

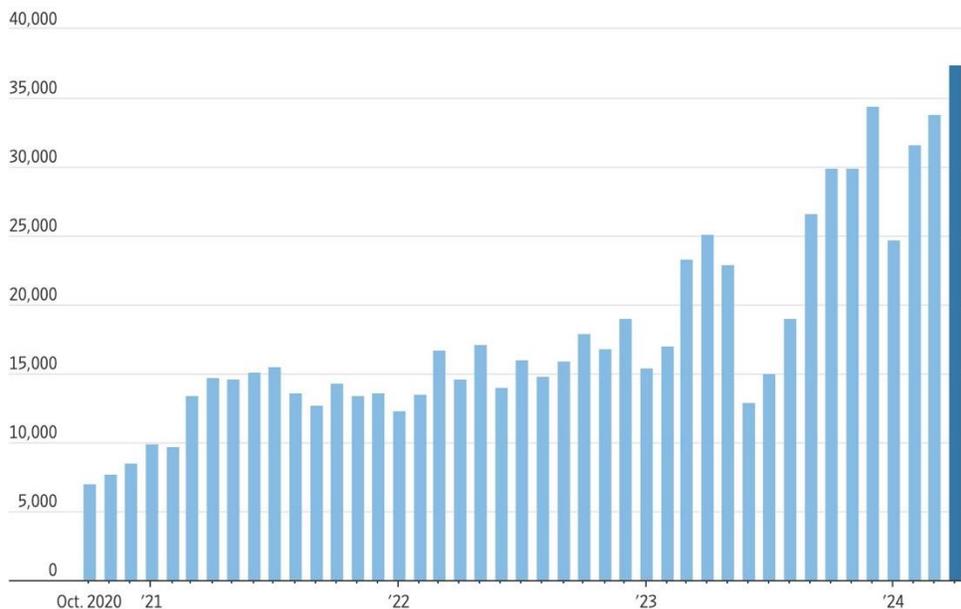
# Testimony: “A Country Without Borders: How the Biden-Harris Open Borders Policies Have Undermined Our Safety and Security”

September 18, 2024

Jim Desmond, San Diego County Supervisor

On December 24, 2022, San Diego was caught off guard by the news that Border Patrol, overwhelmed by the surge of migrants, would begin releasing them at transit stops across the County. This unexpected decision required an immediate response to prevent our transit hubs and homeless shelters from being overwhelmed by the influx of people seeking refuge.

U.S. Border Patrol apprehensions along the San Diego sector of the southwest border, monthly



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

This marked the beginning of a broken immigration system playing out in San Diego County. From September 2023 to June 2024, more than 155,000 adults, predominantly males between the ages of 18 to 35, illegally crossed our border and were bused into the streets of San Diego County. That averages 17,000 per month—almost 600 per day. No community, county, or country can sustain this kind of ongoing influx.



I witnessed, firsthand, large vans and buses, driven by Border Patrol agents, pulling up to San Diego transit stops and unloading hundreds of migrants at a time. Many of these individuals, with nothing more than a small backpack, had no idea where they were or what to do next. The first question many asked me when I approached them was, “Where am I?” This level of disorganization exemplifies the lack of competence and control at our border.



*Watch video of mass street releases happening in San Diego County:*  
[Mass Street Releases in San Diego](#)

The process essentially goes like this: “Welcome to America. Here are papers that allow you to stay. Show up to your court hearing—scheduled for 2030—in whichever city you claim you are headed to. In the meantime, we’re dropping you at a trolley stop.”

*A man released onto the streets in San Diego, looking to go to Virginia:*  
[Street Release Testimony](#)

The situation extends beyond the city limits. In Jacumba, CA, a small border community 50 miles east of downtown San Diego, I encountered an early morning encampment of around 50 migrants who had crossed the border the previous night. They were waiting for Border Patrol to pick them up, process them, and then release them onto our streets. One man from India told me he paid \$8,000, in his home country, for passage across our southern border.

That same morning, a Border Patrol agent informed me that another group was crossing the border within the next 30 minutes. Soon enough, a black SUV sped down a dirt road on the Mexican side, dropped off a dozen migrants, and sped away. These men, women, and children, carrying backpacks and luggage, walked through the gaping hole in the fence, approached Border Patrol, and asked for asylum.



*Watch a human smuggler drop people off as they walk into the U.S.:*  
[Human Smuggler Drops Migrants](#)

Even more alarming was what my team witnessed later: dozens of Chinese nationals, dragging luggage down dirt roads at night. This isn't a one-off occurrence; this is a daily reality for San Diego County. Border Patrol has essentially become an Uber service for migrants, and San Diego County has become their travel agent.

*Footage of migrants entering at night:*  
[Late Night Migrant Entry](#)

Our Border Patrol agents have been reduced to mere processing agents, standing by as our laws are broken. One officer, speaking with deep frustration, shared that their orders from the Federal Government were explicit: "Stand down."

San Diego County spent \$6 million in local funds to establish a migrant receiving center to assist in quickly relocating these individuals to other parts of the country. That's \$6 million that could have been used for roads, infrastructure, and parks.

Migrants now sleep in the San Diego Airport and occupy homeless shelters, while our hospital and healthcare systems are stretched to their limits. Dr. Jay Doucet, Division Chief of Trauma and Surgical Care at UC San Diego Health, described the situation as a public health crisis. “People are being severely injured or dying at the border, and this is impacting trauma care availability for San Diegans.”



The local financial toll is staggering, but the national security threat is even more concerning. Our Border Patrol agents don't have the time or resources to properly vet the individuals crossing. Many countries don't share criminal databases with the United States, leaving us in the dark about who we are admitting.

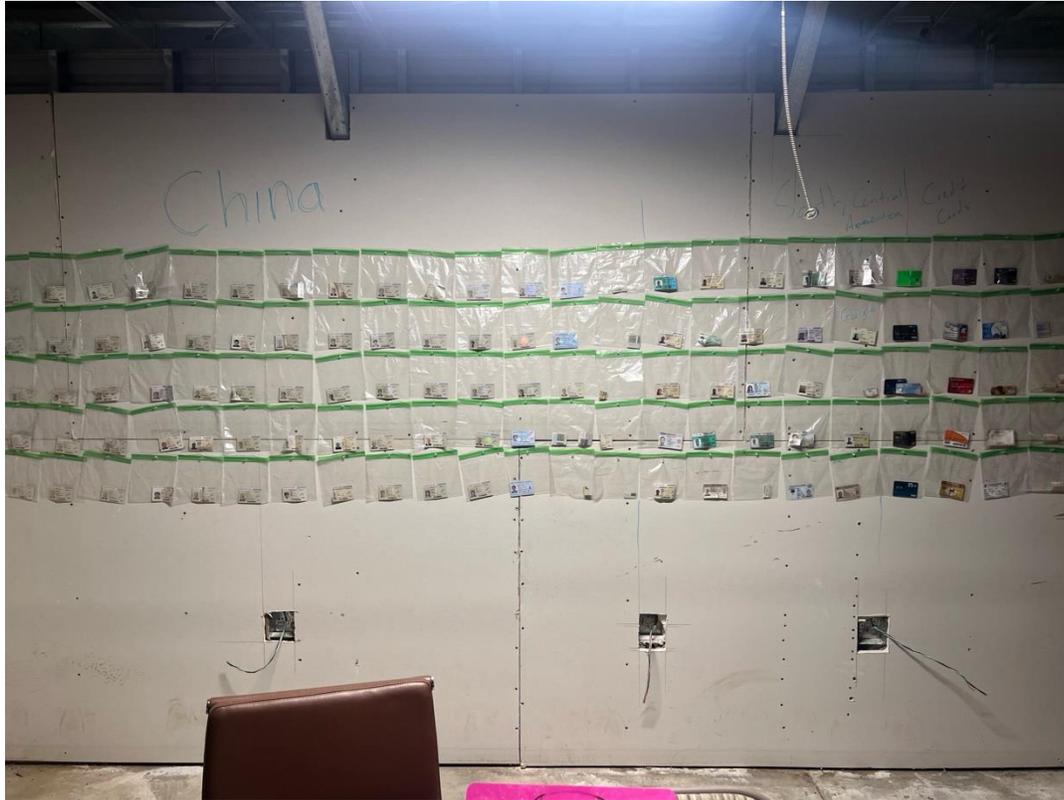
This is not just a broken system—it's a threat to our national security.

San Diego now accounts for 85% of all "Special Interest Aliens"—individuals with known ties to terrorism. And over the past year, we've seen an unprecedented number of 30,000 Chinese nationals enter our region.

California has become a magnet for illegal immigration, incentivized by free healthcare, in-state tuition, and now efforts to provide home loans and taxpayer funded legal services for deportation cases. But make no mistake—San Diego County is just the doorstep.

In fact, local law enforcement cannot cooperate with Federal officials in California. California maintains Sanctuary State laws that, for example, forbid local law enforcement from communicating and cooperating with Federal Immigration agents.

I have witnessed and brought samples of torn and ripped legal documents, that Mexico requires, but the US does not, left on the ground as they cross our borders. With no documentation, our agents can't be sure of countries of origin, and certainly can't do proper background checks.



*Video of a jet ski smuggling event:*  
[Jet Ski Smuggling Event](#)

What's worse are the "got-aways"—those who bypass Border Patrol entirely. Whether they come ashore by boat or cross the border by other means, they vanish without a trace. On April 13, 2024, in broad daylight, a boat carrying a dozen migrants washed ashore in Carlsbad, North County San Diego. They ran into affluent beach neighborhoods, where black SUVs waited to take them further into the country. These individuals chose to evade Border Patrol altogether, leaving us with no information about their identities or intentions.



Footage of the Carlsbad boat landing:  
[Boat Coming Ashore in Carlsbad](#)



Even though the street releases have stopped, the chaos at the border continues. Border Patrol facilities remain over capacity, forcing the Federal Government to fly illegal immigrants from San Diego to McAllen, Texas.



For decades, the focus has been on Arizona and Texas, but San Diego has now become the epicenter of illegal immigration, placing an unsustainable burden on our local communities and endangering neighborhoods. However, this is not just a San Diego

problem. Most illegal immigrants don't stay in border towns; they disperse across the country. This is a national crisis.

The Biden-Harris Administration created this mess, and now they refuse to acknowledge it. In the end, it's counties like San Diego, and the entire nation, that are left dealing with the fallout.



