

Representative Earl L. “Buddy” Carter (GA-01)

Testimony

10/21/2021

House Committee on Judiciary Member Day Hearing

Member Day Testimony

- Thank you, Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Jordan for having me here today to share my priorities before the Judiciary Committee.
- The work you do on this committee is incredibly important, especially now.
- It is no secret that we have a crisis along our Southern border, and many members -- of this body-- including myself— have been down to see it firsthand.
- It is essential that we act.
- That is why I’ve come to speak in support of two bills that would go towards addressing this disaster, which I have introduced and were referred to this committee.
- The first is H.R. 3848, the Illegal Immigrant Assistance Prohibition Act.
- As its name suggests, this bill would prohibit discretionary program funds from going to states that provide assistance to illegal immigrants.
- While there are a number of “carrots” that draw people to come to the United States, it is uncontainable to incentivize people to come into the country illegally by providing tax-payer funded assistance.
- Illegal immigrants are already generally prohibited from federal assistance programs by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act.
- However, states can still provide assistance through their own programs funded by state taxes.
- This allows for the possibility of a state to use its own tax revenues on programs to assist illegal immigrants while simultaneously leaning on federal funding for other programs in their budgets.

- Recent examples of this kind of spending include California’s initiative to provide cash benefits to “undocumented Californians,” and New York’s "Excluded Worker Relief Fund” that would allow for nearly 300,000 undocumented workers in the state to be eligible for lump-sum payments up to \$15,600.
- Programs like this can be an attractive draw for someone to enter into the US illegally, which is contradictory to federal immigration policy.
- States should not be permitted to lean on federal funding to subsidize parts of its budget while undermining the federal immigration system. This is especially worrisome as we face a crisis along our Southern border.
- The second piece of legislation I’d like to discuss is H.R.4796, the Empowering Law Enforcement Act.
- While my first bill addresses one of the “carrots” that attract illegal immigrants, this bill addresses the “stick” side of things by providing backup to federal immigration enforcement officials who have been hamstrung by the Biden Administration.
- Specifically, this bill would grant state and local law enforcement inherent immigration enforcement authority to investigate, identify, apprehend, arrest, detain or transfer a migrant that has entered the U.S. illegally.
- There were 208,887 border apprehensions in August – a 317% INCREASE from last year, and August was the second straight month with over 200,000 apprehensions.
- The Department of Homeland Security has warned officials to be prepared for the possibility of 350,000 to 400,000 illegal border apprehensions in October.
- This is a national security threat, and we must be willing to use every policy option to stem the tide.
- Including completing the border wall, reinstating the “Remain in Mexico” policy, fully reinstating Title 42 health expulsions to protect public health, and passing both H.R. 3848 and H.R. 4796.