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Thank you, Chairman Green, ranking member Bennie Thompson, and distinguished members of this committee for allowing me to testify today on the impact of open border policies on America's cities.

Let me be blunt. "The migrant crisis will destroy New York City."

Those are not just my words. They aren't the words of the right-wing, nor are they the hyperbole of political punditry.

Those words were spoken by Democratic New York City Mayor Eric Adams at a town hall in Manhattan two weeks ago.

Though Mayor Adams and I disagree on many things, including how he has managed the massive influx of migrants into our city, I give him credit for being virtually the only elected official in his party to say out loud, repeatedly and in public, that the open border policies of this White House, Secretary Mayorkas, and the federal agencies under their control have been an absolute disaster for New York.

And the people of the city are paying for it.

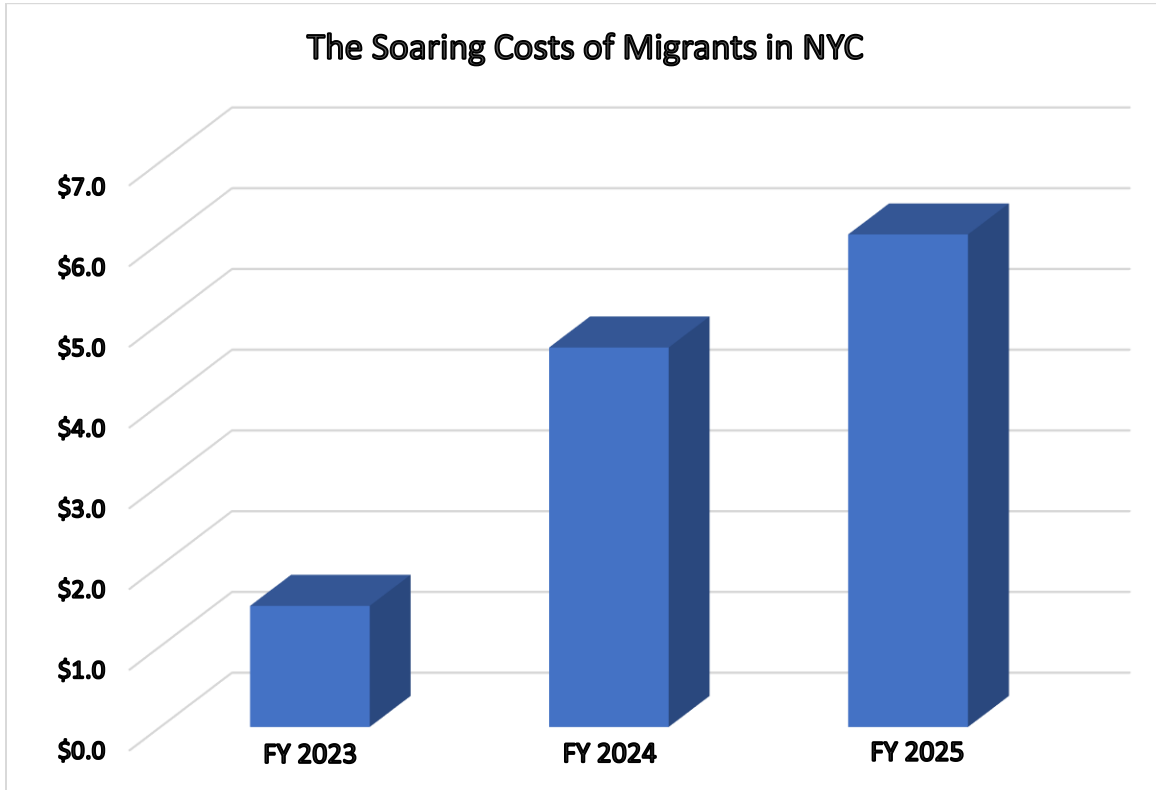
The numbers are staggering.

More than 125,000 migrants have flooded into New York City over the past 18 months. On average, about 60,200 individual migrants remain in our city's care each day, according to the administration's latest figures.

Based on the current rate of about 9,000 migrants each month, the city expects to shelter over 78,000 individuals in the current fiscal year at a cost of \$4.7 billion.

By the next fiscal year, assuming no action is taken by the federal government, the city anticipates the average daily number of migrants in our care could be more than 100,000, at a cost of just over \$6.1 billion.

Adding the approximately \$1.5 billion the city has already spent, the total projected costs of sheltering migrants in New York City will exceed \$12 billion over three fiscal years.



**in billions*

To put this figure in perspective, over the next year alone we will be spending enough money to cover the entire city budget of Dallas, Texas. That means, for the cost of sheltering migrants, we, New York City, could pay to man every firehouse and police station, pick up the garbage, maintain the water and sewer system, inspect buildings, run the airport, and even cut the grass in Dallas, a city of 1.3 million people. And over the next two years, we can do the same for both Philadelphia and Phoenix, too.

These enormous costs are being borne almost entirely by the taxpayers of New York City.

The Biden administration recently touted that they have provided \$140 million in aid to reimburse the city this crisis. This represents, at best, about 1% of the projected cost.

Incredibly, despite the crisis being caused by federal inaction at the border, the U.S. Department of the Interior is charging the city \$21 million, plus tens of millions more in management fees and capital improvements, to lease Floyd Bennett Field, a historic National Parks Service site. New Yorkers are now paying for the loss of their public parkland.

Returning to the \$140 million already earmarked for New York, the city spent double that on migrants in July, alone. So, at a current burn rate of about \$10 million per day, federal aid would pay for about two weeks of sheltering migrants in New York City. Since the Department of the Interior is now allowing national parks to be alienated to house migrants, perhaps it is time for the federal government to open shelter sites in national parks in other

states and cities with lower costs of living, where local elected officials have similarly declared a sanctuary for this population.

These unanticipated and unsustainable expenses are the reason the Mayor is preparing to possibly cut the city's budget by a total of 15 percent by next spring, which would amount to roughly \$16 billion. To give another comparison, that is more than all the revenue generated by the government of Venezuela, a country from which many of these migrants have fled.

These cuts will have devastating and far-reaching real-world consequences, affecting every essential service the city must provide to its residents – from keeping our communities safe and our streets clean, to educating our children and maintaining critical infrastructure – and perhaps require layoffs. This would ultimately wreak havoc on New York's economy, which has yet to recover from the pandemic recession.

While I understand the focus of today's hearing is on the financial cost of the ongoing migrant crisis, I would be remiss if I did not at least mention the toll it has taken on New York City's quality of life.

With our shelter system over capacity, officials have been creating makeshift housing for migrants at 208 locations across the city, taking over hotels, schools, churches, and government buildings. In addition to the federal parks at Floyd Bennett and Fort Wadsworth, they are alienating public parkland to build shelters, including a \$20 million-per-month tent city with 3,000 migrants on the fields of Randall's Island, which are utilized by athletes and youth organizations.

The influx of migrants has meant an influx of about 20,000 students into our schools, and into already-crowded classrooms. The city Department of Education is spending \$110 million to hire multilingual teachers to accommodate the dozens of different languages these children speak and to provide them with basic supplies.

These shelters are often accompanied by increased crime and disorder. At the Roosevelt Hotel in Midtown Manhattan, one of largest migrant shelters, there have been at least 42 arrests over a three-month period, mostly for domestic assaults, according to a recent news report. I know of at least one shelter that is now placing facial recognition systems to keep out gangs.

Right now, almost every community in our city is on edge, fearing the next migrant shelter will be in their backyard, worrying how this growing crisis will affect every aspect of life in New York. They are right to be alarmed. Unless we reverse the disastrous policy decisions that have brought us to this point, on both the local and federal level, there will be no end in sight. This migrant crisis *will* destroy New York.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions.

