELI CRANE:

Mr. Maltz, would you agree with that?

DEREK MALTZ:

Absolutely, yes.

ELI CRANE:

OK, great. Mr. Jones, you were talking about classifying cartels as terrorist organizations. I've heard that argument before. I understand why that argument is being made, but I want to ask you something, sir. Did you watch the videos of the US pulling out of Afghanistan?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, I did.

ELI CRANE:

Did you watch the people hanging from planes?

JAESON JONES:

Yes, sir, I did.

ELI CRANE:

Mr. Maltz, did you watch that?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, and I also witnessed my brother coming back in a body bag from the war in Afghanistan.

ELI CRANE:

Thank you, sir. One of my biggest concerns when we start talking about that stuff, sir, is it would be this same leadership that was executing that fight against the cartels and that concerns me. I really, quite honestly, I don't trust them to do that job and that's one of the biggest issues that I have.

And I also want to hear your thoughts, sir, because I know you've done this for a long time, how that would affect some of the asylum claims?

JAESON JONES:

Sure. First, we have to understand that the issue right now that we have with these cartels is it's about authorities. I don't look to go to war using our military in Mexico.

ELI CRANE:

Right.

JAESON JONES:

We have proven in the past, working with the Marines, working with Samar, driving intelligence-led operations, but what we didn't do was network theory. We leveraged a law enforcement model, and it was too slow. And what does it do? It goes after the bosses.

ELI CRANE:

Just for time's sake, sir, so you're talking more about using intelligence.

JAESON JONES:

Absolutely.

ELI CRANE:

OK. You're not talking about --

JAESON JONES:

But we will have to use overt action at times just to -- Look, they've got surface-to-air missiles over the Sierras. You're not flying over there without getting shot down.

ELI CRANE:

Thank you, sir. My last question, the Federation for America Immigration Reform, FAIR, recently calculated the cost of illegal immigration to be \$150.7 billion to Americans. Do you know how much a border wall would cost to build? Anybody on the panel have any idea? Roughly. The same group says about \$22 billion.

Mr. Jones, do you think that would be a good investment?

JAESON JONES:

I think right now beyond anything regarding money being spent by this committee or any others to the protection of this country, you have to look at the totality of these cartels and providing the authorities we need. That is our real issue right now.

ELI CRANE:

Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, I ask for unanimous consent to enter this article into record. Thank you. I yield back.

MARK GREEN:

Without objection, the article's entered. I now recognize Ms. Greene for five minutes from Georgia.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Human trafficking is a \$150 billion-a-year industry. In 2021, Georgia had one of the highest number of cases per capita that were reported through trafficking hotlines. The northern area of Atlanta is well known. It's one of the highest places of human trafficking, human sex trafficking of women and children.

Women and girls represent approximately 71 percent of all trafficking victims globally. More than 90 percent of detected female victims are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Approximately one third of all human trafficking victims are children. This next sentence is hard to even read because it's our country.

The United States is one of the top destinations for human trafficking and is among the largest consumers of child sex. The average age of entry into the commercial sex market is 12 years old. In the past few weeks, there has been a lot of controversy about a movie called Sound of Freedom, and I can't understand why anyone would say anything negative about a movie that's trying to expose child sex trafficking, especially when it involves our United States border.

Ms. Vaughan, can you tell me, is it a conspiracy theory? Is child sex trafficking a conspiracy theory?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

It is most certainly not a conspiracy theory. It occurs far too much. I have met with and hugged survivors and heard what they have gone

through, and to refer to it as a conspiracy is an insult to what they have endured.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

Is our border a serious issue, the fact that our border is open and the amount of people coming across our border, is that contributing to child sex trafficking?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

It is most definitely contributing to the problem of, not only child sex trafficking, but forced labor and domestic servitude and debt bondage, as we've discussed today.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

Is our current administration's border policies contributing to child sex trafficking?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

They are certainly facilitating it, yes. So it's happening with more frequency as a result of the loose policies at the border. And the lack of enforcement frankly in the interior of the country as well that would help rescue some of these survivors or at least turn them into survivors as opposed to victims.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

Thank you, Ms. Vaughan. Fentanyl deaths are at an all-time high, 300 Americans dying every single day from fentanyl. Having a top government official on the Mexican cartels' payroll help the cartels operate with impunity, moving tons of drugs around the world and

make billions. It costs the cartels as little as 10 cents to produce a fentanyl-laced fake prescription pill, 10 cents, and that is sold in the United States for as much as \$10 to \$30 per pill.

Mr. Maltz, with your experience in your career in the DEA, is the amount of fentanyl coming across our border, is this an all-time high?

DEREK MALTZ:

Yes, I mean, this is the greatest drug threat we've ever faced in the history of the country. But I want to add that it's really not a drug. It's a chemical weapon coming out of China, just like the K2, the Spice, now the xylazine that is rotting people from the inside out. This is deliberate in my opinion, my expert opinion from all the years of doing this.

I lived this nightmare starting in about 2008 and then fentanyl started coming in around 2012. This is deliberate, and I would say based on my experience, it's just like the Afghans used to say, selling heroin to the West is a jihad against America. Well for China, they're undermining, they're destroying our country, and they're sitting back using the Mexican cartels to do the dirty work.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

I agree with you, Mr. Maltz, and I believe and I would ask your opinion as well, with the Biden administration's policies allowing the Mexican cartels to traffic the amount of poison fentanyl that's coming across China, it seems to be - it's not negligence. It's not that they don't know it's happening. They know it's happening.

It's hard to deny 300 Americans dying every single day from fentanyl, but would you agree that the Biden administration's policies is helping

the Mexican cartels traffic this Chinese poison fentanyl into the United States of America?

DEREK MALTZ:

Absolutely. I mean, you look at this cute little boy, three years old from Kentucky, and this is his mother in the coffin here with the kid because of fentanyl, and it's happening every day all over the country. I deal with the families, I know, and that's really sad. And it's very sad that the current administration overturned strong homeland security policies that kept us all safe.

That's my passion. I mean, I can't believe this has happened to this great country.

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE:

I agree with you, Mr. Maltz. It seems that border security should be our utmost important issue that we're working on, not only to stop child sex trafficking, human trafficking, but also to prevent the poison of 300 Americans a day. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

DEREK MALTZ:

Thank you.

MARK GREEN:

Gentlelady yields. I now recognize Mr. Garcia for five minutes.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to also, just to be clear, just to review for the hearing, Democrats want to solve drug trafficking, we want to solve human trafficking and we certainly want to solve any

sort of arms trafficking which funds the cartels. What we don't want and what some on this committee are hellbent on doing is we don't want to demonize or scapegoat immigrants, refugees and people that need the most help.

We're interested in real solutions not going along with Republican attacks and the crusade to launch fake impeachment of Secretary Mayorkas for political gain. Now I do want to start with a question. Now, less than a year after the Tree of Life massacre in Pittsburgh, which we know killed 11 worshipers, a terrorist shot up a Walmart in El Paso, killing 23 people.

Like the Tree of Life shooter before him, the murderer in El Paso believed he was fighting in a war to end quote, "Hispanic invasion of Texas." Mr. Jones, yes or no. Is there an invasion of Texas at the southern border by immigrants?

JAESON JONES:

No sir. We are now in a new phase. We are a nation overrun.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Nation overrun, no longer an invasion. You don't believe there's an invasion going on?

JAESON JONES:

I'm saying we're even beyond an invasion.

ROBERT GARCIA:

OK, because you yourself sir, have on Twitter and on numerous occasions said that there is actually an invasion that's being caused by the US government, similar to the same words that have been said in

this horrific shooting. And so I just want to know that words actually cause impacts and can be quite dangerous here and across the country.

Our country needs responsible leadership. It needs border security. Of course, Democrats agree with that. And I also want to note, just to clarify the record, that more than 90 percent of hard drugs such as fentanyl enter the US through legal crossings at ports of entry, which continues to be forgotten over and over again.

Democrats have increased funding for ports of entry in the government funding package last year, which Republicans of course overwhelmingly opposed. And so we keep hearing over and over again solutions that are not serious, which is why we never seem to discuss treatment programs here in this committee. There's no answer as to how to improve access to health care or tackle the mental health crisis that's happening in our country.

We just keep having the same Groundhog Day hearing over and over again blaming migrants for a drug crisis that continues to be replayed itself hearing after hearing. I want to real quickly just go down the list and ask each of you yes or no, yes or no for each of you. Yes or no. Solving the fentanyl crisis must involve addressing, not only the supply, but also the demand that is coming from the United States.

Mr. Jones, is that correct?

JAESON JONES:

It is, and also we have to remember where the demand is being --

ROBERT GARCIA:

Just a yes or no, sir. Yes, thank you, sir.

JAESON JONES:

You have to remember what the cartels have done now --

ROBERT GARCIA:

Sir, this is my time. I just asked you for a yes or no, thank you.

JAESON JONES:

Yes.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Ms. Vaughan, is that correct?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Well, when a [inaudible] --

ROBERT GARCIA:

Do we have to also --

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Ingests fentanyl that they think is Adderall, I wouldn't call that displaying demand.

ROBERT GARCIA:

So you would not agree that US demand is not part of the fentanyl crisis?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

I think it is part of it.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you. Mr. Maltz.

DEREK MALTZ:

Absolutely, demand is a disaster right now.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you. And Ms. Felbab-Brown.

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

Yes.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you. Second question, just a yes or no, please. Mr. Jones, have you ever received a direct order from the President to stand down or open the border?

JAESON JONES:

Have I received a direct order from the President to stand down on the border?

ROBERT GARCIA:

Yes.

JAESON JONES:

No, sir.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you. Mr. Maltz, have you?

DEREK MALTZ:

No.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Ms. Vaughan, are you aware of any such orders that have ever happened?

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

Am I aware of --

ROBERT GARCIA:

Of orders directly from the President.

JESSICA VAUGHAN:

No, I don't [inaudible].

ROBERT GARCIA:

To stand down and open the border. Ms. Felbab-Brown, have you ever heard of that?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

No.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Thank you very much. Also want to just real briefly ask you about some of the border policies though that have been proposed by some of my friends on this committee and on the other side. Ms. Felbab-

Brown, do you think it would be a good idea to build a water-filled trench with alligators along the border?

Would that be helpful in stopping the border crisis?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

No.

ROBERT GARCIA:

No. Interesting. Do you think that if we shot migrants in the legs to stop them from coming over, do you think that would be helpful?

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN:

No.

ROBERT GARCIA:

So those policies were actually proposed by former President Donald Trump, just to be very clear. Like members of this committee, I'm very concerned that we continue to have this hearing to essentially put down immigrants. I immigrated to this country when I was a young kid. I'm proud to be a very proud American that earned and gained my citizenship.

And I hope that in future committees we could stop demonizing immigrants. With that, I yield back. Thank you.

MARK GREEN:

The gentleman yields. I now recognize the ranking member for his closing remarks.

BENNIE THOMPSON:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. To say the least, it's been a journey, the last three hours. Mr. Chairman, I remain extremely concerned that the committee continues to focus its attention on a baseless attempt to impeach Secretary Mayorkas to the exclusion of its legitimate legislative and oversight work.

As Representative Magaziner outlined, the Department of Homeland Security under the leadership of Secretary Mayorkas has taken unprecedented law enforcement actions to disrupt and dismantle the cartels. The notion that Secretary Mayorkas is working to advance cartel crime in America, as this hearing title suggests, is outrageous.

He's working to combat it. This is a monumental task, one that entirety of the Biden administration is focused on. This committee should be focused on how we can help the administration in those efforts. This should be bipartisan. In the past, it has been bipartisan. But now we need to look no further than the previous title for this hearing, which accused President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas of being accomplices to crime.

To understand the goal of this so-called investigation, I'll remind everyone that Chairman Green struck that title from the record because it didn't adhere to House rules. We can also look at the members who accuse Secretary Mayorkas of being derelict in his duties before their so-called investigation has even concluded.

That doesn't seem to matter. The investigation as closed before it's even open. They are explicit about this. In fact, the hearing that launched this investigation was called Open Borders, Closed Case, Secretary Mayorkas' dereliction of duty on the border. That's right. Closed case. This doesn't sound like a good faith investigation.

And releasing a report today without any consultation with Democrats isn't a good faith effort at bipartisanship. Nonetheless, I'm grateful for the witnesses for appearing here today. This is America and we have an opportunity to voice our opinions. The greatness of this country is that we can do it without any fear of a cartel or anything doing anything to us, but also the greatness of it is that at some point as Americans we can come together.

It's a process, but I don't think citing Secretary of Mayorkas, who's been here as secretary two years, six months, is the way to go. Democrats are prepared to work with Republicans. We've put our votes where our concerns have been. We actually support comprehensive immigration reform. We support fully funding the men and women who protect us along the border.

Our votes reflect that and our votes will continue to reflect that. And so I thank our witnesses, those who are in law enforcement for their service. But you know, when you look at the Democrats on this committee and its diversity, it looks a lot like America today, and so I hope you understand that that diversity makes us strong.

But it also says that our policies have to reflect that diversity. My ancestors came over to this country in the belly of a ship, didn't want to come, but they came. I'm an American. I only know this country and I'll defend the right for what we do in this country, and for others who used to come because we invited them to come because we were the shining star, now for whatever reason, we've decided that we don't want anybody else because we have enough.

I reject that notion. Sure, comprehensive immigration will get us there. President Reagan knew we had a problem. He saw the problem right off the bat. He said I'm going to let everybody who's here stay

here. And so that backlog, he wiped it out with an executive order. We can do anything we want as Americans, but to demonize people who traveled thousands of miles to try to get to our border because what we stand for is not our value system.

Our value system is what everybody else would like to be like, and I don't ever want to change it. Comprehensive immigration reform, not impeachment is the way for us to get there. And I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

MARK GREEN:

Gentleman yields. And I want to thank our witnesses for being here. Deeply appreciate it. I'm sure the ranking member knows that immigration reform is handled in the Judiciary Committee and not here, but I do appreciate him bringing up the need for it. Well, I'll talk to Mr. Jordan and encourage him to take that up. We heard today from the ranking member about how embarrassed he is that this committee has held nine hearings on the southwest border.

We've heard from our witnesses though, that the horrific actions of the cartels are worsening secondarily to the policies of this administration. We all know the process. They allowed instant parole, they stopped detention, they stopped deportation, the catch and release policies happened and the migrants called home.

Millions have come. Make no mistake, there was no change in crime or corruption or economic conditions in Latin America. Actually, since COVID's gone, the economic conditions in Latin America have gotten better. The mass migration is secondary to the policies of this administration, period, and there is no legitimate argument to suggest otherwise.

Even Merrick Garland agreed that the cartels have taken advantage of these policies and are trafficking large groups to overwhelm the Border Patrol and then pass nefarious individuals, the got-aways and drugs around them. The attorney general recognizes it. Perhaps if the minority party owned that current administration is failing, perhaps if the administration addressed the problem, we could move on, but the numbers are not going down.

CBP's One app shell game, not releasing the OFO numbers, moving the numbers from crossing over to the ports of entry and then giving automatic parole to those individuals, not decreasing the incentive. They're still coming and the drug cartels will continue to take advantage of it, just like Merrick Garland said.

We've allowed automatic parole through this app and those numbers are not being counted. The border is open. The incentive for mass migration remains. And as I said, they're coming. The drug cartels are seizing the opportunity. My Democrat colleagues have said it's a waste of time to look into cartel crime.

They said it was a waste of time to address the dead Americans to fentanyl. Nine committee hearings is too many. They say, look at all the policies that this administration has done. Well, they're not working. Fix it and maybe we'll stop these hearings. I happen to believe personally, as do many people in this country, that the southwest border, the human trafficking, the overdose deaths, the cartel crime murders is the greatest threat to this country.

So yeah, we're going to continue until the border is controlled and the cartels are stopped. When Americans stop dying, then we'll stop these hearings. Open border, drug cartels seizing the day, partnering with gangs that have taken over the criminal activity in many of our cities,

that's what's happening, and the Dems on this panel don't want to discuss it. No one has denigrated immigrants here today.

Not a single individual has picked on a particular race of individuals or anything, yet that's what they want to imply. I am offended by that. This is about migration policies that have resulted in the drug cartels taking advantage of them and killing Americans. I hope, I hope the media is paying attention.

Americans are dying and the left is saying our committee investigating this as an embarrassment. 61 percent of Americans get it though. That's the percentage of Americans who say that our border is not controlled by us. Yet investigations are an embarrassment. As for impeachment, my Democrat colleagues keep saying how this is somehow an impeachment effort.

I've never used those words, not here in this committee and not at this supposed recording that they keep talking about. They also say that somehow this discussion is racist. It is not racist to say we have a problem at our southern border. It's not racist to say that the cartels are seizing this opportunity of our open border and the automatic patrol and the mass waves of people who are coming.

It is not racist to say that. And the only reason they bring up that it's racist or that we're trying to impeach or it's some kind of dog and pony show, is because they can't tell you that Americans aren't dying. They can't say, oh, look, the numbers are going down on Americans dying due to fentanyl. Look, the drug cartel crime is going down in America. They can't make a valid argument against those facts. And so they say we're racist or imply that we're racist, or that we somehow have some game here or that it's embarrassing that we've had nine committee

hearings on this. Well, I'll tell you when the committee hearings will end. They'll end when this administration starts fixing the problem.

They'll end when the White House recognizes that their Secretary of Homeland Security isn't doing his job. That's called a dereliction of duty. That's when the hearings will end. It is the job of this committee to get to the bottom of what's going on and we will do it. The Democrats are on record, they think this Homeland Security Committee's investigation of the border, the oversight of the border is embarrassing.

They don't want these hearings because they don't want the lights shined on what's going on, the decisions made by this White House and the DHS secretary. Well, like I said, we will not stop until we get to the bottom of it and the problem gets fixed, period. Again, I thank our witnesses for being here, and as I said, this doesn't end these hearings, but it does end this one.

The committee is adjourned.

List of Panel Members and Witnesses

PANEL MEMBERS:

REP. MARK GREEN (R-TENN.), CHAIRMAN

REP. MICHAEL MCCAUL (R-TEXAS)

REP. CLAY HIGGINS (R-LA.)

REP. MICHAEL GUEST (R-MISS.)

REP. DAN BISHOP (R-N.C.)

REP. CARLOS GIMENEZ (R-FLA.)

REP. AUGUST PFLUGER (R-TEXAS)

REP. ANDREW GARBARINO (R-N.Y.)

REP. MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE (R-GA.)

REP. TONY GONZALES (R-TEXAS)

REP. NICK LALOTA (R-N.Y.)

REP. MIKE EZELL (R-MISS.)

REP. ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO (R-N.Y.)

REP. LAUREL LEE (R-FLA.)

REP. MORGAN LUTTRELL (R-TEXAS)

REP. DALE STRONG (R-ALA.)

REP. JOSH BRECHEEN (R-OKLA.)

REP. ELI CRANE (R-ARIZ.)

REP. BENNIE THOMPSON (D-MISS.), RANKING MEMBER

REP. SHEILA JACKSON LEE (D-TEXAS)

REP. DONALD PAYNE, JR. (D-N.J.)

REP. ERIC SWALWELL (D-CALIF.)

REP. LOU CORREA (D-CALIF.)

REP. TROY CARTER (D-LA.)

REP. SHRI THANEDAR (D-MICH.)

REP. SETH MAGAZINER (D-R.I.)

REP. GLENN IVEY (D-MD.)

REP. DAN GOLDMAN (D-N.Y.)

REP. ROBERT GARCIA (D-CALIF.)

REP. DELIA RAMIREZ (D-ILL.)

REP. ROB MENENDEZ (D-N.J.)

REP. DINA TITUS (D-NEV.)

REP. YVETTE CLARKE (D-N.Y.)

WITNESSES:

CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES DIRECTOR OF POLICY
STUDIES JESSICA VAUGHAN

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION DIRECTOR VANDA FELBAB BROWN

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY FORMER CAPTAIN OF
INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTER-TERRORISM JAESON JONES

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION FORMER SPECIAL
AGENT IN CHARGE, SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIVISION DEREK
MALTZ

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