

We are facing an all-time high number of migrants crossing the border, with a **343 percent increase** since 2020. Before arriving at the border, many women and children migrants are human trafficked, sexually assaulted, and some murdered at the hands of coyotes and cartels. At the same time, over **11 million** undocumented immigrants contribute to our workforce - including critical workers who kept our economy going during the pandemic - are living in the shadows.

Congressman Vasquez is working with his colleagues to address these issues in a common-sense, bipartisan manner.

VASQUEZ PACKAGE OF IMMIGRATION & BORDER BILLS

- 1. STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE ACT:** This bill will support migrant workers who fuel our economy by providing a pathway to lawful permanent residency for critical workers.
 - This bill allows immigrants without a permanent legal status in the United States who work in a critical industry, such as healthcare, education, energy production, emergency response, and others, to apply for a 2-year temporary provisional status that will allow them to remain and work in the US legally.
 - This newly created provisional status mandates a minimum of 100 days of annual employment in one of the designated critical professions to maintain this status. Upon completing the two-year provisional period, immigrants will then be eligible for immediate adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident. Still, they must go through existing USCIS standards and procedures for final approval. Individuals who qualify for a status adjustment through this mechanism will be exempt from existing country/profession caps.

- 2. THE STOP COYOTES' OPPRESSION AND ORGANIZED TRAFFICKING, AND ENSURING SAFETY (COYOTES) ACT:** This bill will go after coyotes and cartels who continue to harm, traffic, sexually assault, and kill migrant women and children.
- This bill will mandate up to a 10-year sentence on individuals, in addition to any other sentence imposed, who are convicted of committing human trafficking-related crimes against a minor within a certain radius of areas with high concentrations of children, such as schools, public parks, arcades, and community centers.
 - This bill also mandates increased interagency communication between the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Congress. These increased communication standards will include information regarding:
 - The unlawful entry of aliens along the southern border of the United States.
 - The prevalence of human trafficking for the purposes of commercial sex and forced labor in the United States.
 - The smuggling of aliens into the United States for immigration purposes.
 - Rates of abuse and assault of aliens committed by traffickers and smugglers.
 - The prevalence of controlled substance and firearm smuggling into the United States.
 - The prevalence of the involvement of gangs and transnational criminal organizations in the activities described above.
- 3. SMART BORDER PROTECTION ACT:** This bill will invest in smart technologies at the border, additional personnel, and improve the quality of infrastructure at our ports of entry to ensure that our border communities are safe.
- This bill will authorize additional funds for DHS to:
 - Prioritize hiring additional personnel at ports of entry, including CBP agents, processing assistants, technicians, agricultural specialists, and import specialists, to address staffing shortages.

- Procure, deploy, and operate non-intrusive inspection technology to interdict illicit cargo, like fentanyl, from being smuggled into the United States.
- Improve port of entry infrastructure through physical building improvements and vehicle/pedestrian lane expansions and modernization efforts.
- Any funds from this bill must be used within one year of enactment to expeditiously address the issues listed above and are in addition to any other funds made available to DHS/GSA for these purposes.

4. **HUMANE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT:** This bill will hold immigrant detention centers accountable to protect detainees from poor living conditions.

- This bill will mandate a report to Congress that addresses conditions within CBP, ICE, and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) migrant detention centers.

Specifically, this report will include:

- Instances of assault or abuse on detainees that require medical attention.
- Reports of sexual assault on detainees, along with findings from any subsequent investigations.
- Instances of detainee death while in custody.
- The frequency and topic of complaints submitted by either detainees or their families regarding abuse, sexual assault, staff neglect, retaliation, lack of proper resources/amenities, and lack of access to legal counsel, as well as any action taken by authorities to remedy these complaints.
- A GAO recommendation to address the instances, reports, and complaints included in these findings.

5. **FARM WORKFORCE SUPPORT ACT:** This bill will address our agricultural workforce shortage with H-2A visas while ensuring safe working and living conditions.

- This bill will ask GAO to submit a report detailing how the H-2A program has impacted the American agricultural workforce. Specifically, the report will ask for:

- An analysis of the impact the H-2A program has on hiring, including the impact on both American workers and guest workers and whether there is an increasing reliance on the program by American employers.
- Identification of any challenges in securing adequate, affordable housing for guest workers.
- Implications of wage rate requirements under the H-2A program on American employers' ability to recruit American workers in comparison to guest workers.
- An analysis of the economic impact of lost wages from spouses and unmarried children of H-2A recipients being unauthorized to work in the United States.
- Examining compliance with working condition guarantees outlined in a guest worker's contract under the H-2A program.