



JOEL ANDERSON

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May 3, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Request for Federal Assistance to Address the Lifting of Title 42 Restrictions

Dear President Biden:

I am writing as a follow up to my December 19, 2022, letter related to the lifting of Title 42 restrictions, now scheduled to occur on May 11th. The anticipated increase in the number of asylum seekers crossing the international border into San Diego County once Title 42 is lifted remains a major concern to me and my constituents.

Last year, Congress made available an additional \$800 million in Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) funding to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide shelter and supportive services to migrants. Unfortunately, the Administration has yet to release this critical funding to the local governments, nonprofits and faith-based organizations that desperately need these funds to assist asylum seekers. I respectfully request that you provide the direction needed for FEMA to promptly distribute this EFSP funding so the County of San Diego and our partners receive the resources necessary to adequately prepare for the lifting of Title 42 next week and can properly assist those additional migrants crossing into the United States.

In my previous letter, I expressed my disappointment that Congress and the Administration have failed to enact meaningful and comprehensive immigration reform since the lifting of Title 42 was initially set to occur in April 2022. Since that time, the number of apprehensions at the international border has continued to increase. Additionally, our region has experienced “street releases” of migrants dropped off by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol personnel at local transit stations, left to fend for themselves with little to no resources. These individuals, many of whom do not speak English, are at risk of becoming homeless and adding to San Diego’s existing homeless crisis.

Last fall, local migrant shelters reached capacity as our region experienced a surge of several hundred asylum seekers released by federal authorities. Approximately sixty of these individuals ended up in City of San Diego-funded homeless shelters. In December,

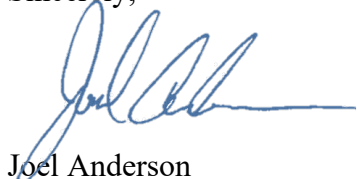
between 800 and 1,000 asylum seekers were released by the federal government at San Diego transit centers throughout the County. This practice of establishing “federally-sponsored homelessness” in San Diego County is unacceptable and I urge you to provide the direction necessary to halt street releases in our region.

The Administration has had over a year since the planned lifting of Title 42 last spring to develop a detailed plan to manage the anticipated influx of asylum seekers. Although the Administration recently announced plans to send 1,500 active-duty troops to the international border to handle mostly administrative and logistical tasks, there remains a lack of a comprehensive federal strategy to address this crisis.

In the absence of a comprehensive plan, in February, I initiated an effort, along with County of San Diego Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Nora Vargas, to work with regional resettlement agencies and identify actions that can be taken to ensure asylum seekers entering the U.S. will not add to our region’s current homeless crisis. Although our County team has identified both short-term and long-term actions to address the influx of asylum seekers, I am appealing to you to provide our region the necessary federal funding to ensure we have the resources to efficiently and effectively implement those activities as we approach the May 11th deadline.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request. I look forward to the Administration’s prompt action to address this urgent humanitarian matter.

Sincerely,



Joel Anderson
Supervisor, Second District

Cc: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
The Honorable Alex Padilla
The Honorable Darrell Issa
The Honorable Sara Jacobs