



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Hearing on Title 42 and Republicans Wanting More Chaos

June 6, 2023

We are here today to discuss the Department's readiness for the end of Title 42. Despite this hearing's title, the Administration did, in fact, prepare for the end of Title 42. And that preparation has been successful. But let's start by acknowledging that Title 42 was a pandemic-era policy. And that Republicans in the House voted to end the public health emergency, which means they voted to end Title 42.

Under Title 42, hundreds of thousands of migrants were denied due process and access to the lawful asylum system. Migrants have the legal right to request protection under U.S. law, and I am glad to see we have transitioned back to regular immigration policy that allows for those laws to be followed. Nevertheless, terminating Title 42 was a complex undertaking that required significant planning.

DHS and the Biden Administration instituted a whole-of-government approach more than a year and a half ago to prepare for the end of Title 42. DHS and the administration surged resources, increased efficiencies, administered consequences for unlawful entry, bolstered capacity, disrupted criminal organizations, and collaborated with international and federal partners to prepare for the end of Title 42.

While my Republican colleagues may be disappointed with the lack of chaos at the border, the Administration's actions led to a dramatic decrease in encounters with migrants at our southwest border following the end of Title 42. While the decrease in encounters is encouraging, we know that numbers may increase in the future.

Our immigration system has been broken for decades and we must continue to work to address the problems that plague this system. This Committee should help ensure the Department has the personnel and resources it needs to process migrants in an orderly and humane manner. Democrats have worked to ensure the Department has the resources needed to process migrants humanely and efficiently.

Instead of helping the Department prepare and manage encounters on our southwest border, Republicans recently voted against authorizing the 1,700 CBP officers needed to increase capacity at our ports of entry. They also voted to cut 2,400 CBP officers and agents. And yet now, despite decreased encounters and the fact that they voted to end Title 42, they are trying to claim that the Department did not adequately prepare.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on the state of the border post Title 42, as well as the Department's extensive efforts to prepare for its termination.

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Media contact: Adam Comis at 202-225-9978