



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6538

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to request a meeting with you regarding the crisis developing on our southern border.

You confirmed this week that you received a briefing on the situation at the border that, according to press reports, included information indicating upwards of 117,000 unaccompanied alien children (UAC) will be crossing the southern border this year. This represents a marked increase from what were the highest yearly totals of UAC apprehensions by the U.S. Border Patrol in recent history (68,541 and 76,020 in 2014 and 2019, respectively, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection data). While the administration has yet to release the border crossing data for February of this year, January's data shows a nearly 113% increase in UAC apprehensions when compared to January 2020. Total apprehensions in January show a 157% increase compared to January 2020. Such drastic increases in apprehensions will, and no doubt already have, put a strain on the capacity of the U.S. Border Patrol and the Health and Human Services officials tasked with caring for unaccompanied alien children.

In the face of all of this, I feel compelled to express great concern with the manner in which your administration is approaching this crisis, but with hope that we can work together to solve it. Just this week, the Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas had a message for those who may seek to cross our border illegally: "We are not saying don't come, we are saying don't come now..." To be clear – there is never a "right time" to enter the country illegally and violate the laws of the United States. Signaling otherwise is reckless and will make the situation worse. I am specifically reminded of the "open letter" former Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson wrote during the UAC crisis of 2014: "To the parents of these children I have one simple message: Sending your child to travel illegally into the United States is not the solution." Secretary Johnson's words represent a stark difference from the message coming from your administration.

We must acknowledge the border crisis, develop a plan, and, in no uncertain terms, strongly discourage individuals from Mexico and Central America from ever making the dangerous journey to our southern border.

I look forward to your response and speaking with you in person about this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin McCarthy".

KEVIN McCARTHY
House Republican Leader