



Senators Denounce Gov. Abbott's Conduct and Regard For Human Life

by Josh Sorbe

January 17 2024 4:07 PM

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and U.S. Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety, released the following statement condemning [reported actions](#) by Texas Governor Greg Abbott's administration that prevented federal officials from aiding migrants in distress at the southwest border:



“First and foremost: Governor Abbott’s horrific conduct over the weekend reflects a shameful disregard for human life. It comes as no surprise, sadly, as it’s the latest in a series of actions that he has taken to harm families and disrupt orderly enforcement at the border. His actions are not only dangerous, but unconstitutional. Time and time again, courts have found state interference in the implementation of immigration enforcement to be unlawful.

“If he truly believes in ‘law and order,’ the Republican Governor of Texas would allow federal officials to patrol our border, enforce existing immigration laws, and respond to requests for life-saving assistance. And he would encourage his Republican colleagues in Washington to engage in good faith to reform our outdated immigration system.”

Dangerous Texas policies include [stringing razor wire](#) along the border and [installing a wall of buoys](#) that have ensnared and seriously injured migrants. Governor Abbott also

has [enacted harmful immigration laws](#) set to take effect in March that purport to allow law enforcement officers in Texas to arrest recent arrivals and allow judges to order their removal. The Republican Governor [recently stated](#), “the only thing that we’re not doing is we’re not shooting people who come across the border because of course the Biden administration would charge us with murder.”

Durbin and Padilla continue to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with the immigration system and using migrants as political pawns. Earlier this month, Durbin [took](#) to the Senate floor to condemn the various ways that Governor Abbott has created chaos around this crisis, including by busing thousands of migrants from Texas to Chicago.

Padilla has held six hearings in his Judiciary Subcommittee exploring the urgent need to reform our country’s outdated immigration system that is harming immigrants and U.S. citizens alike and holding our country and our economy back.

Earlier this Congress, Durbin and Senator Gary Peters (D-MI) introduced a legislative proposal to respond to the immediate resource needs on our southern border. While not a substitute for more comprehensive immigration reform, including legislation to address the root causes of migration, the [*Border Management, Security, and Assistance Act of 2023*](#) provides immediate assistance to border officials and authorities to help responsibly manage the border and fairly and efficiently process asylum seekers. The bill also provides critical support to the communities at the border and across America that receive migrants and asylum seekers. Padilla is an original co-sponsor of the bill.