



# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)**

## ***Havoc in the Congress: How Extreme MAGA Republicans Only Care About Impeaching Secretary Mayorkas and Creating Border Chaos***

**January 10, 2024**

In April, before this Committee even began its so-called “impeachment inquiry,” Chairman Green promised donors at a campaign event that he would bring an impeachment case against Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas.

According to a recording of his comments obtained by the media, the Chairman went on to tell these deep-pocketed contributors to “*get the popcorn*” and “*it’s going to be fun.*” The Chairman may have thought that only those at the campaign event would hear his remarks, but the truth has a way of coming out.

His promise to a room full of donors tells the American people all they need to know about why Republicans are hell-bent on impeaching Secretary Mayorkas. The promise of impeachment was made at a *campaign event*, and shortly afterward Republicans began their so-called “investigation” into Secretary Mayorkas.

It’s now *campaign season*, and Republicans recently rolled out their impeachment proceedings against the Secretary like the *pre-planned, pre-determined political stunt it is*. ***This is not a legitimate impeachment.***

Republicans want to throw *political red meat* to their base and *keep that campaign cash coming*. They know their already razor-thin Majority is slipping away and think impeaching Secretary Mayorkas – *even though there’s absolutely no basis for it* — will help them keep control of the House.

Republicans certainly aren’t going to win votes based on their abysmal legislative record. This has been the most unproductive, dysfunctional Congress in memory. They kicked their own Speaker out and then couldn’t agree on a new one. They paralyzed the House for weeks while they fought amongst themselves. They have struggled to keep the government funded and are continually on the verge of shutting it down. A Member of their party was expelled for lying about practically everything in his life.

Extreme MAGA Republicans have created this *impeachment circus sideshow* in part to try to distract from their own failures. They took their sideshow on the road recently, traveling to the border to stand behind a podium making canned speeches and posing for photo ops. But for all their border security bluster, *Republicans oppose providing the funding necessary to secure the border*. They tried to cut money for Customs and Border Protection personnel and have refused to take up the President’s supplemental funding request.

Chairman Green himself recently penned an op-ed saying “*not another dime to DHS*” until the Republican border bill is signed into law – even though he knows full well that disastrous bill has absolutely zero chance of being enacted. It should be *unthinkable* that a Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security would threaten to de-fund DHS. *But that’s exactly what happened*. This is funding our frontline border and immigration agencies *need* to better secure the border.

Republicans have tried to excuse their opposition to border funding by claiming that Border Patrol doesn’t want more funding — but that is *blatantly false*. In interviews with the Committee, Border Patrol chiefs *unequivocally supported* more resources. Republicans know that — they were in the room, and they have the transcripts. But let me refresh their memory:

- Jason Owens, currently the Chief of the Border Patrol, said: “We always need more agents.”
- From Chief Modlin in Tucson: “...as an agency, we need a lot more — a lot more people.”
- From Chief Heitke in San Diego: “We are always in need of resources and technology.”
- From Chief Bovino in El Centro: “The addition of resources in the correct technology assists with control of the border.”
- And finally, from Chief Chavez in El Paso, “Providing support for critical positions and resources by Congress really does impact positively the deployment of agents to the front line.”

*Every one of these chiefs* told this Committee that having more resources would help them better secure the border. Republicans go to the border in dress pants and polo shirts to pose for pictures, but then leave the hardworking agents in uniform and work boots behind without the resources they have asked for. ***Democrats want to give border agents what they need to secure the border and Republicans do not.***

***The truth is, securing the border isn't really Republicans' top concern.*** If it was, they'd provide the people with boots on the ground at the border what they need to get the job done. Republicans would rather exploit a challenging policy issue for their own perceived political gain.

Republicans disagree with the Biden administration's border and immigration policies. They're angry that this Administration won't take babies from their moms or put kids in cages like the last administration. You cannot impeach a cabinet secretary because you don't like a President's policies.

***Let me say that again – you cannot impeach a cabinet secretary because you don't like a President's policies. That's not what impeachment is for. That's not what the Constitution says. Republicans are willing to do grave damage to the Constitution they claim to hold dear because they think it will benefit them politically.***

And in doing so, they are targeting Secretary Mayorkas — a public servant who has spent his distinguished 30-year career serving our country as a Federal prosecutor and in leadership positions across the Department of Homeland Security.

The facts show Secretary Mayorkas *is doing his job* across all the Department's many critical homeland security missions, including border security and immigration enforcement. Despite what Republicans would have Americans believe, Secretary Mayorkas is enforcing immigration law.

According to a recent analysis by the CATO Institute, someone who crosses the border under the current administration *is more likely to be removed from the U.S. than someone who crossed under Trump.* Republicans don't care about that. This impeachment sham clearly isn't about the facts. It's not about the law. It's about politics, pure and simple. Just look at whose impeachment resolution has been referred to this Committee. Consider what kind of backroom deals Republican leadership must have made with its most extreme MAGA members.

Or, as one Republican member recently put it, “...we are simply accommodating our least sensible...conference members.” I certainly agree. Democrats are doing everything we can to hold the line against Republican chaos. Democrats want to strengthen border security. We want to keep fentanyl off our streets. We want to keep communities safe. *This circus sideshow impeachment does none of that.*

Mr. Chairman, let's drop this baseless impeachment and start doing the real work of securing the homeland for the American people.

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