

Sec. Mayorkas says border crisis 'unsustainable' and 'we're going to lose' in leaked audio

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas met privately with Border Patrol agents in Texas and said in leaked audio that the border crisis is "unsustainable" and "we're going to lose" if "borders are the first line of defense." "A couple of days ago I was down in Mexico, and I said look, you know, if, if our borders are the first line of defense, we're going to lose and this is unsustainable," Mayorkas said Thursday, according to the audio obtained by Fox News' Bill Melugin through a Border Patrol source. "We can't continue like this, our people in the field can't continue and our system isn't built for it."

Mayorkas told the agents that the current border situation "cannot continue." He said the federal government's system was not designed to handle such an influx of migrants as the U.S. has seen in recent months and he was "very well" aware that the sector recently came close to "breaking."

"It's our responsibility to make sure that that never happens again," he said.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS DEMAND ANSWERS FROM DHS ON 'APPALLING' BORDER NUMBERS AS CRISIS ESCALATES

Mayorkas visited the Texas border and announced that agents handled more than 212,000 migrant encounters in July, marking a 13% increase from the previous month. He admitted the issue was "one of the toughest challenges we face."

"The extent of the challenge should not be understated, but nor should our ability to meet it," he said.

The Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to Fox News's request for comment if the border is not currently "breaking" in light of the July increase in migrant encounters.

Criticism of the Biden administration's border policies has only sharpened due to new COVID-19 variants and what critics see as a lack of attention from Vice President Kamala Harris, who was assigned to take over the migration issue in March.

Some border agents have also seemed exasperated by the administration's approach to the crisis.

"For those of us who have been around here long enough ... we don't need to reinvent the wheel," one agent told Mayorkkas. "We've had this happen before. We know exactly how to shut it down. We need to make illegal entry illegal."

Mayorkkas struck an empathetic tone with the agents and thanked them for their "heroic" efforts. He even said that he will do everything he can to get them hazard pay amid a surge in the delta variant of the virus. He told them that he requested an additional 2,000 agents in the 2023 budget and it was revealed that there is a new focus on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to prevent NTRs (notice to return) no-shows at Immigration Court. He also said the Biden administration was working hard to "keep Title 42" in place.

EMERGENCY SHELTER IN TEXAS BORDER CITY EXPANDS CAPACITY AS MORE COVID-POSITIVE MIGRANTS RELEASED

Title 42, which was put in place during the Trump administration to prevent the spread of COVID-19, allows for the expulsion of nearly all single adults and many families without being given the chance to seek asylum. Advocacy groups have been pressing on the Biden administration to do away with the ban.

Meanwhile, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is pressing for more expulsion flights into the interior of Mexico so individuals can't just "turn around and give it another try," and increase criminal prosecutions of recidivists, Mayorkas said.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION BEGINS FLYING MIGRANTS EXPELLED VIA TITLE 42 INTO MEXICO AMID COVID FEARS

These priorities serve as political lightning rods within the Democratic Party and would be a departure from the administration's early days when it prided itself on unraveling Trump's hard-line immigration policies and even put a 100-day moratorium on deportations through executive order.

Mayorkas' call for additional agents will likely rile progressives, including "Squad" U.S. Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib, who released a statement in 2020 calling Customs

and Border Protection and ICE “rogue agencies that act to inflict harm on our communities and have a pattern of behavior of abuse and mismanagement of funds.”

A CBS report on Thursday said that more than 83,000 migrant parents and children — about 88% - who were processed in July were allowed to seek asylum. The report said the Biden administration has “categorically shielded children from the policy.”

Mayorkas emphasized that many of those 212,000 resulted in expulsions under Title 42 public health protections, with 95,788 Title 42 removals. He also said that 27% of those encountered had at least one prior encounter in the past 12 months.

Source:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/sec-mayorkas-says-border-crisis-unsustainable-and-we-re-going-to-lose-in-leaked-audio/ar-AANhIDR>

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