

NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES - SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

LATEST STATISTICS

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2019														
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Alien Child	4,964	5,257	4,753	5,105	6,817	8,956	8,880	11,475	7,372	5,554	3,722	3,165	76,020
	Family Units*	23,116	25,164	27,507	24,188	36,530	53,204	58,713	84,486	57,358	42,543	25,049	15,824	473,682
	Single Adult	22,925	21,436	18,491	18,686	23,536	30,673	31,680	36,895	30,172	23,881	21,913	21,518	301,806
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		51,005	51,857	50,751	47,979	66,883	92,833	99,273	132,856	94,902	71,978	50,684	40,507	851,508

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/sw-border-migration/fy-2019>

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2020														
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Alien Child	2,841	3,308	3,223	2,680	3,070	2,974	712	966	1,603	2,426	2,998	3,756	30,557
	Family Units*	9,721	9,006	8,595	5,161	4,610	3,455	716	979	1,581	1,989	2,609	3,808	52,230
	Single Adult	22,840	21,210	21,035	21,364	22,397	23,960	14,754	19,648	27,652	34,121	41,676	47,207	317,864
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		35,402	33,524	32,853	29,205	30,077	30,389	16,182	21,593	30,836	38,536	47,283	54,771	400,651

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/sw-border-migration-fy2020>

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2021														
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Alien Child	4,687	4,475	4,852	5,688	9,263	18,716	16,900	13,878	15,022	18,681	18,492	14,180	144,834
	Family Units*	4,634	4,172	4,248	7,066	19,289	53,411	48,297	40,816	50,106	76,572	79,899	62,577	451,087
	Single Adult	59,711	60,522	62,041	62,562	69,091	97,089	108,502	117,960	113,521	105,405	98,123	108,758	1,063,285
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		69,032	69,169	71,141	75,316	97,643	169,216	173,699	172,654	178,649	200,658	196,514	185,515	1,659,206

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2022													
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	Total	
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Alien Child	12,617	13,745	11,704	8,607	11,780	13,892	11,858	14,423	14,931	13,028	126,580	
	Family Units*	41,562	43,281	49,437	30,420	25,167	34,053	37,084	51,167	44,075	42,811	399,057	
	Single Adult	104,940	109,992	109,461	108,792	122,118	162,996	154,480	158,812	133,412	125,713	1,290,716	
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		159,119	167,018	170,602	147,819	159,065	210,941	203,422	224,397	192,418	181,552	1,816,353	

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>

LATEST NEWS

DHS To End ‘Remain In Mexico,’ Allow Asylum Seekers To Enter U.S.

By Nick Miroff, *Washington Post*, August 8, 2022

- ❖ The Department of Homeland Security said late Monday, August 8, it is preparing to quickly end the Trump-era “Remain in Mexico” program and will no longer send asylum seekers back across the border to await a decision on their applications for U.S. protection. The announcement came after U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk lifted his injunction blocking Biden officials from ending the program, formally known as the “Migrant Protection Protocols” or MPP. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 30 that the Biden administration had the authority to terminate the program, opening a path for DHS to finally bring a close to one of the Trump administration’s most contentious border measures. DHS officials said asylum seekers waiting in Mexico for their appointments in the U.S. immigration court would be allowed to cross the border on the day of their hearings and stay in the United States while awaiting an outcome. “As Secretary [Alejandro] Mayorkas has said, MPP has endemic flaws, imposes unjustifiable human costs, and pulls resources and personnel away from other priority efforts to secure our border,” the DHS statement read. President Biden quickly ended the program after taking office, but Kacsmaryk last fall sided with several state officials who sued the administration to force a restart of MPP. Between December 2021 and early July, about 5,800 asylum seekers were sent back to Mexico to await their U.S. court dates, the latest DHS records show. Most were adults from Nicaragua and Venezuela. Under President Donald Trump, his administration used MPP much more aggressively, sending nearly 70,000 back to Mexico after negotiating the program with Mexican authorities and implementing it in late 2018. Trump officials said the returns were necessary to prevent migrants from using the U.S. asylum system to avoid detention and deportation. Asylum seekers with pending claims are typically allowed to live and work in the United States while awaiting a response. The process can drag out for several years because U.S. immigration courts are swamped by backlogs. In its ruling, the Supreme Court determined in a 5-4 opinion that Kacsmaryk went too far by requiring Biden to keep in place policies that infringe on his ability to enforce immigration laws and shape foreign policy, given that MPP relied on agreements with Mexico.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/08/08/mpp-biden-asylum-mexico/>

The ‘Remain in Mexico’ Policy Is Officially Over. But Hundreds of Migrants Are Still Stuck in Mexico

By Jasmine Aguilera, *Time*, August 29, 2022

- ❖ On August 8, 2022, the Biden Administration officially terminated the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) or “Remain in Mexico” program—which requires people with open asylum cases to wait in Mexico while their case is adjudicated in the U.S. Hundreds of migrants are still stuck waiting in Mexico for weeks or months before they can be permitted to enter the U.S. because of a new process designed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that requires those in MPP to wait until their next court date before they can be removed from the program. This system differs substantially from how the agency handled MPP termination in the past with a process that allowed people to leave the program without needing to wait for a court appearance. As of July 19, 2022, there were 1,115 open MPP cases for people waiting in Mexico, according to DHS data.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://time.com/6208555/remain-in-mexico-mpp-program-unwind/>

Report Uncovers Cost To Operate Migrant Resource Center In San Antonio

By Don Morgan, *KTSA*, August 31, 2022

- ❖ More than one million dollars has been spent on housing, travel and other expenses for immigrants arriving in San Antonio. A report from FOX 29 in San Antonio uncovered the amount of taxpayer dollars that have been used to run the Migrant Resource Center, which opened on the North side last month. The station filed an open records request which indicates that as of August 15, the city has used more than \$275 thousand on transportation for immigrants arriving at the center. Then there is the cost associated with staffing the migrant center. According to the FOX 29 report, 35 firefighters and 26 police officers are assigned to the center on a daily basis. The amount of overtime pay to have them there was just under \$750 thousand during the month of July. And that’s just for the first month of the center’s operation. Nearly 450 immigrants stay at the center each night with nearly the same amount being housed at other shelters in the area. The city says they will be reimbursed by the federal government for the operating cost of the resource center.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.ktsa.com/report-uncovers-cost-to-operate-migrant-resource-center-in-san-antonio/>

Biden Administration Has Admitted One Million Migrants To Await Hearings

By Eileen Sullivan, New York Times, September 6, 2022

- ❖ The million who have been allowed in since Mr. Biden took office — a figure that comes from internal Homeland Security data and court filings — are from more than 150 countries around the globe. With few pathways to enter the United States legally, crossing the border without documentation is often the only option for those fleeing crime and economic despair. Under a pandemic-driven public health rule, migrants have been turned away at the U.S. border 1.7 million times since Mr. Biden took office, a figure that includes some people who have attempted to cross multiple times. But the United States has allowed others to stay temporarily for a range of reasons, including because Mexico or their own countries will not take them back. Nearly 300,000 of those who have been allowed in — including many heads of families — have been outfitted with tracking devices so that Immigration and Customs Enforcement can keep tabs on their whereabouts while they await their day in court. With no federal assistance once they are released, it falls to local communities and states to help the new immigrants get to where they are going and keep them from living on the streets. And lately, that challenge has grown. To try to get the Biden administration's attention, Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas and Gov. Doug Ducey of Arizona, have sent thousands of newly arrived migrants on buses to Washington in recent months. Mr. Abbott has also sent buses to New York City, where officials say the shelter system now temporarily houses 5,700 asylum seekers. Both cities were not prepared to assist so many people, and officials and volunteers have been scrambling to help shelter them and get them to their desired destinations. Mr. Abbott recently started busing migrants to Chicago, too. Currently, immigrants who are admitted to await removal proceedings can apply for permission to work 150 days after filing an application for asylum, a delay that many businesses — particularly during a labor shortage — find frustrating. Most migrants who do not already have a sponsor in the country have to rely on whatever public assistance is available.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/06/us/politics/asylum-biden-administration.html>

MIGRANTS FOUND IN TRACTOR-TRAILERS

Last Quintana Road Tractor-Trailer Incident Survivor Being Treated At University Hospital Released

By Cody King, KSAT San Antonio, August 19, 2022

- ❖ The last Quintana Road tractor-trailer incident survivor who was being treated at University Hospital for nearly two months was released Friday, August 19, according to officials. The patient, whose name and age have not been provided, is an adolescent male. He was one of two patients being treated at the hospital and was in critical condition when admitted. According to UH, the other patient was a 23-year-old woman. More than 50 migrants died after being left in the tractor-trailer, which was found by San Antonio authorities on a Southwest Side road on June 27. The “horrible human tragedy” is deemed the largest mass casualty event in San Antonio's history. Sixteen migrants were taken to area hospitals, including 12 adults and four pediatric patients. All of them were reportedly suffering from heat stroke and heat exhaustion. Only some of the hospitalized patients survived.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2022/08/19/last-quintana-road-tractor-trailer-incident-survivor-being-treated-at-university-hospital-released/>

DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA)

Biden Moves To Strengthen DACA With A New Rule

By Michelle Hackman, Wall Street Journal, August 24, 2022

- ❖ The new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) rule, published by the Department of Homeland Security on August 24, is set to take effect on October 31, and will replace a memo issued in 2012 by then-Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano that governed the program for a decade. The new DACA program would operate largely the same as the original created by the Obama administration in 2012. The program would carry the same eligibility criteria, which require that an immigrant in the country illegally arrived by June 2007 and before he or she was 16 years old. The program would continue to grant two years of deportation protection and a two-year work permit for a \$495 fee. And recipients could temporarily leave the country under a program known as advance parole, which gives them upfront permission to legally come back.
- ❖ To read the new rule, visit: <https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2022-18401.pdf>
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-moves-to-strengthen-daca-with-a-new-rule-11661381662>

What Would The Dream Act Do?

By the American Immigration Council, 2022

❖ **Step 1: Conditional Permanent Residence Requirements:**

- Came to the United States as a child.
- Has been admitted to an institution of higher education, has graduated high school or obtained a GED, or is currently enrolled in secondary school or a program assisting students to obtain a high school diploma or GED.
- Has not participated in the persecution of another person.
- Has not been convicted of certain crimes.

❖ **Step 2: Lawful Permanent Residence (LPR) Requirements:**

- Higher education: the person has acquired a degree from an institution of higher education or has completed at least two years, in good standing, in a program for a bachelor's degree or higher degree in the United States.
- Military service: the person completed at least two years of military service with an honorable discharge, if discharged.
- Work: the person demonstrated employment over a total period of three years and at least 75 percent of that time the individual had employment authorization, with exceptions for those enrolled in higher education or technical school.
- Individuals who cannot meet one of these requirements could apply for a "hardship waiver" if the applicant is a person with a disability; a full-time caregiver; or for whom removal would cause extreme hardship to themselves or a spouse, parent, or child who is a national or lawful permanent resident of the United States.

❖ **Step 3: Naturalization**

- After maintaining LPR status for five years, an individual can generally apply to become a U.S. citizen through the normal naturalization process.

❖ Source: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/dream-act-overview?emci=aca3f400-5925-ed11-bd6e-281878b914e7&emdi=a64100b4-d926-ed11-bd6e-281878b914e7&ceid=10427639>

STATE OF TEXAS BUSING MIGRANTS TO NEW YORK CITY, WASHINGTON, D.C. AND CHICAGO

El Paso Joins Gov. Greg Abbott In Busing Migrants To New York City

By Cindy Ramirez, Texas Tribune, August 26, 2022

❖ The city government of El Paso chartered a bus this week [August 21-26] to send 35 Venezuelan migrants to New York City, a step meant to address a growing number of people from the South American country crossing from Mexico. The move comes as New York officials have been raising complaints about Texas Gov. Greg Abbott sending busloads of migrants to their city without warning. The buses sent by Texas have strained social services in New York, which promises shelter to virtually every unhoused person in its borders. But some advocates say the busing is beneficial for the migrants, who receive safe and comfortable transportation to their final destinations after an often arduous excursion. The charter from El Paso to New York was arranged by the El Paso City-County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) — one of several the city says it has chartered to transport migrants out of the region. "OEM has sponsored and provided transportation services for migrants out of El Paso, which is reimbursable through [the Federal Emergency Management Agency]," Deputy City Manager Mario D'Agostino said in an email. "OEM has sponsored charter buses to include a recent transport to New York City, this was the preferred destination for those without any means to travel." The federal government has said it will reimburse local governments and nongovernmental organizations coping with the migrant influx. Ruben Garcia, the founder of Annunciation House in El Paso, which has been serving migrants for 40 years, said previous bus charters from El Paso were used to move migrants to churches in Dallas and Denver, which are major transportation hubs. From there, it was easier for migrants to arrange transportation to join family and friends in the United States. On June 21, the Office of Emergency Management chartered a bus to send 50 migrants to Faith Forward, an alliance of Dallas religious leaders, Garcia said. He said faith-based groups are crucial to assisting the growing number of migrants crossing into the United States from Mexico. Five buses carrying 223 migrants arrived in New York City on Thursday, August 25, said Shaina Coronel, director of communications with the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. The majority of the migrants were from Venezuela, with some from Colombia and other countries, she added. Four of the five buses are presumed to have been part of Abbott's controversial initiative to transport migrants to Washington, D.C., and New York using private donations.

❖ News Article Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/08/26/el-paso-texas-bus-migrants-new-york/>

Texas, Arizona Bus Migrants To U.S. Cities, And Now Chicago. Here's What Could Happen Next

By Rick Jervis, USA TODAY, September 2, 2022

- ❖ First Washington, D.C., then New York City. Now Chicago. Officials from Texas and Arizona have been sending busloads of asylum seekers to those cities to the east for months. On Wednesday, August 31, Chicago joined New York and Washington when the first busloads of migrants from Texas arrived there. The migrant families don't always have contacts in the cities and wind up sleeping in bus stations, park benches, homeless shelters and hotels, according to immigrant advocates. Their numbers – from Venezuela, Colombia, Africa and elsewhere – are rising at such alarming rates that Washington, D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser last month requested a National Guard deployment to help receive them. The busing efforts also reveal a disconnect in how states describe their intention: State governors say the destination cities are targeted because of their "sanctuary city" policies, while also saying the bus rides are voluntary and migrants choose where they want to go.
- ❖ **How many asylum-seekers have been bused from the border to New York and Washington?** Nearly 11,000 migrants have been bused from both states to New York and Washington, according to the governor's offices of each state. Texas has shipped over 7,500 to Washington and more than 1,800 to New York City since April. Arizona has bused more than 1,500 just to Washington. Two buses filled with around 60 asylum-seekers, mostly from Venezuela, arrived in Chicago late Wednesday, August 31.
- ❖ **Who are the asylum-seekers?** Those arriving in New York from Texas have been overwhelmingly Venezuelan, though many Colombians and some Africans are also arriving, said Camille Mackler, founder and executive director of the Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative, a New York-based coalition of attorneys and legal groups, who has interacted with the migrants. Those taking the 40-hour bus ride from Yuma, Arizona, to Washington have been from Colombia (55%), Peru (16%) and Venezuela (13%), as well as Cuba and other countries, said C.J. Karamargin, spokesman to Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey.
- ❖ **Is it legal for a state to bus asylum-seekers from the Southwest border to other U.S. cities?** Yes – if migrants are taking the bus rides voluntarily, said Denise Gilman, co-director of the Immigration Clinic at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin. The migrants from Texas have arrived in the Northeast cities with signed releases stating they are, in fact, agreeing to the rides. But Gilman said some of the asylum-seekers may have been directed to sign and take the bus or may not have understood what they were getting into. Texas officials have not revealed exactly how the migrants end up on the buses, she said. In a statement, Abbott spokeswoman Renae Eze said: "These migrants willingly chose to go to New York City or our nation's capital, having signed a voluntary consent waiver available in multiple languages, upon boarding that they agreed on the destination. Migrants are allowed to disembark at any of these stops, as they have been processed and released by the federal government." In Arizona, when migrants cross between ports of entry and are picked up by Border Patrol, they're processed by the federal agency, then released to a nongovernmental organization in Yuma, where they're offered bus rides, Karamargin said. Most of the migrants want to go to either New York, New Jersey, or Florida – but all are bused to Washington, he said.
- ❖ **Why are Texas and Arizona busing migrants away from the border?** Abbott has criticized first President Joe Biden for what he calls lax border policies, then New York City Mayor Eric Adams for claiming that New York was a "sanctuary city" where migrants should feel safe. In Arizona, busing migrants from Yuma to Washington spares the small border community from dealing with a steady crush of migrants released from federal custody but also sends a message to the White House, Karamargin said.
- ❖ **How much do the bus rides cost and who's paying for them?** Texas's migrant busing program has cost \$12 million since it began, or an average of about \$1,300 per person per ride to the East Coast destinations, according to the El Paso Times. Arizona has paid more than \$3.5 million to take 1,574 asylum-seekers on 43 bus rides so far, according to Ducey's office. That comes out to about \$2,200 per person per ride. State taxpayers foot the bills.
- ❖ **Are the bus rides disrupting the migrants' asylum claims process?** Immigrant advocates and attorneys said it's hard to tell because of the lack of information so far arising about how the migrants get to the buses. Karamargin said the migrants leaving from Yuma have agreed to be bused to Washington and will likely have an immigration court date in their final destination, whether it's Washington, New York, or some other place.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/09/02/texas-arizona-busing-migrants-to-other-us-cities/7949381001/>

Texas Spends More Than \$12 Million To Bus Migrants To Washington, DC, And New York

By Polo Sandoval and Andy Rose, CNN, August 31, 2022

- ❖ The state of Texas has spent more than \$12 million busing migrants to Washington, DC, and New York who crossed into the state from Mexico, according to figures from the Texas Division of Emergency Management. A state government spreadsheet obtained by CNN through a Freedom of Information Act request shows that, as of August 9, Texas has paid \$12,707,720.92 to Wynne Transportation, the charter service that is taking migrants to the two cities. Texas has solicited private donations to help pay for the cost of the bus trips, but the state had only received \$167,828 as of August 17. State agencies have provided conflicting figures for the exact number of migrants that Texas has bused out of state, ranging from 8,051 to 9,033. That amounts to a cost of at least \$1,400 per migrant to transport.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/30/politics/texas-migrant-busing-cost-abbott-washington-dc-new-york/index.html>

Gov. Greg Abbott's Migrant Busing Program Is What Asylum Advocates Wanted All Along

By Stephen Neukam, Texas Tribune, September 2, 2022

- ❖ As Gov. Greg Abbott expands his program to bus migrants into a third major metro, inciting a fresh feud with a new mayor, immigration rights experts say the governor who is working to crack down on illegal immigration is actually establishing one of the nation's most generous publicly funded services to assist immigrants entering the country. The free rides given to migrants to travel to sanctuary cities like New York, Washington, D.C., and now Chicago have cost the state \$12.7 million so far. Abbott has provided voluntary trips to 8,900 migrants so far, according to his office. Those trips are bridging an important gap — the stiff cost of transportation — for immigrants entering the country, according to immigration rights advocates who are often on the opposite side of Abbott's border security initiatives. Migrants entering the country often are seeking transportation to connect with relatives or friends who can make their transition into the U.S. smoother. In total, more than 7,400 migrants have been bused to the nation's capital, and over 1,500 have been sent to New York City, according to the governor's office. Late Wednesday, August 31, Abbott announced Chicago, another sanctuary city for immigrants, was being added as a new program destination as the first bus with 60 migrants arrived. Data from Syracuse University shows that New York courts have approved just over 70% of asylum relief or other relief applications since 2001. Houston has denied nearly 88% of asylum-seekers. Dallas has denied over 72% of such applications. El Paso, has also joined in on the busing policy, sending 35 Venezuelan migrants to New York City in late August.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/09/02/texas-migrant-bus-cost/>

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Many Migrants Left In Legal Limbo As U.S. Fails To File Cases

By Alicia A. Caldwell, Wall Street Journal, September 5, 2022

- ❖ Tens of thousands of migrants who crossed the border illegally in the past year are in limbo after the U.S. government failed to file the necessary paperwork in court, leaving them with no immigration case to fight and ambiguous legal status in the U.S. Migrants released into the U.S. after crossing the border from Mexico typically have an initial court date set several weeks later, the first step to applying for asylum or other protections in the U.S. and the start of a legal process that can take years to complete when everything goes as planned. The brief first hearing often ends with the judge setting a second hearing weeks or months later, giving migrants time to find a lawyer. Roughly 47,000 of the nearly 284,500 cases completed in U.S. immigration courts between the start of the federal fiscal year in October and June were dismissed because a document known as a Notice To Appear, or an NTA, wasn't filed, according to data compiled by the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University. Between fiscal 2013 and 2020, fewer than 12,000 of about 1.6 million cases lacked government paperwork, according to TRAC. Last fiscal year, about 15,000 of 144,751 cases did. Unlike typical criminal cases such as a traffic violation, in which charges are dismissed if the government fails to do its part, immigration court cases can be filed at any time, leaving migrants in limbo. Immigration judges and lawyers say such delays, deemed "failure to prosecute" by Justice Department judges hearing the cases, are also undermining efforts by the Biden administration to reduce a backlog of cases that is approaching 2 million. Biden administration officials didn't give a reason why they haven't filed their paperwork in 17% of cases this fiscal year. Border authorities have recently been overwhelmed by a record number of illegal crossings from Mexico, expected to hit 2 million by the end of the fiscal year.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/many-migrants-left-in-legal-limbo-as-u-s-fails-to-file-cases-11662370201>

Authorities Report Nine Drowning Victims After Deadly Rio Grande Crossing

By William Melhado, *Texas Tribune*, September 3, 2022

- ❖ The bodies of nine migrants attempting to cross the Rio Grande on Thursday, September 1, were recovered by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Mexican authorities, according to a statement shared with The Texas Tribune. Dozens were swept downstream while attempting to cross the river near Eagle Pass where the river rose over two feet in a few days, according to The Associated Press. CBP located six bodies and the Mexican authorities recovered three victims, all near Eagle Pass on Thursday, according to a statement from the U.S. agency. The river's swelling came after months of minimal precipitation, followed by heavy rains which caused a sudden surge in flow. The National Weather Service told the AP that the river was flowing five times faster than usual. CBP personnel and Border Patrol agents rescued 37 people who were in the river and detained 16 others, according to the statement. An additional 39 migrants on the southern side of the river were arrested by Mexican authorities. Thursday's drownings was one of the deadliest along the U.S.-Mexico border in recent history.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/09/03/migrants-drown-crossing-rio-grande/>

EXCLUSIVE: Dozens Of Migrant Children Reported Missing In Houston, Raising Alarms

By Kristina Cooke, Mica Rosenberg and Ted Hesson, *Reuters*, September 2, 2022

- ❖ Federal and local officials are scrambling to locate close to a dozen unaccompanied migrant children, after Houston police raised concerns about dozens of migrant children reported missing in the Texas city since last year, according to U.S. government officials and related emails reviewed by Reuters. Earlier this summer, a Houston police detective alerted the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) after discovering what looked like a pattern of migrant kids missing from the homes of their U.S. sponsors, according to an HHS official, who declined to be identified. HHS is the federal agency that oversees the custody and release of children after they have crossed the U.S.-Mexico border without a parent or legal guardian. In August, in a rare step, the HHS refugee office implemented an emergency supervisory review of releases of unaccompanied kids to non-parent sponsors in the Houston area, according to the HHS official and an internal email seen by Reuters. The agency found that since late last year, 57 unaccompanied migrant kids had been reported missing in Houston, the HHS official, and two additional sources familiar with the situation, said. Included in the count were nine kids who ran away from HHS shelters in the Houston area, the official said. As of August 26, 46 of them had been confirmed safe, the official said. So far authorities say they have found no evidence of sex or labor trafficking. Some of the missing kids who have been located are now 18 or older. A handful left the homes of relatives acting as sponsors to join parents who were in the United States, the official said, adding that the number of cases being reviewed is small compared to the volume of overall releases to the area. Harris County, Texas, where Houston is located, is the No.1 destination for releases of unaccompanied minors, with more than 6,300 released between October 2021, when this fiscal year began, through June 2022. More than 200,000 non-Mexican minors - who cannot be quickly turned around at the border - have been caught crossing alone since Biden took office in January 2021. Mario Bruzzone, a senior policy adviser at the Women's Refugee Commission, which advocates for unaccompanied children, said in some cases, sponsor relationships can break down after a honeymoon period following reunification. Kids may have conflicts and run away due to trauma experienced in home countries or en route to the United States, he said. Runaways tend to be "an unfortunate part of this world of child welfare work," he said. During the review of Houston area cases, HHS discovered dozens of children had been released to similar addresses, which can be a red flag for possible trafficking, according to the HHS official and another source. The HHS official said the agency determined the addresses were in apartment complexes where many immigrant families live and not a significant cause for concern. The official said that around 60 cases for release had been subject to additional review and of those 53 had been cleared for release as of Aug. 26. Last year, releases from HHS custody were halted in and around the southern Alabama town of Enterprise. An HHS probe at the time focused on whether minors were falling victim to traffickers exploiting them for labor, three sources familiar with the investigations said. While investigators discovered no evidence of child trafficking, they found "exploitative" working conditions for some migrants living in the area and Reuters uncovered cases of children working in industrial settings in the state.
- ❖ For a chart on historical releases of unaccompanied minors see: <https://tmsnrt.rs/3RmX0Ms>
- ❖ For a map of unaccompanied minors released by county see: <https://tmsnrt.rs/3Rclzfh>
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/exclusive-dozens-migrant-children-reported-missing-houston-raising-alarms-2022-09-02/>

Dreams Of Safety, Health Care, Jobs: Why Thousands Of Migrants Are Waiting In Mexico -- And Thousands More Arrive Each Week

By Rosa Flores and Julia Jones, CNN, September 1, 2022

- ❖ Pastor Hector Silva gets emotional as he describes how he had to recently turn away mothers, with infants in their arms, from the gates of his migrant shelter. "It's very difficult," Silva said with a broken voice. "To stand at the gate and see a mom with a child and say, 'I'm sorry. I cannot help you.'" Silva has had to do just that countless times in recent months as thousands of migrants continue to arrive daily to the northern Mexico border city of Reynosa. Most of the new arrivals are Haitian. Silva estimates that about 12,800 migrants are waiting in Reynosa. At his two "Senda de Vida" shelters, Silva has enough food and tents for nearly 6,000. Earlier this year, the number of migrants waiting in border communities in northern Mexico, including Reynosa, swelled in anticipation of the end of Title 42, the Trump-era public health order that has been used nearly 2.2 million times to expel migrants out of the US to Mexico and other countries. In April, more than 7,000 migrants, mostly from Central America and Haiti were waiting in Reynosa for Title 42 to lift. The list of migrants hoping to qualify for a Title 42 exception is thousands long, Silva said. Thousands more are arriving every week and the wait can take months. Silva said he buses around 200 migrants with their documents in order to the Reynosa-Hidalgo port of entry every day. From there, he doesn't know the process, but he says those migrants have not come back to his shelter. Across the border in McAllen, Texas, Sister Norma Pimentel receives those who qualified for Title 42 exemptions and were processed by US immigration. Pimentel, the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, praised the move by the Biden Administration to allow migrants to seek asylum at ports of entry through an exception to Title 42.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/01/americas/migrants-reynosa-mexico-title-42/index.html>

BORDER WALL

Governor Ducey Issues Executive Order To Fill Gaps in Border Wall

By the Office of the Governor Ducey, News Release, August 12, 2022

- ❖ Governor Doug Ducey issued an Executive Order directing the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs to immediately fill the gaps in the Yuma border wall. Fortifying the border will be 60 double-stacked shipping containers, reinforced with concertina wire at the top. The shipping containers will reach about 22-feet high. The state-owned, 8,800-pound, 9-by-40-foot containers will be linked together and welded shut. The panels of the border wall constructed during the Trump administration are 30-feet high. Construction began Friday, August 12, morning on the thousand-foot gap in the border wall near Yuma, Arizona. Emergency management contractor Ashbritt is constructing the barriers. The 25-person team includes heavy equipment operators, operation supervisors and a safety manager. The project will be completed over the weekend. The barrier mission delivers on the most meaningful border security legislation in Arizona history, which passed the Arizona Legislature this year. Of the \$335 million investment in the Arizona Border Security Fund to construct and maintain a border fence, it will take \$6 million to fill the thousand-foot gap in Yuma. The Yuma Sector saw 235,230 migrant encounters from October 2021 to June 2022 – an ominous acceleration for the sector which already experienced the highest yearly increase among all sectors in fiscal year 2021. Nonprofits and shelters in Yuma County that assist migrants have been over capacity for months, with capacity ranging from approximately 115 to 160 percent.
- ❖ Press Release Source: <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2022/08/governor-ducey-issues-executive-order-fill-gaps-border-wall>

Governor Ducey Announces Border Wall Gaps Near Yuma Are Now Filled

By the Office of the Governor Ducey, News Release, August 24, 2022

- ❖ Governor Doug Ducey announced today 3,820 feet of previously open border near Yuma, Arizona is now closed with a barrier of double-stacked and secured shipping containers. The fast-moving Yuma Border Barrier Mission was launched when Governor Ducey issued an Executive Order on August 12. The last of the 130 shipping containers was installed on August 23. The innovative solution is an example to the federal government on how to effectively secure the border in a short amount of time. Recent numbers from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection show the Yuma sector had 259,895 migrant encounters from October 2021 to July 2022 – a nearly 250 percent increase from the prior year and the highest increase of all border sectors. Nearly 24,500 of those encounters were in July. It took 48 workers from contractor Ashbritt to install the 8,800-pound shipping containers and 4,500 feet of concertina wire. The first 842-foot gap took 44 containers and four days to fill. The second took eight containers to fill 130 feet in half a day. Another four containers filled the third 75-foot gap, which took half a day. It took four days to fill a 1,200-foot gap with 60 containers. The last gap was 250 feet and was filled with 14 containers over three days.
- ❖ Press Release Source: <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2022/08/governor-ducey-announces-border-wall-gaps-near-yuma-are-now-filled>

Tribe: Arizona Built Border Barrier Against Its Wishes

By Elliot Spagat, Associated Press, September 2, 2022

- ❖ The Cocopah Indian Tribe said Friday, September 2, that the state of Arizona acted against its wishes by stacking shipping containers on its land to prevent illegal border crossings. The tribe determined that the state put 42 double-stacked containers on its land near Yuma, said Michael Fila from its office of emergency management. The tribe wrote state officials to inform them of their findings and concerns. Fila said the containers block half of a two-lane road, closing a “vital evacuation route.” The containers pose other safety concerns, including if the containers fall, Fila wrote. Two containers toppled during construction last month for reasons that are unclear. “The integrity of the road itself has subsequently been damaged by the heavy machinery that was used in placing the shipping containers” and created the danger for first responders to get stuck, Fila said in an email shared with The Associated Press. The tribe told state officials at a meeting Aug. 17 that it didn’t want the barriers and is waiting on a response to its findings, said Jonathan Athens, a Cocopah spokesman. “We had made it clear before that we did not want the containers on our land,” he said. The state installed 130 double-stacked containers in the Yuma area last month in an effort to close gaps in the imposing wall built during Donald Trump’s presidency that were incomplete when he left office last year. The Biden administration said in July that it would plug gaps but Ducey said he couldn’t wait and hired AshBritt Inc. to install shipping containers the length of 13 football fields in five areas. The containers that the tribe says were installed on tribal lands extend into the desert, ending abruptly in an area where migrants can easily walk around it. The area includes rights of way for people outside the tribe to travel, which may have created confusion, said Fila. In any case, the tribe said state officials did not consult them before building.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://apnews.com/article/arizona-yuma-government-and-politics-e2c388f17a2a3378f6a099baa0a277d6>

DEVELOPING STORIES

Farmers Push For Immigration Reform To Counter Labor Shortages And Rising Food Prices

By Safia Samee Ali, NBC News, September 5, 2022

- ❖ Farmers across the U.S. are joining a push for national immigration reform that they say could ease labor shortages and lower food prices as surging production costs continue to rock the agriculture industry. The farm operators say the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, already passed by the House and pending in the Senate, will provide them with a stable reliable workforce by creating a path to citizenship for undocumented agricultural workers and reforming the seasonal farmworker visa program, among other things. The current labor shortage, while not new, has been exacerbated by the pandemic and resulted in higher prices or empty store shelves for consumers. Food costs are now 10% higher than they were at this time last year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Senate version of the legislation, sponsored by Sens. Mike Crapo, an Idaho Republican, and Michael Bennet, a Colorado Democrat, would modify and further open up the widely used H-2A temporary work visa program to give undocumented farmworkers year-round work-based residency with an eventual pathway to citizenship. It is still uncertain when the legislation will be presented for a vote in the Senate, but as labor shortages contribute to challenges in food production, the bill has received wide support from hundreds of farmers and agriculture groups. A 2022 Texas A&M University study commissioned by the American Business Coalition, a bipartisan group of 1,200 business leaders who advocate for immigration reform, found that having more migrant and H-2A workers were related to lower inflation, higher average wages and lower unemployment. The study also found that “more denied petitions for naturalizations are associated with larger consumer prices and higher inflation.” Groups such as Familias Unidas por la Justicia, a farmworker union on the West Coast, have been protesting the bill in part because of a requirement to enroll in a government verification process they believe could breed unlawful tracking of immigrants and would not include all undocumented immigrants working on farms. “Those who don’t qualify for any kind of relief from the Farm Workforce Modernization Act are basically given two options: You can either self-deport or you can join the H-2A program, which time and time again, we’ve seen, is very exploitative,” said Edgar Franks, political director of Familias Unidas por la Justicia and a former farmworker in Washington. In its current House version, individuals who can show they have performed at least 1,035 hours of agricultural labor during a two-year period would qualify for temporary “certified agricultural worker status,” which is valid for five-year increments. After an additional eight years of farm work they would be eligible for permanent resident status. From 2014 to 2016 about half of the more than 3 million farmworkers lacked legal immigration status, according to a survey conducted by the the Agriculture Department — which conceded in its report that the number is likely not comprehensive because of the fear around reporting immigration status.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/farmers-pushing-immigration-reform-counter-labor-shortages-escalating-rcna45741>

Garcia: Firefighters Consider Filing Grievance Over Deployment To Migrant Resource Center

By Gilbert Garcia, San Antonio Express-News, September 8, 2022

- ❖ The San Antonio Professional Firefighters Association has notified city officials that the union may file a grievance over the deployment of local firefighters to the city-run Migrant Resource Center. The issue is currently in the hands of the union's seven-member Grievance Committee, which is expected to decide on Friday whether or not SAPFA will go forward with the filing of an official grievance. The union notified the city of the possible grievance on Aug. 25, and has a Sept. 13 deadline to file the grievance. The city opened up the North Side center on July 7, at the site of a former CPS Energy customer service center on San Pedro Avenue. It was intended to provide shelter and other necessary services for asylum seekers arriving in San Antonio, en route to the destinations where they will wait for their cases to be adjudicated in immigration court. The city has used firefighters to help with the staffing at the Migrant Resource Center, providing shelter management, transportation services, planning, logistics and finance-operations assistance. Most of that firefighter manpower has come during overtime hours, according to Joe Arrington, the public information officer for the San Antonio Fire Department. All local costs associated with the center will be reimbursed by the federal government through a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant. If the fire union follows through with its grievance, its major point will be that in these types of situations, the city should utilize only members of the Fire Department's shelter-management team, a disaster-response group that formed in 2005 to deal with the influx of Louisianans displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The shelter-management team is a small group, however, and wouldn't be sufficient to help with the staffing needs at the center, according to city officials. In July, a daily average of 35 uniformed SAFD employees provided assistance at the Migrant Resource Center.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/news/news_columnists/gilbert_garcia/article/Firefighters-filing-grievance-migrant-center-17428867.php

Texas Is Spending \$1,700 For Each Migrant It Buses To Democrat-Controlled Northern Cities

By Benjamin Wermund, San Antonio Express-News, September 8, 2022

- ❖ Texas is spending roughly \$1,700 per person to transport migrants to cities on the East Coast under Gov. Greg Abbott's busing program that has cost the state more than \$14 million. The busing strategy led D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser to declare an emergency on Thursday after more than 9,000 migrants have arrived in the district from Texas and Arizona, which has a similar busing program. The district was preparing to spend \$10 million to set up a new office of migrant services to welcome those arriving, offer them shelter and food and help coordinate transportation to get asylum seekers to their sponsors in the U.S., Bowser said. The bill for Texas to bus migrants to D.C. and New York City had run over \$14.1 million by Aug. 19, according to records obtained through a public information request. Abbott has since expanded the program to send migrants to Chicago, a move the city's mayor blasted last week as a "racist and xenophobic practice of expulsion." As of Aug. 12 the state had sent about 6,800 migrants to D.C. and 360 to New York City. By that point, Texas had paid Wynn Transportation, the charter company it hired for the program, more than \$12.7 million, records show. That amounts to more than \$1,700 per passenger. Under the program, migrants — who are seeking asylum in the U.S. after fleeing violence or authoritarian governments in Cuba and Venezuela — must agree to be transported out of state. And in some cases, Abbott is giving them a free ride to a place where they are likely to have a much easier time making their cases to stay in the country than if they were to remain in Texas.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Texas-is-spending-1700-for-each-migrant-it-buses-17427460.php>

3-Day Stay Policy Pushes Some Migrants From San Antonio's Resource Center To The Street

By Raquel Torres, San Antonio Report, September 7, 2022

- ❖ The City of San Antonio's policy of releasing migrants from its resource center after three days has prompted some migrants, including families with children, to sleep on the streets. In a vacant lot across from the migrant resource center on San Pedro, old carpets laid out on the concrete served as bedding. A hole in the fence allows entry to migrants, who sleep there. One family set up a tent for shelter. Many of the migrants interviewed in the vacant lot last week indicated that they would be staying in San Antonio rather than moving to their original destination. Alexander Perez said he'd been sleeping in the lot for the past two weeks, working day labor jobs to save money for rent to stay. On Friday afternoon, city officials visited the vacant lot after a reporter told them about migrants sleeping there, including families with small children. They learned that earlier in the afternoon, police had swept the lot, said Rob Gonzalez, a member of Iglesia Pentecostal Impacto de Amor, a local Spanish-language church. He told city officials that his church had taken in the families who had been sleeping there. Jessica Dovalina, assistant director of the city's Department of Human Services (DHS), who visited the vacant lot Friday afternoon, said she had been unaware that some migrants who had left the center were sleeping outside. Dovalina emphasized that the city's purpose in opening the central hub has been to temporarily assist migrants on their way to their host cities. She said she hadn't heard that some migrants appear to be changing their travel

Benedictine Sisters Corporate Responsibility Coalition

plans to stay in San Antonio. The vast majority of migrants passing through San Antonio are headed to other U.S. cities, city officials say. Those who don't have immediate travel plans can work with center employees known as "navigators," according to the city, who help connect them to resources like Catholic Charities, which provides immigrants support through a variety of programs. "It's up to the migrant to seek help if they need it," said Tara Ford, director of marketing and communications for Catholic Charities. She added that anyone seeking assistance will receive it. No migrants, especially those with small children, have been turned out by the center without being given resources to find shelter, Dovalina said, noting that families can ask to stay for additional days. Yojaina Cortes, a Venezuelan migrant who arrived in San Antonio with her 3-year-old son, said Thursday that she asked an official at the center if she could stay one more day until her husband, who was still in processing, arrived at the center. "[The center employee] told me no, I had to find a way and that she was going to rip my wristband. I asked her what to do," said Cortes, who was sitting in the vacant lot while her son played with other children there. She said the employee gave her an address for help, but she chose to stay close to the center to wait for her husband. It is unclear what happened to Cortes and her son. City officials said late Wednesday it had no record of anyone registered by that name at the center. Carlos Garcia, pastor of Iglesia Pentecostal Impacto de Amor, said she was not among the families taken in Friday. Two families are staying with church members, he said; one has since been connected to Catholic Charities. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston said Tuesday the city has only asked 81 migrants out of 22,000 who have been served to leave, either for behavioral issues, or because their three days were up. City officials said all 81 were "unaccompanied males." "There may be people who just leave on their own, but we only asked 81 to exit," she said. Asked about a family of five picked up from the vacant lot by church members, a city spokeswoman said the family left after three days "on their own" and "were not forced to leave." The spokeswoman confirmed that migrants arriving at the center are told that they may stay for three days, and that migrants "may or may not" alert staff when they leave. Some migrants interviewed outside the resource center over the past several weeks have said that they were asked to leave after three days, while others said they left after three days because they were told that was the rule. According to Houston, between 500 to 1,000 migrants arrive at the center a day, and roughly 70% leave within 24 hours because they already have travel plans. The remaining third are often trying to obtain the money to purchase tickets, the city said.

❖ News Article Source: <https://sanantonioreport.org/san-antonio-migrant-resource-center-policy-homelessness/>

Catholic Charities To Take Over San Antonio's Migrant Resource Center Monday

By Ricardo Delgado, Megan Rodriguez, San Antonio Express-News, September 16, 2022

❖ Their journey from Venezuela took four months. Mexican immigration officials caught and returned them to the border with Guatemala four times. But Keyder Escalona, 28, and Ayberson Robles, 22, finally made it to San Antonio. "We've been friends the whole trip, like brothers-in-arms," Escalona said Thursday outside the city's Migrant Resource Center. The facility — which provides asylum seekers like Escalona and Robles with service referrals and help with travel connections, transportation to nearby shelters and overnight accommodations — is an alternative to sleeping at San Antonio International Airport or the Greyhound bus terminal downtown. And even as the operation of the center changes hands Monday, its services will continue. The city has run the facility at 7000 San Pedro Ave. on the near North Side since setting it up in July. Now, Catholic Charities will be at the helm. "The plan was always to transition the operation of the MRC to Catholic Charities once the operation was established and Catholic Charities was able to hire staff," said Roland Martinez, a spokesperson for the city's Department of Human Services. Martinez said people are allowed to stay at the center for up to three days before they depart to their host city. He said that more than 70 percent of migrants depart within 24 hours, and nearly all those who remain leave within three days. Of the more than 24,000 migrants whom the center has served, Martinez said, the city has asked 96 unaccompanied males to leave for behaving unacceptably, violating rules or exceeding their allotted time to stay. Although it won't run the center anymore, the city will continue to provide support services to the operation of it, Martinez said. The city isn't alone in helping migrants move through the area. Catholic Charities has provided hotel rooms and travel assistance. Corazón Ministries operates a shelter at Travis Park Church downtown that can host migrants who need a place to sleep. The Interfaith Welcome Committee has volunteers who help migrants traveling on Greyhound buses find where they need to go. And the San Antonio Food Bank provides meals, donations and volunteers at the Migrant Resource Center. The city has funded the lease for the 71,132-square-foot facility, which previously housed CPS Energy customer service, through December. Melody Woosley, director of the city's Department of Human Services, said in August that the city would have to decide soon whether the need for the center will stretch beyond the six-month lease.

❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Catholic-Charities-take-over-SA-migrant-center-17447026.php>

Archbishop Criticizes Busing Of Migrants

By *Laura Garcia, San Antonio Express-News, September 18, 2022*

- ❖ San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller said Sunday that transporting migrants from Texas to other states to score political points “offends God.” García-Siller took to Twitter to comment on Texas Gov. Greg Abbott’s practice of busing migrants to New York, Chicago and Washington, D.C., to protest what Abbott says is the Biden administration’s failure to secure the border. On Wednesday, another governor, Florida’s Ron DeSantis, employed the same tactic, arranging for a pair of charter flights that carried some 50 migrants from San Antonio’s Kelly Field to Martha’s Vineyard, Mass. “To use migrants and refugees as pawns offends God, destroys society and shows how low individuals can be for personal gains,” García-Siller tweeted Sunday morning to his 7,387 followers. “These tactics — buses — promote human trafficking. We pray for conversion of heart. God protect our sisters and brothers in need.” In a second tweet, he wrote that “Pope Francis invites us to be more human, to encounter one another with care and respect in order to let the divine shine for the well being of people. God, we trust in you!” Two days earlier, the archbishop sounded a similar theme, tweeting that “using migrants and refugees as pawns is a disgrace, a great offense to human dignity and a sinful action.” He added, “Let us pray for our public leaders. By some accounts, the migrants flown to Martha’s Vineyard were Venezuelans lured from outside San Antonio’s Migrant Resource Center with promises that shelter and jobs would be waiting for them in Boston. Instead, they were flown to the small island south of Cape Cod, where officials were not expecting them and no arrangements had been made for them in advance. Social service agencies and volunteers provided food and shelter for the migrants before they were transported to the Massachusetts mainland. DeSantis said the flights, funded by Florida taxpayers, were justified because the migrants eventually would have made their way from Texas to Florida and would have placed a burden on public services there. On Thursday, Abbott bused to Washington more than 100 immigrants who had crossed the border near Eagle Pass. They were dropped off outside Vice President Kamala Harris’ official residence at the U.S. Naval Observatory.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/border-mexico/article/San-Antonio-Archbishop-Abbott-migrant-busing-17450529.php>

Gov. Greg Abbott Trolls Vice President Kamala Harris By Sending Migrants To Her Home In D.C.

By *Jeremy Wallace, Austin Bureau, September 15, 2022*

- ❖ Gov. Greg Abbott had over 100 migrants who crossed the border near Eagle Pass bused to D.C. and dropped off Thursday near Vice President Kamala Harris’s residence at the United States Naval Observatory. Abbott pointed out that Harris was just in Houston and — despite being charged by President Joe Biden with leading the effort to address the surge at the border — she has failed to visit the Rio Grande Valley or Del Rio sectors to see the problem firsthand. Harris has visited El Paso last June and visited the Rio Grande Valley during the presidential campaign in 2020. Texas has bused over 7,900 migrants to Washington, D.C. since April and 2,200 migrants to New York City since August 5. Abbott also recently sent about 300 migrants to Chicago.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Gov-Greg-Abbott-trolls-Vice-President-Kamala-17444240.php>

Ron Desantis Follows Greg Abbott’s Lead, Flies Migrants Who Crossed Into Texas To Martha’s Vineyard

By *Jeremy Wallace, Austin Bureau, September 15, 2022*

- ❖ Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is following Gov. Greg Abbott’s lead and transporting migrants who cross the Texas border to northern states to put pressure on President Joe Biden and his administration to do more about the surge in migration across the U.S. border with Mexico. DeSantis on Wednesday night claimed credit for flying about 50 migrants unannounced to Martha’s Vineyard in Massachusetts. Almost all of the passengers were Venezuelans who have become a major part of a surge at the Texas border from Del Rio to Eagle Pass. They told reporters with the New York Times and WBZ television in Boston that they had been released from an asylum processing facility in San Antonio and were then offered flights to Massachusetts. How Florida ended up flying those migrants to Massachusetts is unclear. Texas officials who have been busing migrants to Washington, D.C., New York City and Chicago were not involved in flying or coordinating with DeSantis. “States like Massachusetts, New York, and California will better facilitate the care of these individuals who they have invited into our country by incentivizing illegal immigration through their designation as ‘sanctuary states’ and support for the Biden administration’s open border policies,” a statement from DeSantis’ office stated. Texas has bused over 7,900 migrants to Washington, D.C. since April and 2,200 migrants to New York City since August 5. Abbott also recently sent about 300 migrants to Chicago. On Thursday, Abbott had over 100 migrants who crossed the border near Eagle Pass bused to D.C. and dropped off near Vice President Kamala Harris’s residence at the United States Naval Observatory. DeSantis is not the first governor to follow Abbott’s lead. Arizona has also begun shipping migrants to other states.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Ron-DeSantis-follows-Greg-Abbott-s-lead-flies-17444088.php>

Florida Gov. Desantis Didn't Tell Gov. Abbott He Was Sending Texas Migrants To Martha's Vineyard

By *Jeremy Wallace, Austin Bureau, September 16, 2022*

- ❖ Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis had minimal coordination with Gov. Greg Abbott before deciding to round up Venezuelan migrants in San Antonio to ship to Florida so he could then send them to Martha's Vineyard at the expense of Florida taxpayers. While the staffs of the two governors had talked generally about the busing strategy Abbott started last spring, DeSantis did not have any direct planning with Abbott's office Wednesday when DeSantis had some 50 migrants, including children, board a flight that left San Antonio and stopped in Florida briefly before being sent on to Martha's Vineyard. "Though we were not involved in these initial planes to Martha's Vineyard, we appreciate the support in responding to this national crisis and helping Texans," said Renae Eze, Abbott's press secretary. Just a week earlier, DeSantis called Abbott's busing strategy "brilliant" at a fundraiser with GOP donors in Orlando, according to the Washington Post. At that same meeting, DeSantis told donors "maybe" he would go to Texas and help Abbott. But how DeSantis carried out his version of the operation is vastly different from Abbott's effort. In April, Abbott directed the Texas Division of Emergency Management to charter buses to transport migrants from Texas to Washington, D.C. Emergency management officials have been working closely with nongovernmental aid agencies along the border and have made sure migrants know their rights before agreeing to be bused to Washington or elsewhere. The state provides migrants with waivers to sign in languages they can understand to make sure the state isn't violating any laws. Abbott has stressed in the past that the buses are taking only those who volunteer to go. Texas has sent more than 10,000 migrants to Washington, New York and Illinois. On the other hand, Venezuelans interviewed by the media in Martha's Vineyard painted a different picture of their trip, saying they were not aware they were going to the island town. Some said they were misled to believe they were going someplace to get jobs and other services. On social media, DeSantis' deputy press secretary Jeremy Redfern defended the governor's decision, pointing to a budget item approved by the Legislature to spend \$12 million to "facilitate the transport of unauthorized aliens out of Florida." Since September, federal officials have reported almost 2 million encounters with migrants on the U.S. border with Mexico, with 1 million in Texas alone.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Gov-DeSantis-left-Gov-Abbott-out-of-his-plan-to-17447097.php>

Desantis Joins Abbott In Immigrant Transport Chicanery, Flew People Out Of S.A. To Martha's Vineyard

By *Guillermo Contreras, Brian Chasnoff, San Antonio Express-News, September 16, 2022*

- ❖ Two chartered jets loaded with migrants — whom Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis sent to Martha's Vineyard to make a political point about President Joe Biden's border policies — flew out of San Antonio's Kelly Field. On Wednesday morning, the migrants boarded planes owned and operated by Ultimate Jet, an Ohio-based charter company that specializes in corporate travel. The flights to Martha's Vineyard carried about 50 migrants, who'd reportedly been lured from locations near the city-run Migrant Resource Center on San Pedro with false promises of jobs and help with their asylum cases. Records show Ultimate Jet flights 11 and 59 left Kelly Field — part of Port San Antonio on the Southwest Side — about 8 a.m. Wednesday. The planes landed at Bob Sikes Airport near Crestview, Fla., about 760 miles east of San Antonio, shortly before 10 a.m. Eastern time. From there, the planes took different routes to Martha's Vineyard. Flight 11 landed at Spartanburg, S.C., before arriving at its destination — a Massachusetts island community largely enclosed in a bubble of wealth — about 3:10 p.m. Wednesday. Flight 59 landed at Charlotte Douglas International Airport in North Carolina at 12:46 p.m. before arriving at Martha's Vineyard about 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, flight tracking data shows. Martha's Vineyard municipal officials confirmed those flight details. Rachel Rollins, U.S. attorney for Massachusetts, said she would talk to Justice Department officials about the DeSantis-orchestrated flights. She said she did not have enough information to offer an opinion as to whether DeSantis broke any laws.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/In-political-stunt-Martha-s-Vineyard-bound-17446624.php>

Migrants Who Landed At Martha's Vineyard Felt Embarrassed, Confused: 'They Used Us For A Political Purpose'

By Raquel Torres, San Antonio Report, September 18, 2022

- ❖ Several migrants who had stayed at the San Antonio migrant resource center say they were lured into a political stunt with promises of jobs, English classes and long-term shelter, only to end up confused and embarrassed on a resort island in Massachusetts. When the group of 42 adult migrants and five children arrived Wednesday on Martha's Vineyard, Elid Aguilar, a 27-year-old Venezuelan migrant, felt so frustrated at the situation he was in that he ran behind a church nearby and sat down to cry. Aguilar said over the phone Saturday from Joint Base Cape Cod, where many in the group of migrants were moved after landing in Martha's Vineyard. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis took credit on Wednesday for sending the two flights of migrants to the popular and affluent summer vacation destination in Massachusetts. The City of San Antonio said in a statement Saturday that staff at the migrant resource center has begun advising migrants not to accept rides or any other assistance from strangers outside the center — and to report any concerns to the staff. Signs have been posted at the center providing the National Human Trafficking hotline. Wilmer Villazana, a 34-year-old Venezuelan migrant, said he decided to go with a woman calling herself Perla last week after she said she would help the migrants get to unspecified "sanctuary states." At first, he felt hopeful to hear promises of what awaited the migrants at his next destination, but as he waited for four nights and five days at a San Antonio-area La Quinta hotel, something started to feel off. "[I feel] lied to, deceived," Villazana said. "They used us for a political purpose." Since learning the woman's description, the League of United Latin American Citizens announced it is offering a \$5,000 reward for information about the woman known as Perla. LULAC President Domingo Garcia traveled to Martha's Vineyard on Friday and spoke with a handful of migrants about their experiences traveling to Massachusetts. Their stories of Perla and the false promises she made were almost identical, he told the Texas Tribune. Outside the migrant resource center on San Pedro Avenue near a McDonald's restaurant, Perla and another woman promised migrants long-term refugio, or shelter, opportunities for jobs, additional resources, attorneys, classes to learn English and even a school for Villazana's 7-year-old niece, Aguilar and Villazana said.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://sanantonioreport.org/san-antonio-migrants-marthas-vineyard-felt-embarrassed-confused/>

Texas Reduces National Guard Members Deployed To Operation Lone Star Border Mission

By James Barragán and Davis Winkie, Texas Tribune and Military Times, September 19, 2022

- ❖ The Texas Military Department has reduced the number of troops dedicated to Operation Lone Star, Gov. Greg Abbott's border security mission, as questions remain about its future financing. Texas Military Department officials did not give a specific number for the current deployment level but said it has "over 5,000 service members" dedicated to Operation Lone Star. Last November, Abbott declared he had deployed a total of 10,000 troops to protect the border as part of the mission. But the most troops ever assigned to the border was roughly 6,500, with thousands more supporting the mission from elsewhere, including the department's headquarters in Austin. The number of troops on the mission has declined since. In April, the Texas Military Department's top leader, Maj. Gen. Thomas Suelzer told lawmakers there were 6,128 service members deployed to Operation Lone Star. In another meeting in July, he said the number had dropped to 5,751 after the department had been able to find efficiencies by contracting out construction of border fencing, shutting down a base camp and sending home about 700 service members focused on logistics. The mission is unprecedented in its size and scale for a state deployment whose members typically are sent to help for short missions like assisting in natural disasters. It was plagued early on by complaints of low morale, poor living conditions and a lack of purpose. In a statement, the military department's public affairs staff again pointed to increased efficiencies — one of Suelzer's major focuses after taking over the department in March — that have allowed them to send service members home. Abbott began the mission in March 2021 after migrant encounters at the state's southern border started increasing when President Joe Biden took office and promised to roll back some of his predecessor's stiffer immigration policies. Abbott started ramping up the deployment to Operation Lone Star last September, taking what had started as a voluntary force of 500 service members in March and increasing it to 2,500 that month. The next month, military leaders increased the force to 5,000 and then to 6,500 by November. It was unclear whether the state would try to maintain that level of deployment for another year, particularly as the cost of the mission has risen so high that state officials have had to transfer nearly \$1 billion just to keep it afloat this year. The most recent transfer of \$495.3 million was made in April and covered the military deployment through the end of August. But it is unclear how the state is paying for the department's continued deployment.
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