



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

January 23, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
568 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
332 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leaders Schumer and Jeffries:

On behalf of the people of Texas, I congratulate you as you begin the important work of serving our nation this Congressional Session. The trust placed in you by your constituents is both a privilege and a profound responsibility, and I am confident that your leadership will help guide our country toward a brighter future. As you begin the important work of the new Congress, one thing is clear: the American people have given you an unprecedented mandate to solve the ongoing crisis at our southern border.

Even though the federal government has a duty to secure our nation's borders, from day one former President Joe Biden refused to enforce federal immigration law and pursued reckless open-border policies that invited record-breaking illegal immigration. For example, his administration stopped construction of border barriers, rewarded criminals entering illegally with *en masse* parole, slackened asylum standards or dismissed removal proceedings altogether, and eliminated critical vetting requirements—among other things. President Biden's policies left Texas and the rest of America defenseless against an unprecedented infiltration by violent criminals, known terrorists, and other hostile foreign actors, like the dangerous Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. Weapons and deadly drugs like fentanyl poured into our country; women and children were abducted, raped, and murdered in Texas; and property was destroyed all along the southern border.

I launched Operation Lone Star (OLS) to combat these threats to all Americans. Under OLS, Texas law enforcement has apprehended over half a million illegal immigrants; repelled over 140,000 attempted illegal entries; made over 50,000 criminal arrests; seized over half a billion lethal doses of fentanyl—more than enough to kill every man, woman, and child in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada combined; built over 240 miles of border barriers; and constructed the only National Guard base along Texas' southern border. In short, Texas stepped up where the federal government refused and in doing so, protected all Americans from President Biden's dangerous policies. Over the past four years, OLS efforts successfully reduced illegal immigration into Texas by 87 percent, demonstrated

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the ongoing effectiveness of President Donald Trump's border measures, and shone a spotlight on a national crisis.

As detailed in the attached document, this success came at a cost, which fell squarely on the shoulders of Texas taxpayers but should have been the federal government's responsibility. The construction of over 100 miles of border wall and the deployment of buoys cost almost \$3 billion. Installation and fortification of 200 miles of concertina wire and border fencing amounted to \$58 million. The deployment of over 10,000 Texas National Guard soldiers and surging Texas Department of Public Safety troopers to the border region came at a price tag of almost \$6 billion. In total, Texas has spent over \$11 billion to protect the nation and secure the border.

Accordingly, I am formally requesting that the federal government reimburse Texas for these costs in full. The burden that our State has borne is a direct result of a refusal by the federal government to do its job. The work that Texas has done through Operation Lone Star has protected and will continue to benefit the entire country.

Thank you for considering this request and for the leadership I know you will demonstrate to solve the ongoing border crisis. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Abbott", written in a cursive style.

Greg Abbott
Governor

Texas' Operation Lone Star Funding

Securing the border is primarily the federal government's job. President Biden's refusal to enforce federal law invited record-breaking illegal immigration that forced Texas to spend billions of dollars to protect Texans and Americans. The unprecedented surge of illegal immigrants including criminals and known terrorists, as well as transnational criminal activity by the Mexican cartels and violent gangs like Tren de Aragua, threatened all Americans. Weapons and deadly drugs like fentanyl poured across the border, and criminals who illegally entered committed heinous crimes such as kidnapping, rape, and murder in Texas. Operation Lone Star was required to combat the massive caravans, rampant vehicle pursuits and bailouts, human trafficking, stash house operations, property damage, and unsafe conditions for Texans living on the border. The burdensome costs to stop this fell squarely on the shoulders of Texas taxpayers—costs that are the federal government's responsibility.

Importantly, the strategies funded by Texas proved effective, leading to an 85% decrease in illegal immigration into Texas. Notably, the reduction in illegal immigration began more than a year before President Biden's executive order that he claims led to the decline.

Prior to the Biden Administration, Texas spent \$800 million of taxpayer money per biennium to supplement federal efforts to secure the border. As a result of the Biden Administration's failures, Operation Lone Star was launched and \$11.1 billion of Texas taxpayer money has already been expended or is currently being deployed to combat the chaos at Texas' southern border. The chart below details the cost of that response.

Operation Lone Star Border Security Funding Breakdown

BORDER SECURITY EFFORT	2022-2025
Border wall and other border barrier funding, local border security grants to counties and cities, processing criminal trespass arrests, and the relocation of migrants out of small Texas towns	\$4.75 billion
Personnel costs for the deployment of National Guard soldiers to build border barriers, guard the border and construct barriers, and apprehend migrants who entered illegally	\$3.62 billion
Personnel costs for Texas state troopers to repel illegal immigration, arrest migrants who crossed illegally, and target and arrest transnational gang members, cartel members, human smugglers, and human traffickers	\$2.25 billion
Anti-gang intelligence and by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice	\$311.2 million
Court costs for prosecution of border crimes at Operation Lone Star criminal processing centers	\$77.3 million
Personnel costs for game wardens patrolling the Rio Grande River on the border to prevent illegal entry (and make arrests)	\$62.6 million
Health and safety related services required at criminal processing centers	\$32.8 million
Investigation and prosecution of vehicle theft along the Texas-Mexico border	\$19.2 million
Border human trafficking interdiction by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission	\$13.7 million
Eradication of Carrizo cane along the border to enhance surveillance capabilities and improve visibility for law enforcement	\$10 million
Prosecutions by the Attorney General for crimes relating to human trafficking	\$5.2 million
TOTAL	\$11.1 billion

Operation Lone Star Since March 2021

Border Barriers

- Texas has constructed, or is in the process of constructing, over 100 miles of border wall at a cost of \$2.95 billion. Ongoing costs will include operations and maintenance of border barriers to deter and repel illegal immigration.
- Approximately 150 miles of concertina wire border barrier has been erected and more than 72 miles of fencing border barrier has been built at a cost of \$58 million. Constructed barriers are patrolled by the Texas National Guard to ensure operational security and deny illegal entry.
- Other border barriers include CONEX boxes and anti-climb barriers totaling more than 42 miles at a cost of \$54 million.
- Texas has placed approximately 1,000 feet of floating buoy border barrier at a cost of nearly \$1 million in strategic locations on the Rio Grande River in the Eagle Pass area. DPS will purchase at least an additional \$1 million in floating buoy border barrier in the next year.

Texas Military Department (TMD)

- TMD constructed the Eagle Forward Operating Base (FOB) for \$116.43 million, with a monthly operating cost of \$14.56 million. The FOB includes: 51 barracks, 15 executive dorms, a 700-person dining facility, four behavioral health buildings, a first aid area, a conference center, a laundry facility, and shower and restroom trailers. It can house approximately 1,775 soldiers in total.
- Approximately 10,000 troops were deployed for Operation Lone Star at its peak, with a current troop level of nearly 4,200.
- TMD has continuously guarded the border barriers erected by the state of Texas, as well as provided security, detection, and deterrence of illegal immigration. They have had: 192,652 detections and reports; 566,270 surrenders or referrals; 262,701 apprehension referrals; and 131,523 turn backs.

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)

- Additional costs have been incurred to fund the Texas Department of Public Safety to surge troopers into the border region, and they have arrested over 49,418 people committing Operation Lone Star-related offenses.
- Additionally, state troopers have apprehended and referred over 529,567 illegal migrants; deterred and denied over 141,429 illegal entries; encountered over 4,878 vehicle bailout incidents; and raided over 585 stash houses, leading to the recovery and referral of 5,439 illegal immigrants.
- DPS has seized almost 600 million lethal doses of fentanyl, enough to kill double the population of America. It is unknown how many Americans are alive today due to the fentanyl taken off the streets by the DPS during Operation Lone Star.

Migrant Transport

- To alleviate the dangerous over-crowding in small towns due to the Biden Administration releasing illegal immigrants, Texas was compelled to transport 121,507 migrants from over 40 different countries out of Texas on a total of 2,681 bus trips and flights. Countries of origin include Afghanistan, China, Colombia, Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua, Russia, and Venezuela.



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