

<https://www.heritage.org/immigration/commentary/deluxe-housing-illegal-migrants-not-the-military>

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# Luxury hotel rooms for migrants and not the military?



COMMENTARY BY

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Protestors

opposed to the city housing new migrants at hotels hold a demonstration outside the Hillcrest Hotel, June 4, 2023, in Queens, New York. Andrew Lichtenstein / Corbis / Getty Images

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Biden administration is paying \$2.5 billion in taxpayer funds for Immigration and Customs Enforcement to house illegal migrants.

The contrast between these generous living conditions and the housing situation for America's military families is stark.

These numbers don't lie. They provide a stark demonstration of who they care—and don't care—about. If Biden won't fix the discrepancy, Congress should.

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President Joe Biden would never come out and say, "We value illegal migrants more than we do members of our military." But considering how much more his administration is spending to house migrants who came here illegally than those who defend us—and the conditions both are living in—he might as well. They provide five-star treatment to migrants, while our troops are given accommodations little better than a prison.

The Biden administration is paying \$2.5 billion in taxpayer funds for Immigration and Customs Enforcement to house illegal migrants. ICE provides them not only food and a bed,

but medical and dental care, recreation and other services to meet higher standards than county detention systems, for example.

However, the administration is not filling the beds in these facilities. It's choosing to bypass ICE and simply release the migrants onto the streets in many cases, where they need to be housed in other facilities, like hotels in American cities. So basically, the administration is paying for nice facilities, which have a large amount of space available, and also paying to put the migrants up in hotels.

### **>>> Open Borders Creating Bidenvilles of Homelessness. Who Saw That Coming?**

Consider the \$2 billion deal the Biden administration struck with Family Endeavors Inc to provide housing for migrant families in hotels and facilities. America First Legal revealed that migrants were receiving concierge services under this contract, including hotel rooms, room service, 24-hour snacks and drinks, laundry and dual-language television, in addition to other services.

There is also nothing to stop the migrants from leaving this detention center. The government is basically paying \$2 million per day for these enhanced services, which now include music and pet therapy, sheltered athletic facilities, cultural events, and individual support in academic areas such as mathematics and social studies.

The contrast between these generous living conditions and the housing situation for America's military families is stark.

Mold. Sewage overflows. Rodent infestations. Multiple instances of unsafe conditions. Facilities that fail to meet Defense Department requirements for privacy and safety were identified. All of these issues and more have been found in the barracks for our enlisted personnel, as the Government Accounting Office recently testified at a hearing held by the House Armed Services Committee Quality of Life Panel.

The GAO report is a damning indictment of the Biden administration's miserly approach to military housing.

"Our men and women in uniform have put their life on the line to protect our freedom," Don Bacon, R-Neb., Chairman of the Quality of Life Panel, said in his opening statement. "They and their families make countless sacrifices for our nation. We owe it to these individuals to ensure they have access to safe, comfortable, and affordable housing. Unfortunately, the reality of military housing is often far from that."

### **>>> How Biden, Mayorkas Broke Our Immigration System From the Inside Out**

Added Rep. Mike Waltz, R-Fla.: "The men and women in uniform that serve our nation are our greatest assets; we owe it to them to provide the necessary resources to defend our nation which includes, at the bare minimum, satisfactory living conditions."

The budget for the maintenance of barracks is difficult to estimate because of the multiple sources of funding that plug into it. One data point is the budget for maintaining Family Housing facilities in the Department of Defense in 2022 was only about \$56 million. The GAO also estimates that \$1.3 billion goes to housing allowances for members who would live in barracks but can't because of space or conditions concerns. In other words, less than half of what is being shelled out to house illegal migrants.

The fact that the Biden administration is paying billions to provide hotel rooms, room service, and recreational activities for migrants, while our military members are subjected to mold, sewage issues, rodent infestations and dangerous conditions, is shocking. Even given the challenging fiscal environment Biden's reckless spending has created, American taxpayers wouldn't want to skimp on housing for our military, especially while those here illegally are given such attractive accommodations.

These numbers don't lie. They provide a stark demonstration of who they care—and don't care—about. If Biden won't fix the discrepancy, Congress should.

*This piece originally appeared in MSN*