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Biden puts Harris in charge of border crisis



Stef W. Kight



Photo: Eric Baradat/AFP via Getty Images

President Biden is putting Vice President Harris in charge of addressing the migrant surge at the U.S.-Mexico border, senior

the U.S. economy after he assumed office in 2009, Biden is putting his own vice president in charge of a problem threatening to overshadow the new administration's successful launch.

- Harris will lead efforts with Mexico and the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) to manage the flow of unaccompanied children and migrant families arriving at the border in numbers not seen since a surge in 2019.
- "Starting today, the Northern Triangle nations and Mexico will know there was one senior official dedicated to this effort. To be very clear, this is an important task," a senior administration official told reporters during a conference call.
- It was held just an hour before a White House event with Biden, Harris, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, and Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra.

The announcement and high-level meeting, coming the same day the White House arranged a trip for senior aides and members of Congress to South Texas, illustrated the breadth of the administration's efforts to get control of the problem.

- Republicans say Biden is to blame for refusing to reinstate a Trump-era policy to expel unaccompanied minors, as well as more accommodating language the president's own press secretary concedes is connected to the administration's humanitarian values.

What they're saying: "President Biden said during the transition, whatever the most urgent need, he would turn to the vice president," one of the three officials briefing reporters said, "and today he is turning to the vice president."

- In a broader context, Harris also will work on establishing a strategic partnership with the Central American countries "based on respect and shared values," another official said.
- The work will be conducted with the understanding that "these countries are our friends and our neighbors. They are members of our shared community of the Americas and within the Western Hemisphere."

Details: One official said Harris spoke Wednesday morning with Ricardo Zúñiga, the State Department's special envoy to the Northern Triangle.

- Zúñiga and other top border officials [left earlier this week](#) for Mexico and planned to go on to Guatemala with the goal of addressing local problems fueling the migration north.
- They include lax responses to the coronavirus pandemic, rampant crime, as well as the aftereffects of two hurricanes that blew through the region.

The bottom line: "The people of the Northern Triangle certainly deserve to experience freedom and opportunity, and be able to access protection within the Northern Triangle," one official told reporters.

- "They shouldn't have to come to the United States to seek that freedom and opportunity, and that's what she'll be working toward."
- Among the items to tackle are local corruption and ways to improve local economies.



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Pressure grows on Bob Menendez to resign from Senate after indictment



Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) attends a forum earlier this month in Italy. Photo: Pier Marco Tacca/Getty Images

Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) faces growing calls to resign after being indicted on bribery charges this past week.

Driving the news: Menendez, who was indicted alongside his wife, Nadine Menendez, has [refused to resign](#) and said he is "not going anywhere."



Josh Kraushaar, author of [Axios Sneak Peek](#)
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UAW strike scrambles political allegiances



Then-candidate Biden delivers remarks outside the UAW Region 1 offices on Sept. 9, 2020, in Warren, Mich. Photo: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

The [United Auto Workers strike](#) against the Big Three domestic automakers comes at a volatile time in American politics, with blue-collar union workers set to be a pivotal constituency for both parties in next year's election.

Why it matters: Democrats have historically been the party of labor unions, while Republicans have maintained close ties to big business. But as Democrats have become increasingly reliant on

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Christie says McCarthy "doing the very best he can," as House speaker



Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a 2024 Republican presidential candidate, speaks at an event in Florida in August. Photo: Eva Marie Uzcategui/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a 2024 GOP presidential hopeful, expressed confidence Sunday that House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) will withstand the multiple challenges threatening his speakership.

Why it matters: The pressure on [McCarthy](#) is building as the clock ticks closer to a potential [government shutdown](#), and multiple GOP



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