



# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Subcommittee Hearing Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)**

### ***Examining Title 42 and the Need to Restore Asylum at the Border***

**April 6, 2022**

We know that Title 42 was never about public health. From the earliest days of the pandemic, the Trump Administration sought to exploit COVID-19 to advance his anti-immigrant agenda. Simply put, the Trump Administration used this order to prevent vulnerable migrants from seeking refuge in the United States.

It is not lost on me that the same people who used the Title 42 order to stoke fear about migrants bringing COVID into communities were among the first to lift indoor mask mandates and other pandemic response measures. Now that we have increased access to COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and masks and things are returning to normal, the Federal government must also prepare to resume normal immigration processing at ports of entry.

That means terminating Title 42, a policy that has harmed hundreds of thousands of migrants. Latin Americans, Haitians, and other migrants have the legal right to request protection under U.S. law. The Biden Administration must restore access and adjudicate asylum claims in a fair and timely manner.

But we must also recognize that terminating Title 42 is complex undertaking that requires significant planning. I expect to hear more about the Department's plans and am willing to help ensure it has the personnel and resources it needs to process migrants in an orderly and humane manner.

This must be a robust whole-of-government operation. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on the impacts of Title 42 and welcome any suggestions they have on how the Administration can best prepare for the wind-down of this policy.

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