

Durbin: We Must Restore Order At Our Southern Border And Enforce Our Immigration Laws In A Fair And Humane Way

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WASHINGTON – In a speech on the Senate floor, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, called on his colleagues to reach a deal on immigration reform to restore order at the southern border while also enforcing these laws in a humane and fair way. During his remarks, Durbin slammed Texas Governor Greg Abbott (R-TX) for his continued inhumane practice when migrants reach the Texas border.

Durbin said, “We must restore order at our southern border and enforce our immigration laws in a fair and humane way—that’s why the Senate has been engaged in bipartisan talks on a path forward for weeks. The Republican Governor of Texas takes a different view. He has implemented cruel and ineffective immigration policies that sow chaos, risk lives, and prevent federal border officials from doing their jobs.”

Durbin cited various ways the Texas Governor has created chaos around this crisis. Through his Operation LoneStar, Texas has strung razor wire along the border that has seriously injured migrants and dropped migrant children off at truck stops in Illinois in subzero temperatures. Last week, a woman and two children tragically perished in the Rio Grande, while Mexican authorities rescued other migrants in distress. U.S. Border Patrol could not reach the migrants in need because the Texas National Guard actively blocked access to the Rio Grande. Just last week, Texas began arresting immigrants and placing them in state custody.

Durbin continued, “Governor Abbott defends these policies even though there is zero evidence that they deter migrants from crossing the border. We must discourage migrants from risking their lives by approaching the United States between ports of entry, but we cannot stand by while Governor Abbott increases the likelihood of injury or death. Despite their desperation to reach safety, most migrants wish to enter the United States lawfully. Many wait months at our border for appointments to make asylum claims. In defending his policies, the Texas Governor recently bragged: ‘he 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 continued to say that Governor Abbott’s policies are unconstitutional. Under the Constitution, states do not have the right to pass their own laws preempting federal laws on immigration. Just yesterday, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the federal government, allowing Border Patrol agents to cut through or remove razor wire that Texas installed on the border.

Durbin continued, “Congress must do its job and pass immigration laws that honor our history as a nation of immigrants and provide the critical resources necessary to address the challenges at our southern border.”

Durbin argued in his speech that we are also in desperate need of workers to fill key jobs in industries like health care and agriculture, which can be filled by immigrants.

As the lead author of the *Dream Act* and Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Durbin has been a champion for immigration reform for years. Durbin, along with seven of his Republican and Democratic colleagues, authored a comprehensive immigration reform package that would have addressed many of the challenges our nation faces at

the border today. That legislation passed the Senate with bipartisan support in 2013 but did not receive a vote in the Republican-controlled House.

Durbin concluded, “I believe immigration is a critical element in who we are and what we will become. It is part of our past. It will be part of our future. My mother was an immigrant to this country, and I've never forgotten. I'm lucky to be standing here as a United States Senator because her parents had the courage to come to a country where they didn't even speak the language in the hopes of a better life for her and her children.”

Video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

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