

Member Day Testimony – Subcommittee on Homeland Security

Rep. Pat Fallon (TX-04)

Chairwoman Roybal-Allard, Ranking Member Fleischmann, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

As you all know, we are currently facing a crisis on our Southern Border. While we can debate what caused this crisis or what is the best way to handle the surge of immigrants crossing our border, the fact remains that we are currently under resourced and understaffed on our border.

With this in mind, I ask that you consider my commonsense appropriations request to support the men and women of the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol by providing them adequate resourcing to accomplish their mission. Because of the surge of immigrants, a significant number of Border Patrol Agents (BPA's) have been forced to divert their attention from law enforcement activities to mundane administrative tasks in order to process migrants. This has compounded the effects of the surge in immigrants as we now have fewer BPAs covering our border. Illegal immigrants including drug smugglers, human traffickers, and criminals then exploit these holes in our security to enter the country unlawfully.

Previously, this committee has recognized the issue of diverting BPAs from law enforcement activities by providing funding for Border Patrol Processing Coordinators. These coordinators seek to alleviate the administrative burden put on the BPAs so that they may instead focus on law enforcement duties.

Last Congress, this Committee increased funding for these positions by \$7 million. This year, we are at a critical juncture. There seems to be little hope that the tide of immigrants is going to slow any time soon as more illegals are processed and sent into our country. We must use every tool we have to prevent migrants from entering illegally as we simultaneously work to fix the root causes of the problem. Ensuring BPAs are able to do their job and not drown in administrative work is a simple step toward this goal. With this in mind, I ask that you continue to invest in the critical roles of Border Patrol Processing Coordinators by supporting the highest level of funding possible for the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol Operations and Support account. Thank you again for your time today and attention to this matter. I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.