



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff **Chad Enright** Chief Deputy

United States House Committee on the Judiciary

“The Biden-Harris Border Crisis: Wisconsin Perspective”

Hearing Date: Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 10:00 am
Location: Milwaukee Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
517 E. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Written Testimony of Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt
Dodge County Sheriff
President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Nadler, and the distinguished Members of the Committee, my name is Dale Schmidt, and I am the Sheriff of Dodge County in the great state of Wisconsin. I also serve as the President of the Badger State Sheriffs' Association (BSSA) representing all 72 Wisconsin Sheriffs. Finally, I am Congressman Scott Fitzgerald's sheriff and am honored that both of us can be here representing Dodge County, the 5th Congressional District, and the State of Wisconsin.

If you had told me 10 years ago when I took office as Sheriff, that I would be sitting here today, in essence, as a southern border state on the far northern border of our great nation, I would not have believed it. This was especially true while under the Trump Administration when we were at a point where we had seen more progress in border security than I have ever seen in my 24 years in law enforcement. Make no mistake, the criminal element was already here, and it would have taken years to see significant progress in removing the criminal element that was already here. However, we were seeing positive efforts in shutting down the free movement of illegal drugs flowing across our southern border and making its way to Wisconsin.

Over the last 4 years, we have seen a huge increase in the amount of crime across our great state, crime which has been perpetrated by individuals who should never have been allowed entry into the country in the first place. These illegal aliens have caused death and despair for so many Americans, including right here in the State of Wisconsin.

DODGE COUNTY

Incident #1

The evidence of our southern border crisis and the criminal activity surrounding it making it to Dodge County, Wisconsin, couldn't have been clearer than in an investigation that happened right in the county seat of Dodge County, in Juneau. Juneau is a quiet bedroom community with very low rates of crime, but with less need for intense law enforcement, it apparently also means it is the perfect place for the Mexican Drug Cartels to set up shop.

In October 2020, it was clear that the United States Drug Enforcement Agency was on the right track as they arrested **Francisco “Chicho” Gonzales Diaz**, a member of the Mexican **“Sinaloa Drug Cartel”** who was located with 81.13 lbs. of methamphetamine and 5.5 ounces of fentanyl at his home.

You would think that after this federal arrest, an individual like this would not be able to maintain his status living in our community, especially with this kind of weight of a very deadly substance. To be clear, 5.5 ounces of fentanyl is enough to kill 156,000 people as a lethal dose is 2mg for a typical person ([dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl](https://www.dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl)). Unfortunately, **no action took place following this arrest**, and this individual was not charged. It is unclear if charges have ever been filed, even after he appeared on our radar again.

However, in November of 2022, the Dodge County Drug Task Force, after tracking new activity from **Francisco “Chicho” Gonzales Diaz**, controlled buys were made of an additional 172.09 grams of methamphetamine.

In late November of 2022, the Dodge County Drug Task Force executed a swear warrant on **Francisco “Chicho” Gonzales Diaz’s** home and this time located 4 pounds of methamphetamine, 2.1 pounds of marijuana, and \$51,907 in suspected drug money.

Following our arrest, **Francisco “Chicho” Gonzales Diaz** was arrested for:

- Possession with intent to deliver more than 50g Methamphetamine
- Possession with intent to deliver Marijuana 200g-1000g
- Maintaining a drug trafficking place
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Three Counts Manufacture/Deliver Methamphetamine

Francisco “Chicho” Gonzales Diaz was sentenced in Dodge County Court to 18 ½ years of initial confinement and 10 years of supervised release as the state did its job in protecting the citizens of Dodge County. However, the state now must bear the burden of corrections for this individual when under the Biden/Harris Administration he should have been held accountable and removed from our country before he could continue his cartel work in our community.

Incident #2

A scammer from India was arrested for attempting to defraud a Dodge County Resident.

On Wednesday, September 18, 2024, the Dodge County Sheriff's Office was notified of a phone scam where the caller attempted to defraud a 61-year-old town of Lowell resident. Due to the immediate reporting of this violation, investigators were able to take over communications with the scammer and pose as the victim. The scammer identified themselves as an agent with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and requested for the victim to withdraw all their money from the bank in cash. The scammer claimed this was due to having a compromised social security number and bank accounts, and the scammer claimed that the FTC would issue a new social security number and new bank accounts to the victim.

The criminal organization sent a person from the Chicago, Illinois area to the victim's residence to pick up the funds. The Dodge County Sheriff's Office utilized an undercover law enforcement officer to complete the transfer to the suspect. Immediately after the transfer occurred, the suspect was arrested. This criminal organization attempted to defraud the victim of over \$81,000.

Laxit Devendra Patel, an 18-year-old man illegally here from India, had his initial appearance at the Dodge County Circuit Court. He was charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and conspiracy to commit theft by false representation. He is currently being held in custody on a \$500,000 cash bond. As always, all persons are innocent until proven guilty in court.

FOND DU LAC COUNTY

Incident #3

On March 22, 2024, in neighboring Fond du Lac County, Sheriff Ryan Waldschmidt's agency handled a stabbing. The suspect and reported illegal alien, Fermin Teodoro Lopez Mendoza, fled the scene after leaving the victim behind with life-threatening injuries.

On March 24, 2024, the Sheriff announced that an extensive manhunt took place in conjunction with 2 other sheriff's offices, and the subject was taken into custody after identifying additional criminal activity. Significant resources were expended by the 3 counties in this investigation and as a result, he is now facing charges for:

- First Degree Attempted Intentional Homicide
- Mayhem
- 1st Degree Reckless Injury
- Aggravated Battery

*This case is still pending and all persons are innocent until proven guilty in court. *

Incident #4

In another case in Fond du Lac County, on May 19, 2024, deputies were dispatched to a sexual assault. A 12-year-old female had just shown up at the door seeking help. She had just fled from a vehicle after a male subject, **Juan Carlos Rocha Mejia** had bound and blindfolded her and was attempting to assault her. Bravely, she fought back and broke free from the subject running for help. Due to outstanding work by Fond du Lac area law enforcement, they located the subject and took him into custody.

This investigation was complex and involved numerous serious potential crimes including sexual assault of a child, false imprisonment, child human trafficking, failure to protect a child, and others. It is alleged that the suspect paid the victim's mother, who he knew, in exchange for spending time alone with the victim. Detectives determined the suspect of the assault was a 30 or 31-year-old Nicaraguan man (legal identity yet to be determined based on multiple aliases) who entered the United States illegally from Mexico into Texas in October of 2021. At that time, he was apprehended by US Customs and Border Protection agents, processed at a federal facility, and released from their custody with instructions to follow per current federal immigration policy. The mother has also been arrested for numerous crimes related to this incident, and she also entered the country illegally.

Juan Carlos Rocha Mejia has been charged in court with the following offenses, but of course, all persons are innocent until proven guilty in court.

- 1st Degree Child Sexual Assault w/ Person under 16 – Use/Threat of Force/Violence
- Child Enticement – Sexual Contact
- False Imprisonment
- Strangulation and Suffocation

OCONTO COUNTY Incident #5

On Monday, February 22, 2021, at approximately 6:26 AM, the Oconto County Sheriff's Office Emergency Communications Center received a 911 call regarding a body being found in the parking area of the Green Bay Shores State Wildlife Area on Lade Beach Road which is located Oconto County.

Oconto County Sheriff's Office personnel responded to the scene. Sheriff's Office personnel arrived on the scene and confirmed there was a deceased male located in the parking area. Law enforcement believed the male had been there for some time due to being partially covered in snow.

While processing the scene, several fired 9mm ammunition cartridge cases were located near the decedent. Medical Examiner personnel advised the deceased male had injuries

consistent with gunshot entry and exit wounds. Law Enforcement teams did not locate a weapon at the scene and began investigating the death of the male as a homicide.

During the investigation, it was determined that the victim left a residence in the City of Green Bay. Witnesses indicated he left voluntarily with an unknown individual.

On Monday, May 17, 2021, a 32-year-old male Manuel Antonio Herrera-Hernandez, and a 30-year-old female both residing in the Green Bay area were arrested following a traffic stop in the City of Green Bay. Herrera-Hernandez and the female were arrested for numerous drug-related charges. During the initial interview with the female, she told investigators that Herrera-Hernandez admitted to her that he had shot and killed the victim.

Subsequently, investigators conducted another interview and during the interview, she admitted to being in the vehicle when Herrera-Hernandez shot and killed the victim. The female stated she and Herrera-Hernandez had picked up from a residence and drove to a secluded area where Herrera-Hernandez shot and killed the victim.

Investigators interviewed with Herrera-Hernandez. During the interview, Herrera-Hernandez admitted to shooting and killing the victim. Herrera-Hernandez stated they picked up the from a residence and then drove the victim to a remote location. Herrera-Hernandez admitted to having the firearm with him and stated the victim owed a drug debt. Herrera-Hernandez admitted to shooting several times. During the investigation, law enforcement also learned that the victim was involved in the sale and distribution of illegal narcotics in the Green Bay area.

A Charge of First-Degree Intentional Homicide is pending in the Oconto County Courts against **Manuel Antonio Herrera-Hernandez**. Of course, all persons are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. **Manuel Antonio Herrera-Hernandez** has also entered the United States illegally.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

So far, the Columbia County Sheriff has reported to me the following types of incidents which have occurred in 2024:

Incident #6

- Many drivers, that are not citizens and with no valid driver's license are committing traffic offenses.

Incident #7

- Attempted homicide occurred at Alsum Produce. This was a stabbing of an ex's new friend, and the illegal alien suspect was arrested. (From Nicaragua)

Incident #8

- A fatal motor vehicle crash occurred where the suspect born in India, illegally here, ran a stop sign and killed a resident. He did have a valid California Driver's License and unknown how he got here.

CONCLUSION

The above 8 incidents span crimes including traffic violations, drug pedaling, sexual assault, attempted homicide, and homicide. In addition, the non-stop flow of fentanyl and methamphetamine has not simply made the drugs more accessible in our country, but the flow of illegal drugs has vastly increased the number of people who have died in our country because of overdose death. The number of hospitalizations in our country is staggering.

Our law enforcement does not have the resources needed to curb the crime that the southern border has allowed into our country. As you know, law enforcement is forced to wear many hats. We are asked to be law enforcement officers, health care workers, mental health professionals, and counselors, but we are now being asked to pick up the pieces because of a broken border. Our citizens are paying a heavy price as mothers and fathers are losing their sons and daughters to overdose death. Families are suffering as their loved ones are sexually assaulted by people who should not be in our country. Still, others have lost their loved ones because of evil acts of homicide. Finally, we have people here within our borders who are actively working to scam our citizens with their hard-earned money.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. The examples listed above are a mere sampling of the incidents that are occurring every day here in Wisconsin by people who never should have been here in the first place. Law enforcement is fighting an uphill battle. We need your help in Congress to close the border, but to not allow the discussion to end there. Criminals who are in our country need to be deported and never allowed to return. Amnesty provisions of border security bills are dangerous and will only prolong the suffering our citizens are facing.

I will leave you with the 2025 priorities of the National Sheriff's Association and ask you for help and support in resolving these priority issues as they are not simply border state issues, they are national issues for sheriffs and police departments nationwide.

- Open borders result in unknown whereabouts of undocumented individuals in communities.
- There is an increase in documented cases of serious crimes including sexual assaults, aggravated assaults on officers, and homicides committed by undocumented individuals.
- Local law enforcement is overwhelmed with additional violent crime, gang, human trafficking, and drug-related issues