

Council on National Security and Immigration Border Platform



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The Council on National Security and Immigration is a coalition of American national security leaders who believe broad-based immigration reforms are necessary for America's security needs and long-term national interests, including its economic future.

Among our principles is the need for policy reforms that implement robust and efficient screening and vetting, as well as effective border security measures. We believe that a vast, interagency vetting and screening infrastructure is key to securing our immigration system and safeguarding almost every immigration process.

Building on this principle, the Council on National Security and Immigration has laid out the following border platform, which outlines measures that any immigration policy reform should include.

Ramp up regional enforcement efforts to stop flows of people, drugs, and weapons before they reach the border.

- Engage with regional governments to crack down on Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) and other Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) groups operating cross-border smuggling and trafficking networks.
- Formalize agreements with Mexico and others to share information and establish responsibility and strategies for migration enforcement and anti-smuggling/anti-trafficking efforts.
- Consider establishing Border Crime Task Forces (BCTF) modelled on organized crime task forces to coordinate local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to focus on cross border smuggling, trafficking and other crimes that impact states and localities beyond the border.



Augment border security between ports of entry with smart, evidence-based border policies and technologies.

- Prevent “got-aways” by adopting and funding border security solutions that make use of state-of-the-art security technologies and that are tailored to address the specific vulnerabilities faced by each border sector. Expand use of expedited removal while ensuring adequate due process safeguards are in place, particularly before and during Credible Fear Interviews (CFIs).
- Focus border security resources on cost-effective solutions and best practices. These solutions might include deploying mobile surveillance systems; deploying additional personnel to assist with back-end operations and processing; implementing sensors, autonomous security technologies, and aircraft to bolster surveillance capabilities in remote parts of the border; and constructing additional physical barriers where effective.

Collect and publicize additional data and metrics that clarify the situation at the border and use that data to improve border processing and security

- Establish new metrics to better define and quantify surge events at the border. Relevant metrics may include Border Patrol processing capacity, average time spent in various intake facilities, Border Patrol man-hours, further demographic disaggregation of existing CBP data, outcomes and timelines for various humanitarian protection applications, and overall costs devoted to migrant detention, transportation, and asylum and removal procedures.
- Use data to inform a proactive response to future increases in migration. Break the cycle of reactive and uncoordinated border policy during surge events.
- Make all data and metrics publicly available and regularly report on efforts to Congress. Work with the National Institute of Migration (INM) in Mexico and other migration agencies in Central America to create and update a regional migration database.



Create a more secure, more efficient, and more effective system for processing asylum seekers and other irregular migrants apprehended at the border.

- Bolster personnel at the border and in immigration courts to increase processing capacity. Train and hire additional immigration judge teams, ICE prosecutors, USCIS asylum officers, and medical and case management professionals.
 - Streamline asylum processing by implementing procedural reforms, including prudent use of docket management tools and expanding the role of USCIS asylum officers. Build capacity to ensure initial hearings with mandatory reporting requirements occur within 90 days of U.S. entry.
 - Make monthly metrics available to Congress regarding asylum processing and the asylum lifecycle, including types of claims made by migrants petitioning for asylum and rates of asylum acceptance vs. denials issued by immigration judges and by USCIS asylum officers.
 - Build capacity to assess mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for adult asylum seekers (and eligible children).
 - Engage diplomatically to ensure that Mexico improves its own asylum and immigration enforcement systems so it can shoulder more responsibility in responding to migratory flows, maintaining border security, and combatting organized crime.
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Modernize land ports of entry to strengthen security and expedite cross-border trade.

- Deploy modern screening technology and systems at all land ports of entry to screen a higher proportion of both passenger and commercial vehicles. When advanced security systems are up and running, introduce additional infrastructure improvements to expand capacity and reduce wait times.
- Improve entry-exit tracking at land ports of entry consistent with longstanding Congressional requirements.
- Address staffing shortage at ports of entry by hiring at least 2,700 additional CBP OFO officers.
- Review existing trusted trade and traveler programs and expand those that successfully and securely bolster trade and commerce.

Address the root causes of migration to the U.S.-Mexico border.

- Work to call out corrupt actors and eradicate government corruption in key migrant-sending countries, which contributes to and interacts with other root causes, erodes human security, and prevents effective distribution of international aid.
- Ensure adequate responsibility sharing by assisting regional governments in improving their own asylum systems and resettling migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) before they reach the U.S.-Mexico border.
- Reduce pressure on the border by expanding in-country and near-country resettlement options. Increase refugee resettlement from the region for those with legitimate claims to protection in the U.S.
- Investigate rising migration to the border from outside the region and work to address the drivers of migration and formation of new smuggling routes.