



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

April 6, 2021

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20535

The Honorable William J. Burns
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Dear Director Wray and Director Burns,

I am writing to request a classified briefing regarding certain individuals apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol. Through conversations with the Border Patrol and media reports, I have learned of the apprehension of foreign nationals on the Terrorism Watch List who were attempting to illegally cross our southern border. This highlights the ongoing national security risk posed by the border crisis. When scheduled, I would request Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer attend as well. I would also like to extend an invitation to Vice President Harris to join us for this briefing. On March 24, the Vice President was appointed by the President to lead the government's efforts on the border crisis and I hope she, along with Congressional leaders, could benefit from this briefing.

Last month, I, along with 12 other members of Congress, traveled to El Paso, Texas, to see firsthand the humanitarian and security crisis that has emerged along our southern border this year. The agents of the U.S. Border Patrol provided us with an eye-opening tour and briefings regarding the current crisis in El Paso and the operational challenges they face each day. During the briefings, the agents conveyed to us that they have apprehended individuals from not only Mexico and Central America, but also countries including China, Iran, Yemen, and Turkey. They then conveyed that they had apprehended individuals who are on the Terrorism Watch List. These revelations were shocking and concerning, and for those reasons, I felt compelled to share them with the nation.

Upon returning to Washington, I read comments from some of my colleagues who, rather than sharing my concern, cast doubt on it – one even accusing me of lying. However, shortly thereafter, staff from U.S. Customs and Border Protection confirmed the accuracy of my comments and further reporting provided greater insight into the situation. In fact, the threat has only grown. Just yesterday, in a now-deleted, publicly-released statement, U.S. Customs and

Border Protection announced the arrest of two Yemeni individuals caught illegally crossing the border in the Border Patrol's El Centro sector, hundreds of miles from El Paso. Like the cases we were briefed on in El Paso, these El Centro suspects were on the Terrorism Watch List.

Compounding the risk, approximately 1,000 people each day are evading capture by the U.S. Border Patrol, according to recent reporting from the Washington Post. While I am grateful to the Border Patrol for doing all they can, I have great concern about the number of bad actors that have escaped arrest and are residing in the United States. We simply have no way of knowing if other terrorists have crossed the border undetected.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



KEVIN McCARTHY
House Republican Leader

Cc: The Honorable Kamala Harris, Vice President
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senate Majority Leader