

The vast majority of claimants for asylum are not ultimately successful, but if they are released into the great American countryside, they never show up again for their court hearing and essentially circumvent our laws and exploit those loopholes.

In addition, the HUMANE Act would provide protections for children, such as DNA tests, to ensure that they are actually traveling with a biological parent. It would prevent children from being released into the custody of a sex offender or a human trafficker.

I know these seem like commonsense reforms, ones that could protect vulnerable children and ensure that our laws are not abused and finally begin to reinstate the integrity of our legal immigration system. But that is not what is happening right now in the absence of congressional action. There are additional commonsense measures in the HUMANE Act, such as streamlining the processing of migrants, adding more Customs and Border Protection personnel, and training for those who work with these migrant children.

As I said earlier, it is important to note that this is the only bill that has bipartisan support. It is not a sweeping reform that will immediately fix every problem along our border, but it is an important place to start.

I believe there is more we need to do here at home to stem the crisis, but the truth is, we can't do it alone. We need to work with Central American countries, where the vast majority of these migrants are coming from, to help them build stronger and safer governments and countries. We can't do it for them, but we can help. We also need additional support from our southern neighbor, the country of Mexico.

I agree with President Trump that Mexico must do more to prevent the mass migration of Central Americans traveling across their countries en route to the United States. I commend the President, the administration, and the Mexican Government for working together to come up with a solution that will help stem the flow of migrants at our southern border, as well as avoid the costly economic mistake of additional tariffs. The fact is, we can achieve border security without compromising our economic security. The two are not mutually exclusive.

Let me say that one more time. We can achieve border security without compromising our economic security. The two are not mutually exclusive.

I am eager to continue our work in Congress to improve our immigration system in a way that prioritizes both physical and economic security. I hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join me and join us in that effort.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, June 9, 2019]

WHEN WILL CONGRESS GET SERIOUS ABOUT THE SUFFERING AT THE BORDER?
IT'S TIME TO CUT THE SQUABBLING AND PASS AN EMERGENCY RELIEF PACKAGE.

(By the Editorial Board)

Last week, as American and Mexican officials haggled over how to address the migrant crisis at their countries' shared border, United States Customs and Border Protection released its monthly migration statistics. They tell an alarming story.

In May, 144,278 migrants were taken into custody. It was the third consecutive month in which apprehensions topped 100,000 and the highest one-month total in 13 years.

Unequipped to deal with the crush, border facilities and migrant shelters are dangerously overcrowded, and the staff is overburdened. Dysfunction, disease and even death are a growing reality.

"We are in a full-blown emergency, and I cannot say this stronger: The system is broken," the acting commissioner of Customs and Border Protection, John Sanders, said.

Also last week, officials said that the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the agency assigned to care for unaccompanied migrant children, would begin cutting services "not directly necessary for the protection of life and safety." This includes English classes, legal aid and recreational programs.

Democrats and other administration critics called the move "cruel" and "illegal," but the financial reality is that the agency is overwhelmed. So far this fiscal year, it has taken charge of nearly 41,000 unaccompanied children—a 57 percent increase over last year. The entire program could run out of funding by the end of June.

In short, it is time for Congress to stop dithering and pass emergency funding to deal with this nightmare.

It has been more than a month since the administration sent Congress a request for \$4.5 billion in additional border assistance. A large portion of the money, \$3.3 billion, was earmarked for humanitarian aid—which most lawmakers agree is sorely needed. But a relatively modest piece of the request aimed at shoring up border security operations, roughly a quarter of the total, has tied negotiators in knots.

Early on, Democrats were opposed to funding additional detention beds for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Republicans had problems with Democrats' demands for changes in the administration's asylum policies. At one point, negotiators thought they were close to resolving these conflicts, only to have other issues snarl the process. Beyond the money for security, one of the remaining disagreements is how much data sharing will be allowed between the agencies responsible for caring for migrant children and those that handle border enforcement.

The broader problem is that many Democrats have come to view the Trump administration as untrustworthy, and they are loath to hand over one more penny for anything to do with immigration. Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Progressive Caucus have been particularly adamant, insisting that their leadership take a hard line in negotiations. In part, they fear that the administration, despite its promises, will spend any additional funding on enforcement rather than humanitarian needs.

There is much to despise about this administration's immigration policies, which are exacerbating this crisis, but there should be no ambivalence about the urgency of addressing the humanitarian needs. While lawmakers wring their hands and drag their feet, tens of thousands of migrant children are suffering.

Congress needs to get serious about dealing with that suffering.

Mr. CORNYN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on Friday, the entire country got some really good news: President Trump and his administration secured an agreement with the Government of Mexico. Our neighbors to the south will be doing more to secure their own borders and to control the flow of people through Mexico. These stepped-up efforts should help relieve some of the extraordinary pressure on the U.S.-Mexico border.

This was an important step in tackling the unacceptable and unsustainable crisis—the crisis that continues to roil our southern border. Mexico has an important role to play in solving the ongoing security and humanitarian nightmare.

Americans were also happy to hear the President's announcement that, as a result of this progress, our own families and businesses will not need to absorb the cost of higher tariffs on imports from Mexico. This would have been a step backward for the U.S. economy generally, a new obstacle for many of our manufacturers and small businesses, and a pain that families back home tell me often would hurt them directly.

At its best, the U.S.-Mexico friendship should combine strong mutual efforts on security with a strong and prosperous trading relationship. I am glad that is the direction we seem to be headed.

So this was an important step, but as my Republican colleagues and I have been sounding the alarm for months, the magnitude of this border crisis means that more will obviously be necessary.

Our U.S. processing facilities are badly strained beyond capacity as record numbers of individuals and families continue to pour through.

The men and women of Customs and Border Protection and our other agencies on the border are juggling too much, making do with too little and having to triage resources away from other important priorities so they can keep up even the most basic security functions and provide even the bare minimum humanitarian assistance.

The administration is working overtime on this. Now our Mexican friends are stepping up as well. In short, about the only important players who are still refusing to take action are my