

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2021

Contact: Joaquin Romero

joaquin.romero@nmlegis.gov

(505) 506-5798

State Legislators, County Sheriffs Urge Governor to Address Crisis at Southern Border

SANTA FE – Following Vice President Kamala Harris’ visit to El Paso, Texas, last week, several border legislators and county sheriffs are urging Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to address the growing crisis at New Mexico’s southern border.

“[T]he crisis at the border has worsened this year due in large part to the inaction and procrastination of the Biden Administration,” wrote **Senator Crystal Diamond** (District 35-Doña Ana, Hidalgo, Luna, and Sierra) in a letter co-signed by **Representative Rebecca Dow** (District 38-Grant, Hidalgo, and Sierra), **Representative Luis Terrazas** (District 39-Doña Ana, Grant, and Sierra), Luna County Sheriff **Kelly Gannaway**, Sierra County Sheriff **Glenn Hamilton**, and Hidalgo County Sheriff **Warren Walter**.

The letter notes that according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) statistics, there were more than 180,000 attempted crossings in May – a 20-year monthly high that surpassed previous record highs set in March and April of this year. The CBP also reported an 18 percent spike in drug seizures in May, including a 53 percent increase in methamphetamine and a 9 percent increase in fentanyl seizures.

“The federal mismanagement of our southern border has left our state exposed and rendered our border communities extremely vulnerable,” warned the legislators and sheriffs. “[W]e urge you to take all necessary steps to mitigate the crisis, including a deploying of the New Mexico National Guard to the border to assist CBP.”

The full letter to the Governor is attached.

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New Mexico State Legislature

STATE CAPITOL
Santa Fe

June 29, 2021

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor of New Mexico
490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Suite 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Governor Lujan Grisham:

In response to Vice President Kamala Harris' visit to El Paso, Texas, last week, we are writing to express our ongoing concerns regarding our nation's border security and the safety of our southern New Mexico border communities.

As you are well aware, the crisis at the border has worsened this year due in large part to the inaction and procrastination of the Biden Administration. Over the past several months, we have seen a massive increase in the number of migrants crossing into our country, including a record-number of unaccompanied minors. Just this past month, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported more than 180,000 attempted crossings – a 20-year high that surpassed the previous record highs set in March and April of this year. Tragically, among those encounters in the month of May were 10,765 unaccompanied children, down slightly from 13,940 in April.

With regards to public safety, the CBP also reported an 18 percent spike in drug seizures in May, including a 53 percent increase in methamphetamine and a 9 percent increase in fentanyl seizures. CBP reported that fentanyl seizures continue to surge with Fiscal Year 2021 seizures already 56 percent higher than all of Fiscal Year 2020.

These staggering figures substantiate what we and others have been saying for months – we have a crisis at our southern border. Our federal and local resources are strained, our facilities are overcrowded, and our Border Patrol and law enforcement are overwhelmed. Add to these challenges a potential rescinding of Title 42 by the Biden Administration, and we are setting ourselves up for yet another monumental crisis like the one we experienced in 2019.

The federal mismanagement of our southern border has left our state exposed and rendered our border communities extremely vulnerable. Locally, our constituents continue to experience damage to their properties and many live in fear of the cartel and the drug peddlers who cross

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their land. For these hardworking New Mexico families, securing our border is not a political talking point. It is a necessary means to preserve their property rights and their personal safety.

As New Mexico's Executive, we are looking to you for leadership at this critical time. The situation at the border is unsustainable and we urge you to take all necessary steps to mitigate the crisis, including a deploying of the New Mexico National Guard to the border to assist CBP.

We further urge you to work with our Congressional Delegation on some permanent solutions to address our nation's broken immigration system. We cannot delay any longer. Human lives are at risk and without strong leadership and direction, our border communities and citizens, and migrant families and children will continue to suffer.


It is time to fix the Biden border crisis and we stand ready and willing to work with you to that end.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



CRYSTAL R. DIAMOND
State Senator



REBECCA DOW
State Representative



LUIS M. TERRAZAS
State Representative

Letter Co-Signers:

Kelly Gannaway, Luna County Sheriff
Glenn Hamilton, Sierra County Sheriff
Warren D. Walter, Hidalgo County Sheriff

Cc: The Honorable Martin Heinrich, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Ben Ray Luján, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Yvette Herrell, U.S. Representative
The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernández, U.S. Representative
The Honorable Melanie Stansbury, U.S. Representative