



# FACT SHEET: AS BIDEN'S "BORDER CZAR," VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS OWNS THE HISTORIC BORDER CRISIS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

CHAIRMAN MARK E. GREEN, MD

## BACKGROUND:

On March 24, 2021, President Joe Biden announced that he was tapping Vice President Kamala Harris to "lead our efforts" in working with Mexico and Central America to stem the flow of historic numbers of would-be illegal border crossers to the Southwest border. At the time, even the media gave Harris the title of "border czar," which as we can remember from the Obama years, simply means a government official tasked with responsibility for a particular issue. Some even reported that she would have "the lead role on the overall border and regional issue."

It would be charitable to say that Harris has failed to secure our border. More accurately, she's an open-borders radical with a long track record of opposing border security and immigration enforcement—both in her previous roles, and as Biden's top official on the border crisis.

## 1. VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS HAS OVERSEEN A BORDER CRISIS LIKE NO OTHER IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

- Since early 2021, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has recorded more than 10 million encounters nationwide, and more than 8 million encounters at the Southwest border.
- Roughly 2 million known gotaways have evaded Border Patrol agents since Fiscal Year (FY) 21. In testimony before the Committee last year, then-chief of Border Patrol, Raul Ortiz, said the total number of gotaways could be undercounted by as much as 20%.
- Encounters at ports of entry have exploded, from just under 20,000 in January 2021 to more than 117,000 in June 2024.
- Apprehensions of Chinese nationals crossing the Southwest border illegally exceed 33,000 just since October 2023, more than were apprehended from FY07-20.
- More than 200,000 Americans have died from the fentanyl being smuggled across the Southwest border by the criminal cartels.
- From FY21 through mid-July 2024, the Border Patrol had recorded 52,058 arrests of illegal aliens with criminal backgrounds, compared to 21,936 from FY17-20.

## 2. AS A SENATOR, HARRIS TOOK RADICAL, ANTI-ENFORCEMENT, OPEN-BORDERS POSITIONS.

- In 2018, then-Senator Harris advocated abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), saying "we need to probably think about starting from scratch." She also advocated doing away with private ICE detention facilities.
- She boasted about introducing legislation to reduce the number of ICE detention beds.
- She called construction of new border wall system, a move supported by the overwhelming majority of Border Patrol agents, "a stupid use of money" and President Trump's "vanity project."
- During a 2018 Senate hearing, she even attempted to draw a disgusting comparison between ICE agents and the Ku Klux Klan.
- In 2019, she made clear that she would support decriminalizing illegal border crossings, making them a civil offense instead. She doubled down on this anti-enforcement position when pressed on an episode of "The View."



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## 3. VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS HAS DONE HER WORST DAMAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

- Her job as "border czar" was ostensibly to find the "root causes" of the border crisis. It turns out that to do so, all she had to do was look in the mirror.
- Let's first recognize that many of the very policies she supported as a senator—including cutting ICE beds, ending border wall construction, and ending Title 42—she then oversaw after becoming "border czar."
- After calling border visits "grand gestures," she has only made one trip to the Southwest border—all the way back in June 2021—in what Texas Democratic Representative Henry Cuellar blasted as a "politically safe," "check the box" visit. She has not been back since.
- In late July, we learned that she has never spoken with current Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens, or his predecessor, Chief Raul Ortiz. This belies absolute dereliction of her duty.
- Harris has also lied repeatedly about the crisis she helped create. In June 2022, she falsely claimed on national television, "The border is secure. We have a secure border in that that is a priority for any nation, including ours and our administration." That month, there were 247,523 encounters at our borders nationwide, the worst June number in decades.
- She also viciously slandered mounted Border Patrol agents in Del Rio in furtherance of the fake "whipping" scandal, saying their standard security tactics resembled those that were "used against African Americans during times of slavery."
- It is clear that the criminal cartels and would-be border crossers do not take her seriously. either. In June 2021, Harris infamously declared from a podium in Guatemala, "Do not come" to the Southwest border. The following month, more illegal aliens were apprehended at the Southwest border than any other month in decades—and millions more followed.
- Anne Fundner, who lost her 15-year-old son, Weston, in 2022 to fentanyl poisoning, told the RNC in mid-July that she holds not only Biden responsible for his death, but also Harris, whom she called "a joke" as "border czar."
- According to former Border Patrol Chief and CBP Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan, "Vice President Harris has overseen the worst, unmitigated border security crisis in our lifetime. Her performance has negatively impacted every aspect of our country's safety and national security and can only be described as a complete failure."
- There's a reason why the House, on a bipartisan vote, passed a resolution on July 25, 2024, condemning the administration's open-borders policies, and Harris' failure as "border czar."
- In 2015, she said, "An undocumented immigrant is not a criminal." Illegally crossing the Southwest border is a federal misdemeanor, with up to six months in prison as the penalty for a first offense, and a felony for repeat offenders. More importantly, Harris brought that mentality to her role as the "border czar."
- Harris is an extreme, dishonest, open-borders radical. That's why President Biden entrusted her with this role. She has embraced, and even inspired, his failed border policies, and the horrific consequences they have created.