

NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES - OCTOBER 13, 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	AUG	Total	
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Alien Child	12,616	13,745	11,704	8,607	11,779	13,892	11,857	14,419	14,930	13,007	11,013	137,569	
	Family Units*	41,561	43,279	49,436	30,419	25,166	34,053	37,083	51,167	44,071	42,847	39,221	438,303	
	Single Adult	104,940	109,992	109,461	108,791	122,118	162,995	154,482	158,811	133,470	125,911	130,926	1,421,897	
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		159,117	167,016	170,601	147,817	159,063	210,940	203,422	224,397	192,471	181,765	181,160	1,997,769	

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

LATEST NEWS

Record Surge Of Venezuelan Asylum Seekers Strains Texas Border

By *Jeremy Wallace, Austin Bureau, September 20, 2022*

- ❖ A surge of Venezuelan asylum seekers heading to Texas crossed into the United States last month continuing a record surge of migration that has resulted in U.S. border officials encountering more than 2 million people in less than a year. Just in August, more than 25,000 Venezuelans were stopped crossing the U.S. border with Mexico with more than 18,000 of those coming between Del Rio and Eagle Pass. It's made the Del Rio sector along the Texas border — typically one of the least crossed sectors along the entire U.S. border — now one of the most crossed sectors, forcing federal border patrol officials to surge agents and resources to counter the shifting patterns along the border. For each of the last three months Del Rio has seen more border encounters with people of all nationalities than any other sector along the U.S. border between Texas and California. In August, federal officials reported a record 52,364 border encounters in the Del Rio sector — nearly twice as many as any other sector along the U.S. border. Since last October, more than 428,000 migrants have been encountered in the last 11 months along the same stretch of the border, almost twice as many as the previous year. Economic conditions in Central and South America have been slower to improve coming out of the pandemic, triggering a surge of migration to the U.S. where the country has rebounded more quickly, Mayorkas said. “Failing communist regimes in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba are driving a new wave of migration across the Western Hemisphere, including the recent increase in encounters at the southwest U.S. border,” U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Chris Magnus said Monday. As Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis send buses and planes of migrants to other states, many of those on board have been asylum seekers from Venezuela who said they crossed through Del Rio or Eagle Pass. Almost all of the migrants on the plane sent to Martha’s Vineyard last week by Florida taxpayers were Venezuelans who crossed the border near Del Rio or Eagle Pass and were sent to San Antonio to be processed. DeSantis said he rounded up the migrants in San Antonio in a preemptive strike to keep them out of Florida. Miami and South Florida are home to more than 100,000 Venezuelans. Since 2013, millions of Venezuelans have fled that nation as economic and social problems have spiraled under the authoritarian leadership of Nicolas Maduro. The New York Times reported that many of the Venezuelans who took the flight to Martha’s Vineyard described traveling for more than two months on foot, crossing jungles to escape the conditions in their home country.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Record-surge-of-Venezuelan-asylum-seekers-strain-17454392.php>

Migrant Encounters At The Border Are Higher Today Than They Were Before Gov. Greg Abbott’s Operation Lone Star Began

By *James Barragán, Texas Tribune, September 28, 2022*

- ❖ For the past year and a half, Gov. Greg Abbott has made border security his priority and the centerpiece of his reelection campaign. He’s put \$4 billion on the line to do so, initiating construction of a border wall and sending thousands of National Guard service members and state police to patrol the border with Mexico for months on end in his highly touted Operation Lone Star. And over 18 months, he has taken unprecedented measures to curb illegal immigration — arresting and jailing migrants on state criminal charges; spending millions on bus tickets to send them to other cities; and for a few days, nearly shutting down international trade with Mexico to increase inspections of commercial trucks entering into Texas. He has repeatedly blamed President Joe Biden for an increase in migrants and called for the federal government to reinstate former President Donald Trump’s tougher immigration policies. But despite those efforts, the number of migrants officials encounter at the Texas-Mexico border is higher today than it was before Operation Lone Star began, according to data reported by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Migration slowed periodically after Gov. Greg Abbott launched the \$4 billion operation in March 2021. But it has not been the major deterrent the governor had promised. The number of migrant encounters at the Texas-Mexico border has climbed from 109,456 in March 2021, the month the mission began, to 116,976 in August — a slower rate of growth than at other parts of the border but a failure of Abbott’s office’s stated desire to “stop this revolving door and deter others considering entering illegally.” This month, federal authorities said the number of migrant encounters at the entire southwest border exceeded 2 million in August. That’s the first time in history that threshold has been hit. Authorities expect it to rise to about 2.3 million by the end of the fiscal year on Friday. In his weekly border mission updates, Abbott touts successes: 334,000 migrant apprehensions by state officials; 19,000 criminal arrests; seizures of 5,500 weapons and 336 million doses of lethal fentanyl. “All of which would have otherwise made their way into communities across Texas and our country thanks to President Biden’s open border policies,” his spokesperson Renae Eze said. Yet the continued pace of migrants at the state’s southern border calls into question the effectiveness of a state policy intended to stem border crossings that is costing the state the equivalent of the average annual college tuition and fees at a public university for 395,000 students.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/09/28/greg-abbott-border-migrants/>

Migrant Deaths At The U.S.-Mexico Border Hit A Record High, In Part Due To Drownings

By Joel Rose and Marisa Peñaloza, NPR, September 29, 2022

- ❖ The river that divides Texas and Mexico is known on the U.S. side as the Rio Grande. On the other side, it has a different name: El Río Bravo, "the angry river" or "the fierce river." "It seems like it's a slow moving river, but it's fairly swift. It is very deceptive, very dangerous," says Manuel Mello, the fire chief in Eagle Pass, a small city in South Texas that's become one of the busiest crossing spots on the entire border. The fire department helps recover the bodies of migrants who drowned trying to cross. Mello says the department used to get one or two calls a month. Now it gets dozens. This has been the deadliest year ever for migrants trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border. More than 800 migrants have died border-wide in the fiscal year that ends this week, according to internal government figures shared by a senior Border Patrol official. Drownings are part of the reason why. Hundreds more have perished from extreme heat in remote borderlands, or in the backs of tractor-trailers. Eagle Pass has emerged as one of the more dangerous crossing points on the border — especially after heavy rains, when the river is high. Earlier this month, nine migrants were recovered from the river near Eagle Pass on a single day. NPR watched as several families with young children waded out into the water on the Mexico side, only to turn back when it got too deep. First responders and law enforcement officials in South Texas say they're struggling to keep up with the pace of migrant fatalities. Maverick County, which includes Eagle Pass, has no medical examiner. So the remains of migrants have to be stored at a local funeral home until they can be transported to neighboring Webb County. Maverick County Sheriff Tom Schmerber says the funeral director recently called to ask if the sheriff had a place to store bodies. It's the second year in a row that migrant deaths near the border have climbed sharply. More than 560 migrants died in FY 2021, according to internal government figures, setting the previous record for a single year.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/29/1125638107/migrant-deaths-us-mexico-border-record-drownings>

Migrants From Three Countries Are Driving The Spike In Encounters At The Southern Border, Swamping A Backlogged Immigration System

By Rosa Flores, CNN, October 8, 2022

- ❖ In August alone, immigration agents encountered more than 203,000 individuals at the southern border. Migrants from just three countries – Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba – made up about 56,000 of those encounters, or about 28 percent, federal data shows. After an encounter at the border a migrant could be detained, immediately expelled from the US or released pending immigration proceedings. Among the latest arrivals were the roughly 50 asylum hopefuls – mostly Venezuelans – sent from Texas to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, last month on flights organized by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis – part of a series of moves by Republican governors to transport migrants to liberal areas to protest what they describe as the failure of the federal government to secure the southern border. Attorneys for the migrants have filed a class action lawsuit, saying they were misled in agreeing to the flights and had been told that they would arrive to find housing, jobs and help with the immigration process. In response to the lawsuit, DeSantis' office repeated what was previously said: The transportation of migrants from Texas to Martha's Vineyard "was done on a voluntary basis." CBP Commissioner Chris Magnus says the latest wave of migration is mostly driven by people fleeing the "failing communist regimes" in Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba, which is complicating the processing and removal of those individuals once they arrive in the US, as they are generally not subject to Title 42. Title 42 is the pandemic public health order that since 2020 has allowed immigration authorities to swiftly expel some migrants to Mexico or their home countries. In Del Rio, Texas, a small border town of about 35,000 residents, border patrol vans and buses constantly drop off migrants who have been processed by immigration agents at the Val Verde Border Humanitarian Coalition – the one migrant respite center in town. So far this year, more than 32,000 migrants have come through the center, a nearly 40% increase over last year's total, according to Tiffany Burrow, the center's director of operations. The recently arrived migrants and asylum seekers are entering a highly complicated and backlogged immigration system. This fiscal year alone, U.S. immigration Courts recorded over 819,000 new immigration cases. At the end of August, there were nearly 2 million immigration cases pending in immigration courts. That total includes 743,250 cases in which asylum claims have been made and are still pending, according to an analysis of government data by Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) at Syracuse University. There are hundreds of thousands more asylum cases going through US Citizenship and Immigration Services, the USCIS ombudsman told the National Law Review in July. At the end of March about 443,000 work permit cases were pending, according to a USCIS spokesperson.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/07/us/migrant-asylum-immigration-backlog/index.html>

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTER IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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

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

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>

Security In Place At San Antonio's Migrant Resource Center In Days After Controversial DeSantis Flight

By Yvette Benavides, Texas Public Radio, September 21, 2022

- ❖ In the days after Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis had dozens of migrants flown from San Antonio to Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts, the Migrant Resource Center found itself in a national spotlight. A family of six Venezuelan migrants spoke to TPR outside the facility on Tuesday. After a day that saw temperatures near 100 degrees, it was finally cool enough in the evening to sit outside and pass the time. Brigid, the mother, folded clothes, and the father watched Spanish language news on his phone. The youngest children ate small packets of Skittles candy. When they were asked if they heard the story about Martha's Vineyard incident, the father held up his cellphone. That was the news story they listened to at that moment. A woman named Perla reportedly recruited about 50 migrants under false pretenses for the trip to Massachusetts, and she had approached this Venezuelan family too. They asked that TPR use their first names so as not to interfere with their legal asylum claims. Brigid recalled that her family was at a supermarket nearby when the woman gave them a \$20 gift card and promised them food, a hotel stay and assistance to their relocation flight. They declined her offer because they had a pending immigration court date in San Antonio. The flight was part of a Florida initiative to transport migrants out of Texas and into Democrat-friendly communities -- a project DeSantis has championed and celebrated. Critics have characterized the most recent flight as a political stunt to embarrass President Joe Biden. On Tuesday, DeSantis claimed that migrants in San Antonio were poorly treated. However, Brigid said that her experience in San Antonio has been different. Her family has been treated well, and they've been fed and given a place to sleep. The Migrant Resource Center provides asylum seekers with service referrals. They also help them make travel connections. Migrants are also provided transportation and overnight accommodations at shelters. They receive travel bags with basic essentials. "The San Antonio Migrant Resource Center was set up as a safe and welcoming place for migrants traveling through San Antonio to their host city destination. As a City, we believe migrants seeking asylum should be treated with kindness and respect," said a City Spokesperson. "Staff at the Migrant Resource Center is advising migrants not to accept rides or any other assistance from strangers outside the MRC," it continued, "and to report any concerns to the MRC Staff. Signs are also posted at the MRC providing the National Human Trafficking hotline." Security is tight at the Resource Center. Only migrants with wrist bands are allowed through the gates manned by police but they may come and go freely. People who work in nearby businesses told TPR that the security measures were a recent development.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.tpr.org/news/2022-09-21/security-in-place-at-san-antonios-migrant-resource-center-in-days-after-controversial-desantis-flight>

Mayor Nirenberg: Until Congress Acts, ‘We’re Going To Need’ A Migrant Resource Center

By Andrea Drusch and Raquel Torres, San Antonio Report, October 2, 2022

- ❖ The City of San Antonio’s best efforts to help the growing number of migrants seeking asylum from places like Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua faced obstacles from the start. First, federal agents working at the border flooded the city with more migrants than it could handle, forcing Mayor Ron Nirenberg to write the Department of Homeland Security seeking help. Next, the city’s decision to open a resource center in July to prevent migrants from crowding the city’s transit hubs faced backlash from residents who say they were blindsided by its unexpected opening in a residential community. The issue reached a breaking point last month, when some migrants were told they could no longer stay at the packed San Pedro Avenue resource center after three days. Desperate for work and shelter, 43 people were lured onto a flight to Martha’s Vineyard that was orchestrated by Florida governor and likely Republican presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis — part of an attention-grabbing political statement against federal immigration policies. The outcome, while predictable, came as a disappointment to Nirenberg after all the city’s attempts to welcome asylum-seekers and ease their journeys. On Sept. 19 — five days after the flight to Martha’s Vineyard — the city began transitioning management of its migrant resource center to Catholic Charities, according to documents obtained via an open records request by the San Antonio Report. Nirenberg says the handover had always been part of the city’s plan, though it wasn’t mentioned when City Council members voted to request Federal Emergency Management Agency funding to pay for the center back in June. Under the new arrangement, Catholic Charities’ staff members at the center will oversee case management, sheltering, reception and intake, food and commodities distribution, as well as travel assistance necessary to get migrants to their final destination and hearing date, according to the city. Catholic Charities has “a contract with the government to support operations at the center,” chief development officer Tara Ford said, but she didn’t confirm if the FEMA funds will be redirected to the organization for the management of the site. While Catholic Charities is running most operations, the City of San Antonio said its staff will continue to “oversee partnerships with local and border non-profits and site contractors, manage local transportation to the airport and bus station, and provide building maintenance, custodial services, and other logistical support.” The transition also comes as the city is trying to resolve a dispute with the San Antonio Professional Firefighters Association, which complained that an unknown number of its members were being pulled off their normal duties and forced to advance the city’s political agenda by staffing the shelter. City staff contends that the use of firefighters to assist with the shelter is in line with San Antonio’s protocols for emergency management situations, according to a letter shared with the San Antonio Report. The city plans to keep two SAFD staff members as shelter managers at the center going forward instead of pulling from on-duty resources, as well as an around-the-clock police presence.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://sanantonioreport.org/mayor-nirenberg-interview/>

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

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>

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>

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>

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.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/border-mexico/article/San-Antonio-Archbishop-Abbott-migrant-busing-17450529.php>

‘Its Enraging’: Sheriff Investigates How Migrants Were Lured From San Antonio To Martha’s Vineyard

By *Jacob Beltran, San Antonio Express-News, September 19, 2022*

- ❖ Criminal charges could be levied against the people responsible for shuttling 48 South American migrants to Martha’s Vineyard in what Sheriff Javier Salazar called a stunt of “political theater.” The sheriff announced the investigation Monday, saying a migrant was paid a “birddog” fee to recruit 50 others around city’s Migrant Resource Center, at 7000 San Pedro Ave. In total, 48 were “lured,” the sheriff said, under false pretenses. Salazar was not immediately able to say what statute was broken, but he said what was done to the migrants was wrong from a human rights perspective. “They were lured by promises of a better life with the knowledge they could cling to whatever they were offered just to be exploited and hoodwinked,” he said. The sheriff said it was “too early” to start naming suspects. Investigators have been in talks with Boston-based attorney Rachel Self, who is representing some of the migrants, to get an idea of what occurred in Bexar County, including what was said leading up to the migrants’ exodus to Florida. Florida Gov. Ron 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 . “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 .
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/politics/article/Bexar-sheriff-migrants-Marthas-Vineyard-17452874.php?sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=news_a&utm_campaign=SAEN_ExpressBriefing

Latest DeSantis Migrant Flight Was To Land In Biden’s Home State, Delaware. It Never Left Texas.

By *Guillermo Contreras, San Antonio Express-News, September 20, 2022*

- ❖ Early Tuesday morning, a chartered jet was scheduled to fly out of San Antonio’s Kelly Field — just like the two planes that flew 48 Venezuelan asylum seekers from Kelly to Martha’s Vineyard last week with stops in the Florida Panhandle. Like those earlier flights, Tuesday’s was scheduled to land briefly at Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview, Fla., according to FlightRadar24 , a global flight-tracking service. But its final destination wasn’t the Vineyard, a favorite vacation spot for the super-rich. Instead, the flight was to make a stop in President Joe Biden’s home state of Delaware. After touching down there, it was scheduled to continue on to Teterboro Airport in northern New Jersey, a few miles from Manhattan. But Tuesday’s departure didn’t materialize — at least not from Kelly Field, on the city’s Southwest Side. It’s unclear why. Airfield employees declined to comment.
- ❖ News Article source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Latest-DeSantis-migrant-flight-was-to-land-in-17455278.php>

Bexar County Sheriff Says Gov. Desantis' Flying Of Migrants Out Of S.A. Could Be 'Human Trafficking'

By Brian Chasnoff, San Antonio Express-News, September 20, 2022

- ❖ Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' political gesture last week — transporting 48 migrants from a San Antonio shelter to Martha's Vineyard on two chartered jets — could amount to human trafficking, Bexar County Sheriff Javier Salazar said Tuesday. Salazar has opened a criminal investigation into the flights. He said a woman and a man — the latter a Venezuelan national — might have lied to Venezuelan asylum-seekers who'd gathered near the city's Migrant Resource Center on San Pedro to get them onto the planes Sept. 14. Some of the immigrants reportedly said they'd gotten false promises of jobs and housing when they arrived in Massachusetts. It's too early to say which laws might have been broken, Salazar said, adding that he'd spoken with Bexar County District Attorney Joe Gonzales about the matter. Gonzales on Tuesday said he applauded Salazar's investigation into whether the interactions added up to human trafficking, a crime that includes transporting someone by fraud or deception. Salazar said he is conferring with Rachel Self, a Boston immigration attorney who lives on Martha's Vineyard, about the migrants' situation. Migrants here have described being approached by a woman who introduced herself as Perla and handed out fast-food gift cards before offering to take them to Massachusetts. Salazar said he is investigating two "persons of interest" in the case. He declined to release their names. Appearing on Fox News, DeSantis said Monday that all the migrants signed "consent forms" to go to Martha's Vineyard. It's unclear if the forms were in Spanish.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Flying-migrants-human-trafficking-Texas-17454532.php>

GOP 'Stunts' With Migrants Sweep Up Those Fleeing Regimes They Denounce

By Rebecca Beitsch, The Hill, September 21, 2022

- ❖ Governors' determination to send newly arrived migrants to liberal-leaning parts of the U.S. is coinciding with another trend: an uptick in migration from countries led by authoritarian dictators. The group of 50 migrants flown to Martha's Vineyard, Mass., by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis last week had nearly all recently arrived from Venezuela. Another group of 100 dropped outside the vice president's Washington, D.C., residence this weekend also included those fleeing the country. And buses sent to Chicago by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott largely included Venezuelans. The U.S. in recent weeks has seen an even greater shift in migration from Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua. Migrants from the three countries represented 35 percent of those who crossed the southwest border in August — nearly double what it was just last year — a pattern fueled by struggles in the trio of Latin American countries. Many are asylum-seekers, legally allowed to seek refuge from political and other types of persecution, and the U.S. is largely unable to return them given the lack of agreements with their home countries.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://thehill.com/policy/3652882-gop-stunts-with-migrants-sweep-up-those-fleeing-regimes-they-denounce/>

Gov. Greg Abbott Sends More Migrants By Bus To VP Kamala Harris Residence In D.C.

By Jeremy Wallace, Austin Bureau, October 3, 2022

- ❖ Gov. Greg Abbott isn't flinching amid criticism of his busing program that has now sent about 12,000 migrants who have crossed the border in Texas north to cities run by Democratic mayors. On Monday, another bus dropped off about 50 migrants in front of Vice President Kamala Harris' residence in Washington, D.C. NBC News reported that many of the migrants said they are Venezuelans. Washington has received the bulk of Abbott's busing project, which is part of the governor's wider Operation Lone Star border security program. More than 8,200 migrants have been bused to the nation's capital, and about 3,000 have been dropped off in New York City.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/politics/texas/article/Abbott-sends-more-migrants-to-VP-s-home-in-D-C-17483415.php?sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=SAEN_210Report

The Story Behind DeSantis’s Migrant Flights To Martha’s Vineyard

By Edgar Sandoval, Miriam Jordan, Patricia Mazzei and J. David Goodman, *New York Times*, October 2, 2022

- ❖ **Understand the Migrant Drop-Offs in Martha’s Vineyard**
- ❖ **Where were the migrants from?** The 48 migrants who were taken from a shelter in San Antonio to Martha’s Vineyard in mid-September are Venezuelans who had crossed the southwest border without authorization and had turned themselves in to border officials; many likely planned to claim asylum. After being taken into custody, they had been released to face future proceedings.
- ❖ **Who flew them to Martha’s Vineyard? Why?** The migrants were sent to the island in two planeloads by Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, a Republican. The move was one in a series of similar drop-offs, often by bus, to Democratic strongholds orchestrated by Republican governors in recent months as a way to provoke public outrage over migrant arrivals at the border.
- ❖ **What happened to the migrants after they arrived on the land?** Volunteers and officials in Martha’s Vineyard welcomed the migrants with food and clothing and gave them shelter at a local church. A few days later, the migrants boarded buses for a temporary shelter at Joint Base Cape Cod.
- ❖ **Are the drop-offs legal?** Once migrants have been released and served documents to appear in court, they are free to travel within the United States; it is not illegal for a state government to pay for that travel. But on Sept. 20, the migrants taken to Martha’s Vineyard filed a lawsuit against Mr. DeSantis and other state officials, accusing them of engaging in a “fraudulent and discriminatory scheme” by lying about where they were being taken.
- ❖ **Are the claims being investigated?** Yes. A county sheriff in Texas has opened a criminal investigation into the drop-offs, saying that it was clear that many of the migrants had been misled and lured away from Texas to score political points. The sheriff, who has been a critic of the Republican handling of illegal immigration, added that his decision to open the investigation was not politically motivated.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/02/us/migrants-marthas-vineyard-desantis-texas.html?campaign_id=190&emc=edit_ufn_20221003&instance_id=73596&nl=updates-from-the-newsroom®i_id=54832992&segment_id=108821&te=1&user_id=17f12e73eae14f98610bfe32205d547

S.A. Native, Former Army Counterintelligence Agent, Could Be At Center Of DeSantis Immigrant Flights

By Guillermo Contreras, *San Antonio Express-News*, October 3, 2022

- ❖ Authorities are looking into whether a San Antonio native is the mysterious “Perla” who helped lure 48 Venezuelan immigrants from San Antonio’s Migrant Resource Center onto a pair of chartered jets that flew them to Martha’s Vineyard in Massachusetts on Sept. 14. Sources confirmed that the Bexar County Sheriff’s Office considers Perla H. Huerta — 43, a former Army combat medic and counterintelligence agent — a “person of interest” in its criminal investigation into the incident. **Who is Perla Huerta?** A military ID card and other records reviewed by the Express-News show Huerta was an Army noncommissioned officer. She was deployed twice in Iraq between 2003 and 2009 and four times in Afghanistan between 2010 and 2019, said Bonzo, the Army spokeswoman. Huerta held the rank of master sergeant when she left the military in August. Public records show she was born in San Antonio and grew up at a family compound near Sandy Oaks in Southeast Bexar County. One of her brothers operates a small trucking business, and a company linked to her family runs a liquor store at a strip center in Sandy Oaks, records show. Huerta graduated from Southside High School, class of 1996, and was married to a fellow soldier after joining the Army, other records show. The couple lived in San Antonio and then Fayetteville, N.C., near Fort Bragg, one of the Army’s largest posts. Since 2018, she has lived in Tampa, Fla., near MacDill AFB, which is home to U.S. Central Command. Known as CENTCOM, the command is responsible for protecting U.S. security interests from the Horn of Africa to Central Asia. Huerta filed for divorce in 2017 in Niceville, Fla., where she and her then-husband were living. The split was finalized in February 2018. Later that year, she paid \$335,000 for a three-bedroom townhouse in Tampa, according to real estate records. A neighbor, Daniel Palmer, said Huerta lives there with her daughter, who’s probably no more than 10 years old. Huerta dotes on the girl and sometimes has a female relative stay over to help, he said. However, Huerta listed the condo for sale this summer for \$549,900. She got a cash offer the same weekend after the migrant flights, according to her real estate agent. But the deal apparently fell through. It was relisted last week at a reduced price, \$489,000. Huerta’s current whereabouts are unknown.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/San-Antonio-native-and-former-Army-17483495.php>

DeSantis' Migrant Flights To Martha's Vineyard Appear Outside The Scope Of Florida Transport Program Guidelines, State Documents Show

By Steve Contorno, CNN, October 8, 2022

- ❖ A pair of flights carrying migrants from Texas to Martha's Vineyard last month, orchestrated by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, may have exceeded the original scope of the state's plan to transport undocumented individuals, according to records obtained by CNN. The documents, provided to CNN through a records request and released Friday evening by the Florida Department of Transportation and the governor's office, offer new details about the stunt that thrust DeSantis even deeper into the middle of a national debate on immigration. The budget act that created the \$12 million program specified the money was set aside to relocate "unauthorized aliens from this state." The records for the first time also directly tie a \$615,000 state payment made to Vertol Systems Company for the September flights that sent migrants from San Antonio to Martha's Vineyard. Previously, the payment to Vertol was disclosed by the state, but the governor's office for weeks declined to confirm that the check was linked to the flights that landed in Massachusetts. The Florida Department of Transportation, the agency tasked with executing the new migrant relocation program, received a price quote from Vertol CEO James Montgomerie on September 6 for "the first Project," one document showed. Montgomerie identified that project as "the facilitation of the relocation of up to fifty individuals to the State of Massachusetts or other, proximate northeastern state." The price, he said, was \$615,000. The next day, FDOT officials sent a letter asking for authorization for the \$615,000 and the state made the payment within the next 24 hours, according to financial statements maintained on the Florida Chief Financial Officer's website previously reported by CNN. On July 26, after a discussion with FDOT's general counsel, Montgomerie gave the agency estimates for his company to charter flights that could carry four to 12 people from Crestview, Florida, to the Boston or Los Angeles areas, according to an email from the Vertol executive to FDOT. The prices quoted for flights originating from Florida more closely aligned with FDOT's guidelines for the program that it sent to prospective contractors and the agency's request for quotes. In the three-page guidelines, FDOT stipulated the chosen company needed to ensure "that the Unauthorized Alien has voluntarily agreed to be relocated out of Florida." The quotes also showed Montgomerie early on anticipated Vertol would be moving less people. Later, in September, his quotes evolved to include many more people on board. Ultimately, the planes that left San Antonio briefly touched down in Crestview before eventually landing in Massachusetts. The state has paid Vertol \$1.6 million so far through its migrant program, which is funded by interest earned on federal coronavirus relief money, according to the state budget documents. The initial payment of \$615,000 was made by the FDOT on September 8, six days before the Martha's Vineyard flight. Another payment for \$950,000 followed on September 16, though it's not clear what that payment went for. A few days after that second payment, reports of a similar flight plan from San Antonio to Delaware, Biden's home state, sent officials there scrambling to prepare for migrant arrivals. The flights, though, never arrived.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/08/us/florida-migrants-marthas-vineyard-state-documents-contractors/index.html>

ASYLUM SEEKERS

New York Mayor's Migrant Tents Give Him More Time To Meet Shelter Mandate

By Joe Anuta and Janaki Chadha, Politico, September 27, 2022

- ❖ Tent shelters Mayor Eric Adams is setting up to handle an influx of asylum seekers will buy his administration more time to comply with right-to-shelter laws that the city has twice violated since border-state governors began sending migrants here. An estimated 14,600 asylum seekers have arrived in New York in recent months — some aboard buses sent by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. Thousands have found shelter with family or moved along to other cities, but around 11,000 of them ended up in the city's homeless shelter system, putting an enormous strain on an apparatus that was already operating near capacity. The city is legally required to promptly provide shelter to those who seek it, but it violated that obligation at least twice when it failed to timely house four families and 60 single men. In response, the Adams administration has opened 39 new emergency homeless shelters, largely in hotels. The administration has said it wants to route migrant buses directly to the tent shelters, making them the newly arrived asylum seekers' first point of contact. Upon arriving, asylum seekers will be provided with medical care if necessary and asked whether they have friends or family to stay with. Those seeking to leave the city altogether have been receiving relocation assistance from community-based organizations, rather than the city, according to a mayoral spokesperson. The 1,000-bed tent for adult asylum seekers being built in the Orchard Beach section of the Bronx will be heated, but it won't fulfill all the requirements to comply with right-to-shelter laws. Migrants seeking housing through the city will stay there for 24 to 96 hours, providing the administration a buffer against the right-to-shelter timer: If someone were to arrive directly at Homeless Services intake center, a longstanding statute would require the city to find them a bed that same night.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/09/27/tent-centers-give-adams-more-time-to-meet-homeless-shelter-requirements-00059130>

NYC Nearing Deal To House Incoming Migrants On Norwegian Cruise Ship: Report

By NBC News New York, October 1, 2022

- ❖ New York City is reportedly close to reaching a deal with Norwegian Cruise Line to house migrants on one of its luxury vessels upon arrival in the Big Apple. Mayor Eric Adams' administration has been under pressure to provide shelter to the thousands of incoming migrants arriving in New York City, and the city's shelter system has struggled to keep up with the demand. In addition to opening Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers, the mayor is eyeing the Norwegian cruise ship for a six-month lease to house and process asylum seekers before transitioning them into the city shelters, the NY Post reported Friday. The vessel would likely be docked at Staten Island's Homeport, the former naval station on the northeastern shore of the island. Speaking to reporters at City Hall, the mayor said he did not have any announcements to issue regarding a deal with the cruise liner. "When we have an announcement of any type of deal, we will make an announcement. So any type of deal they've written about, they know more than I do," Adams said Friday.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/investigations/migrant-crisis/nyc-nearing-deal-to-house-incoming-migrants-on-norwegian-cruise-ship-report/3888909/>

Mayor's Migrant Tents Being Built By Trump Border Wall Contractor

By Joe Anuta and Sally Goldenberg, Politico, September 30, 2022

- ❖ A contractor tapped by Mayor Eric Adams to erect a migrant tent shelter in The Bronx received hundreds of millions of dollars to build former president Trump's border wall, a City Council member told POLITICO. The arrival of more than 15,500 such travelers — many from Venezuela and Colombia — has set off an operational and political maelstrom for Adams, who has been sparring with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott while struggling — sometimes in vain — to meet the city's legal obligation to provide shelter to those who request it. Last week, Adams announced a 1,000-bed tent facility in a remote section of The Bronx that wouldn't comply with right-to-shelter laws — but would buy him some time to find them longer-term housing. The contractor in question is Texas-based SLSCO, according to Council Member Shahana Hanif of Brooklyn, who chairs the Committee on Immigration that will grill the Adams administration on its response to the more than 15,000 asylum seekers who have arrived since the summer. The firm was previously paid more than \$200 million to work on Trump's border wall. "That is not OK," she said. "These walls were literally created to keep migrants out. I question exactly who the city is contracting with, and whether we know the full scope of their previous work." To address the additional influx, City Hall has also tapped into unused hotel capacity to open 39 emergency shelters as of earlier this week. However, officials are also looking for a longer-term fix. Adams himself has floated the idea of housing the asylum seekers on docked cruise ships, something City Hall Chief of Staff Frank Carone examined during a recent overseas trip to Europe. As the New York Times recently reported, Carone has been in touch with Norwegian Cruise Line executives to explore housing migrants on one of its vessels.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/09/30/mayors-migrant-tents-trump-border-wall-00059663?cid=apn>

DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA)

Appeals Court Rules Against DACA Immigration Program

By Michelle Hackman and Alicia A. Caldwell, Wall Street Journal, October 5, 2022

- ❖ A federal appeals court ruled Wednesday, October 5, that an Obama-era initiative that provides deportation protections and work permits to some young immigrants is unlawful, placing the decade-old program in jeopardy. The decision, by the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, largely affirmed a 2021 ruling by a federal district judge in Texas, who found the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, was an overreach of presidential authority because Congress never gave the executive branch the power to grant mass reprieves to immigrants who are residing in the U.S. without authorization. A Fifth Circuit three-judge panel said DACA was "manifestly contrary" to federal immigration law. The earlier ruling allowed the program to continue for existing DACA recipients for the time being while litigation continued. The Fifth Circuit likewise declined to cancel the program immediately for current recipients while additional court proceedings continue. Wednesday's decision also didn't address recent efforts by the Biden administration to shore up DACA's legality. The appeals court said the Texas district court should consider that issue first. The Department of Homeland Security in August reissued the DACA program as a federal regulation after a public-comment process. That regulation is set to take effect on Oct. 31. DACA offers temporary protections to immigrants in the country without legal authorization who were 30 years old or younger when the program was announced. DACA recipients must have arrived in the U.S. before they turned 16, by a cutoff date in June 2007, and satisfied other conditions, including being a student or graduate and having no significant criminal record. The Obama administration created the program to protect the immigrants after Congress failed to pass a bill providing them a path to citizenship.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/appeals-court-rules-against-daca-immigration-program-11665008102>

OPERATION LONE STAR

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.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/news/border-mexico/article/Texas-National-Guard-Operation-Lone-Star-17449901.php?sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=news_a&utm_campaign=SAEN_ExpressBriefing

DEVELOPING STORIES

Pope Francis Elevates Italian Bishop And Missionary To Sainthood

By CBS News, October 10, 2022

- ❖ Pope Francis on Sunday denounced Europe's indifference toward migrants risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean Sea as he elevated to sainthood an Italian bishop and Italian-born missionary whose work and life paths illustrated the difficulties faced by 19th Century Italian emigrants. Francis departed from prepared remarks to slam Europe's treatment of migrants as "disgusting, sinful and criminal." He noted that people from outside the continent are often left to die during perilous sea crossings or pushed back to Libya, where they wind up in camps he referred to as "lager," the German word referring to Nazi concentration camps. He also recalled the plight of Ukrainians fleeing war, which he said "causes us great suffering." "The exclusion of migrants is scandalous," Francis said, generating applause from the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square for the canonizations of Don Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, an Italian bishop who founded an order to help Italian emigrants in 1887, and Artedime Zatti, an Italian who emigrated in 1897 to Argentina and dedicated his life as a lay-worker there to helping the sick. "Indeed, the situation of migrants is criminal. They are left to die in front of us, making the Mediterranean the largest cemetery in the world. The situation of migrants is disgusting, sinful, criminal. Not to open the doors to those who are in need. No, we exclude them, we send them away to lager, where they are exploited and sold as slaves." According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there have been over 24,000 missing migrants reported in the Mediterranean region since 2014. The group says the Central Mediterranean is the "deadliest known migration route in the world," with more than 17,000 deaths and disappearances recorded since 2014. He urged the faithful to consider the treatment of migrants, asking: "Do we welcome them as brothers, or do we exploit them?" The pontiff said the two new saints "remind us of the importance of walking together."
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/pope-francis-elevates-sainthood-don-giovanni-battista-scalabrini-artedime-zatti/>

Migrants Are Helping Rebuild Florida After Hurricane Ian. They Might Not Get Paid For It.

By Rick Jervis, USA TODAY, October 5, 2022

- ❖ The Venezuelan migrants were cold and disoriented, wandering streets in Queens, New York, looking for a white van that would shuttle them to jobs cleaning up after Hurricane Ian in Florida. They didn't find the vehicle. Instead, community organizers discouraged the migrants from taking a job with people they didn't know. The whole thing, they warned, was a scam. "It sounds like human trafficking," said Ariadna Phillips, of community organizers South Bronx Mutual Aid, who intercepted the migrants and steered them to a shelter. "They recruit migrants, take them down there, don't pay them and get them deported. We've seen it with other hurricanes." Immigrant workers from Mexico, Venezuela, Guatemala, Honduras and other countries are often at the center of the multibillion-dollar disaster recovery industry, and the aftermath of Hurricane Ian probably will be different. Experts predict migrants will descend on Florida to help repair properties after the deadly storm, putting their lives at danger for little pay. But the migrant workers who repair communities are sometimes not paid fair wages.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/10/05/migrants-key-to-rebuilding-florida-after-hurricane-ian-but-vulnerable-to-scams/8177904001/>

Gov. Greg Abbott Used \$1 Billion In COVID-19 Aid To Pay For Border Mission, Report Says

By Ariana Garcia, Chron, October 6, 2022

- ❖ Gov. Greg Abbott allegedly used \$1 billion in federal emergency aid disbursed during the COVID-19 pandemic to fund the Texas National Guard's border security mission, Operation Lone Star (OLS), according to a Thursday report from The Nation. Following the launch of OLS in Spring 2021, those funds were used to hire thousands of guards, build border barriers and bus 12,000 migrants out of the state, the magazine reported. Texas received a total of \$25 billion from the CARES ACT and \$40 billion from the American Rescue Plan for COVID-19 relief. The funds were barred from being used for pension programs, pay for debt service or legal fees, or to build "rainy day funds of financial reserves." States were also not allowed to use the funding to offset tax cuts, build prisons and jails, or pay for police and trooper salaries —unless they were "substantially dedicated to mitigating and responding to Covid-19." Migrant busing and border wall construction were not part of the approved list of activities. Eva DeLuna Castro's budget analyst for Every Texan—an Austin-based nonprofit policy institute— told The Nation that Abbott swapped some state agencies' general revenues with COVID relief funds and used the general revenues to pay for OLS. In January, Abbott wrote to the heads of the Department of Criminal Justice, the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, and the Department of Public Safety that his office had approved the transfer of their revenues totaling \$480 million to the governor's disaster fund, according to The Nation. Following their approval, Abbott in April added three more agencies to the list and requested nearly \$500 million, writing in a letter obtained by The Nation: "Dear Agency Heads: We received your letter dated April 28, 2022 requesting to transfer [your] General Revenue funds...to the Programs within the Officer of the Governor... These transfers are meant to support the deployment of the National Guard with \$465.3 million and border operations in other state agencies with \$30 million." The letter, reportedly signed by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, Speaker of the Texas House Dade Phelan, Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance Senator Joan Huffman, and Chair of the House Appropriations Committee Representative Greg Bonnen, did not mention the swap with COVID funds, and stated that "the agencies' earlier appropriations have been fully funded with other sources." Upon their approval, the Department of Criminal Justice paid \$54 million; Department of Public Safety paid \$159 million; Health and Human Services Commission paid \$210 million; the Department of State Health Services paid \$36 million; the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission paid \$4 million; and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department paid \$31 million. Abbott defended the budgetary maneuvering, arguing the agencies were eligible because they had "made significant adjustments to their operations as part of the state's overall response to the pandemic," according to The Nation. Abbott also told the state legislature that "the state is utilizing approximately \$3.5 billion of the coronavirus relief funds to support these efforts, primarily for salary and benefit costs for public health and public safety-related employees at state agencies... that have been substantially dedicated to COVID-19 response efforts." Abbott also argued that the COVID-19 relief funds were needed by "state troopers at the Department of Public Safety and game wardens at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department who were drawn to the frontlines of numerous response efforts"—agencies not tied directly to the border, but largely unconnected to COVID-19 relief efforts.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.chron.com/politics/article/texas-greg-abbott-border-17492053.php>

500 Children Reunited With Families By Biden-Harris Task Force, Nearly 200 Still In Process

By Quinn Owen, ABC News, October 7, 2022

- ❖ More than 500 children have been reunited by the Biden administration's task force to find families separated as a result of the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance" policy at the border, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Friday. Nearly 200 other children have yet to be reunited and are in the process, Mayorkas said. The administration had previously identified 3,855 total children who would qualify for government-assisted reunification, according to the last formal progress report from the task force in July. Since then, the administration has now reached out to about 150 families who are eligible but have not responded. Prior to the establishment of the task force, some 2,260 known children were reunified. The work is done in connection with international non-governmental organizations including the International Organization for Migration and the UN Refugee Agency. Human rights workers have fanned out across Central America, traveling over 62,000 miles to find separated parents. Those admitted for reunification receive humanitarian parole for three years to live and work in the U.S. The status is similar to those who have fled Afghanistan and Ukraine over the past year. The administration continues to operate two websites -- Together.gov and Juntos.gov -- where families can register to check their eligibility. So far, the government has registered about 1,700. Once found eligible, families then submit documentation to receive parole, allowing them to enter the U.S.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/500-children-reunited-biden-harris-task-force-200/story?id=91180989>

Tents To Temporarily House Migrants Under Construction On Randall's Island

By Lisa Rozner, CBS News New York, October 10, 2022

- ❖ Tents are being built on Randall's Island to temporarily house single, adult migrants being bused to New York City from the South. Construction crews appeared to be working quickly and a City Council member said it's possible the tents could be done by the end of the week, CBS2's Lisa Rozner reported Monday. City contractors spent the day putting up the walls of two tents next to Icahn Stadium in the middle of Randall's Island, where the Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Center will go after a lawsuit was filed against putting them on a flood-prone parking lot in Orchard Beach in the Bronx. Mayor Eric Adams said the number of migrants being bused here is "unbelievable." He said close to 1,800 migrants were brought to the city from southern states over the weekend. Last week, the mayor said out of 61,000 people living in city shelters, one in five is a migrant. That number could go to 100,000 by next year. Deputy Speaker Diana Ayala, who represents Randall's Island, has asked the administration to instead consider 10 vacant hotels as locations to place migrants. The Randall's Island location will be the first stop of asylum seekers who are single adults that are bused to the city where they will temporarily stay. The city said the tents will have 500 beds and clients will receive three hot meals a day. They will also have access to phones and iPads to connect with family. It's an intermediate stop - a place to go before finding more permanent housing.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/randalls-island-tents-to-house-migrants-construction/>

As Texas GOP Targets 'Open Borders' Policies, Here's What Biden Has Really Done On Immigration

By Benjamin Wermund, Washington Bureau, October 11, 2022

- ❖ The Migration Policy Institute estimates that Biden has undone about 100 of Trump's immigration actions, said Kathleen Bush-Joseph, an associate policy analyst at the nonpartisan think tank. In August, the administration began winding down the so-called Remain in Mexico program — a policy Biden tried to end during his first days in office. But he was stopped by a lawsuit led by Texas Republicans. The Supreme Court eventually ruled Biden had the authority to terminate Remain in Mexico. Still, one of Trump's signature immigration policies — the public health order [Title 42] used to immediately turn away migrants at the border — remains in place, despite Biden's efforts to wind it down. A judge blocked Biden from rolling back the program earlier this year, and the administration has appealed the ruling. Biden is working to overhaul the asylum system so those who do make it to the U.S. can have their cases heard more quickly. Under a new policy, asylum officers can now adjudicate cases on the border, rather than having asylum-seekers wait years for their claims to be heard in courts. Officials have said the rule would allow officers to vet asylum claims in a matter of months, instead of the six to eight years the process typically takes. But the program is off to a slow start. The administration has also moved to modernize the immigration court system, in part by allowing applications and other documents that once had to be filed on paper to be submitted online.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/politics/election/2022/article/As-Texas-GOP-targets-open-borders-policies-17499245.php?sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=news_a&utm_campaign=SAEN_ExpressBriefing

Operation Lone Star Troops Could Owe Feds Tax Money Thanks To State's Payroll Error

By James Barragán and Davis Winkie, Texas Tribune/Military Times, October 9, 2022

- ❖ Texas National Guard troops deployed to the border by Gov. Greg Abbott could be stuck paying hundreds or even thousands of dollars in unexpected federal taxes for their work on Operation Lone Star because of a payroll error made by state officials. Officials with the Texas Military Department have acknowledged that the payroll system they used for the mission has withheld too little in federal taxes from service members' paychecks since October 2021, when Abbott ramped up the number of troops on the mission from 2,500 to a peak of 6,500 in November. Officials said they became aware of the issue in July.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/news/border-mexico/article/Operation-Lone-Star-troops-could-owe-feds-tax-17497277.php?sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=news_a&utm_campaign=SAEN_ExpressBriefing

Biden Administration Considering Humanitarian Parole Program For Venezuelans

By Eileen Sullivan and Zolan Kanno-Youngs, New York Times, October 11, 2022

- ❖ The Biden administration is considering a humanitarian parole program for Venezuelans who have been fleeing political instability and poverty in large numbers, according to two administration officials familiar with the proposed plan, which the administration hopes will discourage Venezuelans from crossing the southwestern border illegally. If implemented, the program for Venezuelans would be similar to a humanitarian program offered to Ukrainians, which allows a family member or sponsor in the United States to apply on behalf of the refugee and commit to providing them with financial assistance while they're in the country. The humanitarian parole program would not apply to Venezuelans who are already in the country, but the hope is that it would encourage migrants to seek refuge closer to home and fly to the United States instead of traveling north by foot and crossing the border illegally. Venezuelans in their home country or who crossed into a neighboring country legally would qualify to apply for the program. Official ports of entry have been closed to migrants since the beginning of the pandemic, effectively forcing those intent on reaching the United States to take a more dangerous route to cross illegally. The administration officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a plan that had not yet been finalized. Because Washington does not have formal diplomatic relations with Caracas, the United States has not been able to repatriate most of the Venezuelans who enter the country and turn themselves in to border officials. Instead, the administration has been giving most permission to stay in the country temporarily and face deportation proceedings in immigration court. The full scope of what a humanitarian parole program would look like and why the administration is considering it now were not immediately clear.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/11/us/politics/biden-venezuelans-parole-program.html>