

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 04, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We are writing today with serious concerns about the organized migrant caravan currently on its way from southern Mexico toward the United States. It is estimated over 3,000 migrants from Haiti, South America, and Central America will reach our southern border within the coming weeks.¹

As you know, the caravan has already surged past a blockade of 400 Mexican law enforcement officers in Tapachula, who were prepared in anti-riot gear and attempted to block their path from getting to the U.S.-Mexico border.² It has been reported that a number of minors were injured as a result of the breakthrough.³ We are deeply concerned about what the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is doing to prevent a similar situation at our southern border, especially when Customs and Border Protection (CBP) field agents are already overworked, undermanned and under-supplied as a result of the influx of migrants this year.

Additionally, this caravan comes only weeks after ten thousand migrants flooded Del Rio, Texas, overwhelming border personnel and later gaining entry into the United States. While the strategy DHS released on September 18, 2021, stated that migrants “who cannot be expelled under Title 42 and do not have a legal basis to remain will be placed in expedited removal proceedings,”⁴ this did not occur in Del Rio. In fact, Senior Executive Branch officials stated that migrants were released into the United States on a “very, very large scale.”⁵ We believe this incentivized the recent caravan to journey to the United States.

¹ Jose Torres, *New migrant caravan in Mexico pushes past blockade to head north*, REUTERS (Oct. 23, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/new-migrant-caravan-mexico-pushes-past-blockade-head-north-2021-10-23/>

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *DHS Outlines Strategy to Address Increase in Migrants in Del Rio*, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (Sept. 18, 2021), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2021/09/18/dhs-outlines-strategy-address-increase-migrants-del-rio>

⁵ Elliot Spagat, Maria Verza, Juan A. Lozano & Sarah Blake Morgan, *Many migrants staying in US even as expulsion flights rise*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Sept. 23, 2021), <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-united-states-texas-el-paso-del-rio-3a8146cbb47b9df7a31a19594df3ec6>

To better understand DHS's preparation strategy and make sure individuals with nonexistent asylum claims are placed in expedited removal proceedings, we ask that you respond to the following questions:

1. What has DHS done to prepare for this caravan, including diplomatic efforts with Central American countries to stop it as it gains momentum?
2. How is DHS collecting, receiving, and sharing intelligence on this caravan through the interagency process to ensure malign actors are not making their way to—and into—the United States?
3. How are these actions different from the actions taken in Del Rio?
4. Will DHS expel migrants encountered at the border using Title 42?
5. What are DHS' plans to process and deport migrants who cannot be expelled under Title 42 and do not have a legal basis to remain in the U.S.?

In the past year alone, U.S. Border Patrol has recorded nearly 1.7 million migrant apprehensions at the southern border, which is the highest number of illegal crossings in history.⁶ If the Administration does not begin to appropriately respond to these caravans and the ongoing border crisis, these surges will surely continue. In fact, organizers made migrants who wished to participate in the current caravan “register with a QR code on their phones or a web link to participate.”⁷ As this shows, the situation at our border is only getting worse.

We must enforce our immigration laws as we do any other laws and ensure migrants in this caravan with nonexistent asylum claims will not be released into the United States. The safety of our American citizens and future migrants depends on your actions. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

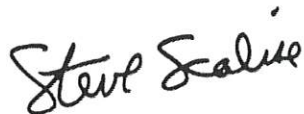
Sincerely,



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Lindsey Graham
United States Senator

⁶ *Id.* at 1.

⁷ Jesse O'Neill, *Migrants push past southern Mexican border city en route to US*, NEW YORK POST (Oct. 24, 2021), <https://nypost.com/2021/10/24/central-american-migrants-push-past-mexican-border-city-en-route-to-us/>



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Member of Congress



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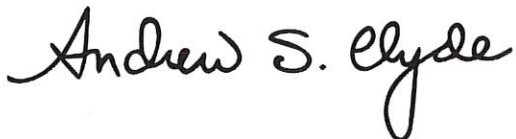
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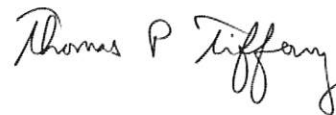
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