

My name is Brad Coe and I am the Sheriff of Kinney County Texas. I am currently in my second term as Sheriff. Prior to being elected as sheriff, I spent over 30 years with the US Border Patrol, all of which was in Kinney County.

Kinney County Texas lies in southwest Texas and has 16 miles of border with Mexico. Kinney County is roughly 1370 square miles, making 27th in size. Currently the population is under 3200 people. Kinney County is primarily agricultural land for the raising of sheep, goats and cattle. One of the primary sources of revenue is the hunting industry.

My office has 6 fulltime deputies and 8 parttime to cover the 1370 square miles of the county. This causes large areas of the county to go unpatrolled. The majority of their patrol areas are within the city limits of Brackettville and Fort Clark Springs, which is a gated community within the county.

Currently Kinney County is under siege by illegal immigrants either walking through local ranches, or being smuggled through the county on the back roads that circumvent US Border Patrol Checkpoints. I am here today to discuss the impact this immigration crisis is having on Kinney County's resources and revenue.

Out of Control Immigration

With the current "open door" policy, Kinney County has seen a dramatic increase in illegal alien activity. The number of migrants seen on our game camera system is currently averaging 165 people per night (60,225 this year). These are also considered a way since Kinney County does not have the personnel or equipment to actively pursue these subjects.

Damage to fences, water troughs and structures has ranchers spending more on repairs than they can afford. There currently is no way to recoup those losses. The loss of the ability to grow crops is an issue also. With large groups walking cross country, creates trails that prevent the grass and natural foliage to grow, reduces the grass for the livestock.

Our "game ranches" specialize in exotic animal hunts year-round. Some of these hunts cost up to \$40,000.00 per animal. With the constant foot traffic walking through these ranches, the animals are harder to locate and often are spooked by illegal aliens while the hunter is watching the animals. Which can and will result in the loss of revenue for the rancher.

Smuggling

Kinney County has 6 highways that lead directly from the border area into the county, plus two other roadways that circumvent the US Border Patrol checkpoint on U.S. Highway 90. These highways have seen an unprecedented increase in human smuggling activity. For calendar year 2022, Kinney County Deputies arrested 741 human smugglers and filed over 3000 felony charges. This is a huge increase from calendar year 2021 in which we arrested 169 human

smugglers. Currently we are on track to exceed over 900 human smugglers for calendar year 2023.

With the increase in human smuggling comes the increase in vehicle pursuits and bail outs. The number of pursuits has increased with the increase in human smuggling arrests. With these increases, the risk of traffic accident and deaths associated to these accidents also increase.

With the increase in pursuits that result in traffic accidents puts a huge strain on our first responders. In December of 2022 an accident that was the result of a driver trying to flee from law enforcement, lost control of the vehicle, killing himself and two other, later identified as being in the US illegally, and required 3 others, who were thrown from the vehicle, to be transported to area hospitals due to severe injuries.

First Responder Resources

Kinney County only has one EMS team on duty at any given time. Our Fire and Rescue Department is all volunteer. This accident required Kinney County to request EMS assistance from neighboring Val Verde County. As a precaution, Air-Life was also dispatched in the event they would be needed. This accident tied up all of Kinney County's first responder resources. Resources that are provided for by tax payers of Kinney County. Kinney County does not have a tax base that sustain this type of emergency. Not only were our first responders timed up, but resources from Val Verde County were tied up as well.

It's not uncommon for EMS to be called out for illegal aliens who have suffered an injury or has become dehydrated while walking cross country. Often EMS has to transport these individuals to Val Verde County since Kinney County does not have an emergency medical facility. This too ties up a county resource. Often the county does not get re-imbursed for these services, creating another burden for the local taxpayer.

During one instance where EMS was tied up with injured illegal aliens, a resident of Kinney County suffered a heat attack. A second team had to be called in to respond to the call. The Kinney County resident didn't survive. Would he have survived if the primary on duty EMS team responded? We'll never know.

Closing

Kinney County has no industry to support it. We depend on our ranchers and hunters. We have no port of entry for international trade, or tourism. At one time Kinney County was a world leader in the production of wool and mohair. That has gone away. Kinney County was the Movie Capital of Texas. John Wayne's The Alamo, Lonesome Dove, The Gambler, Bad Girls,

Just name a few that were filmed here. Alamo Village was huge tourist attraction, which brought in people from across the county. That has closed. All we have left is our agriculture and hunters. If our ranchers sell due to loss of revenue, who's going to buy the property? If the

hunters quit coming, our gas station, our grocery store, and restaurants are going to close. What happens to the residents of Kinney County when the ranchers go out of business and the hunting quit coming? This is why I am fighting so hard, so I don't lose the county.

Questions pertaining to:

Landowner re-imburement

Landowner liability

Interstate Compact to allow state level officers to arrest and prosecute federal violations

Ex. Illegal entry to the US

Inter-agency cooperation

Needs improvement.

Turn over aliens for prosecutions

Prosecution Levels

Need additional resources 8 years behind.

Facilities

Jail closed

No female space

Radio Communications with other agencies

Can no longer communicate via radio to outside agencies.

Grant funding

School safety

Salary supplements

Advanced Training

Fleet repairs/fuel/etc