



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Republican Border “Hearing” #745

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As many are aware, the number of border encounters is down since the end of Title 42. That’s not a shell game, as the Majority has alleged. All numbers, including appointments via the CBP One App, are publicly reported. They are even reported in the Administration’s press releases!

Last week, CBP shared that encounters between ports of entry in June decreased by 42 percent since May—the lowest number of encounters since February 2021. The Biden Administration’s actions to expand legal pathways, establish a more orderly, humane border, and enhance collaboration with our regional partners are largely responsible for this decline.

The situation at the border—both under previous Administrations and the current one—does have a human and economic cost on both sides of the border, however. Since this Committee was established, I have been to the border many times. I have seen it myself, and I’ve spoken with members of border communities. It affects Americans and Mexicans alike, in addition to the migrants seeking safety, freedom, and an opportunity to contribute.

The answer to the experiences that today’s witnesses have shared in their submitted testimony is not to shut off access to asylum or reimpose “Remain in Mexico,” Title 42, or family separation. Those failed policies caused immense harm to migrants, our border, and American families.

That’s right – it hurts American families too. We know that the majority of migrants coming to the United States are joining family here. When they get injured or killed, it hurts Americans. The answer is instead to initiate comprehensive immigration reform, which goes hand in hand with border security.

Deterrence measures alone do not stop people from coming. They drive up the demand for human smugglers and increase the number of injuries and deaths at the border. No one fleeing a cartel-controlled community, an authoritarian regime, or desperate poverty will get to the border and just give up because someone built a wall or installed a buoy.

No one risking their lives to make the treacherous journey across thousands of miles to the U.S. is going to just turn around and go home. They are trying to save themselves and their loved ones.

To our witnesses, I look forward to hearing your testimony. I hope that the Members of this Committee make it clear today that they are interested in a humane and effective solution, not one that turns a blind eye to the global migratory crisis and does nothing to make Americans safer.

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