

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 25, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We, once again, write to express our serious concern about the unprecedented surge in apprehensions along our Northern Border. Since October 1st, 2023, the Northern Border has seen a record number of illegal immigrants and drug seizures, most notably fentanyl, by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). While the crisis at the Southwest Border continues to intensify and unfold into an unprecedented disaster, local communities and Border Patrol agents along the Northern Border are feeling the strain as you continue to direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to abandon its duty of protecting our sovereign borders.

According to CBP data, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, Border Patrol agents apprehended 10,021 aliens illegally crossing the border between ports of entry, including 2,229 apprehensions in the first four months alone.¹ In the first four months of FY 2024, through January 2024, the Border Patrol has already apprehended 4,772 subjects along the Northern Border, a 114% increase from the first four months of FY 2023.² This 114% increase in apprehensions is unsustainable and symptomatic of your broader failure to secure the border.

As temperatures reach sub-zero levels along some of the coldest regions in the United States on the Northern Border and Border Patrol agents continue to conduct life-saving search and rescue missions, you continue to insist that you are managing the border in a safe, orderly, and humane manner by providing “legal pathways” to otherwise inadmissible aliens. But at the same time, only four months into FY 2024, the Swanton Sector alone has seen 3,192 apprehensions, up from 1,514 at the same time in FY 2023.³ Furthermore, the Buffalo Sector has seen almost double the apprehensions thus far in FY 2024 compared to the first four months of FY 2022 and FY 2023 combined.⁴

¹ [Nationwide Encounters | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

² [Nationwide Encounters | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

³ [Nationwide Encounters | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

⁴ [Nationwide Encounters | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

More alarmingly, the surge of Terrorist Screening Data Set (TSDS) encounters at the Northern Border continue to skyrocket. Through the first four months of FY 2024, there have been 103 encounters with individuals at ports of entry at the Northern Border, compared to just eight at Southwest Border ports of entry.⁵ This is not a new phenomenon, in FY 2023, the Northern Border had 484 TSDS encounters at ports of entry, compared to 80 at the Southwest Border. In FY 2022, the Northern Border had 313 while the Southwest border had 67. Dangerous individuals continue to take advantage of the vast Northern Border, which is the longest land border between two countries in the world, and relatively unguarded by natural barriers.

While the significant increase in illegal immigration should raise serious concerns, the Northern Border has also seen a dangerous spike in drug smuggling, particularly fentanyl and other synthetic opioids. CBP has seized nearly double the amount of fentanyl – the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18-45⁶ - in the first four months of FY 2024 than it did throughout the entirety of FY23 at the Northern Border.⁷ As you are aware, Air and Marine Operations has been the leading component in fentanyl seizures, totaling 1,188 pounds seized along the Northern Border in FY 2024. According to Drug Enforcement Administration statistics on opioid potency, the amount of fentanyl seized this fiscal year to date at the Northern Border is enough to kill more than 270 million people. While the Southwest Border has been overrun with drug smugglers, we cannot allow another avenue for deadly, illegal drugs into our country and our communities.

In FY 2024 alone, Border Patrol agents are on track to apprehend a record number of illegal immigrants at the Northern border. These statistics are yet another example of how the Biden administration is downplaying the serious nature of this orchestrated border crisis. Every state has now become a border state under your leadership – or lack thereof. The signed members below expect answers to the following questions no later than April 25, 2024.

1. How does DHS plan to address the strains experienced by local communities and Border Patrol agents along the Northern Border due to the surge in illegal immigration and drug smuggling?
2. What specific policies is DHS implementing to secure the Northern Border and prevent further increases in illegal activities?
3. Given the alarming spike in drug smuggling, particularly of deadly narcotics like fentanyl being trafficked in by transnational criminal organizations, what strategies are being employed to enhance detection and interception of these drugs?
4. The Border Patrol is facing morale challenges due to the scale of the border crisis. What resources are being allocated to support these agents conducting life-saving search and rescue missions, especially in extreme weather conditions?

⁵ [CBP Enforcement Statistics | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

⁶ [How many across the Heartland are fighting back against fentanyl | msn.com](#)

⁷ [Drug Seizure Statistics | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

5. Are there any plans to collaborate with the Canadian government to address the cross-border issues contributing to the surge in illegal immigration and drug smuggling?
6. How does DHS intend to prevent the Northern Border from becoming another avenue for deadly illegal drugs into the country?
7. What steps are being taken to ensure the effective enforcement of Border security laws and regulations along the Northern Border?

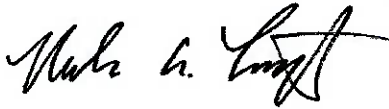
Sincerely,



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress



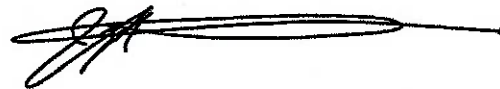
Nicholas A. Langworthy
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



Jeff Van Drew
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Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



Ralph Norman
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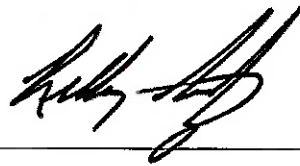
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Robert E. Latta
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Andy Biggs
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Kelly Armstrong
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Andy Barr
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Pete Stauber
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Matthew M. Rosendale, Sr.
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