

March 19, 2019

STATEMENT OF TEXAS SHERIFFS ON BORDER CRISIS

The Sheriffs' Association of Texas joins the Southwestern Border Sheriffs' Coalition and the sheriffs of the State of North Carolina in announcing its support for, and encouragement of, Congress to act promptly to secure the nearly 2,000 miles of the nation's southern border and its ports of entry.

Congress can substantially improve public safety only by rationally updating and coordinating national policy in several key areas, including policy on physical security—the construction of stretches of a wall or other physical barriers in strategic locations, drones and other technology, and manpower—on immigration, on law enforcement, and on economic and trade relations. In addition to securing the border, Congress's goals should include preserving and strengthening international relations, the rule of law, and our long and rich friendship with Mexico and other nations.

Texas sheriffs recognize that the nation has several competing goals in the field of border security and that it has limited resources. A broad-based and long-term solution will be difficult and expensive. But outdated and uncoordinated public policies are creating an increasing threat to public safety at home and abroad. How many more hundreds of thousands of Americans must perish from drug overdoses before Congress is willing to stop bickering and work together with the President of the United States in a meaningful way to solve this crisis? Federal, state and local law enforcement on the border and across Texas acknowledge that the flow of illegal immigration into the United States is completely out of control. Yet, politicians blinded by partisanship, are unwilling to concede that every level of law enforcement and the communities they live in along our southern border are overwhelmed by a tsunami of asylum seekers who make their dangerous journey knowing that untenable and outdated US immigration policies won't allow them to be turned away and returned to their countries of origin.

Criminals on both sides of the border *are* exploiting this humanitarian crisis and the lack of security on our border with Mexico. These same criminals are flooding our nation with narcotics and dangerous drugs, the likes of which has never been seen before. Texas sheriffs, therefore, add their voice to the growing expression of political will for Congress to act promptly to secure the southern border.

Respectfully,

Sheriff Gerald Yezak, Robertson County, President of the Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Tom Maddox, Sabine County, First-Vice President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Kelly Rowe, Lubbock County, Second-Vice President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Buddy Mills, Gillespie County, Third-Vice President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Larry Smith, Smith County, Sergeant at Arms, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Gary Maddox, Lamb County, Immediate Past President

Sheriff Jim Skinner, Collin County, Director; Legislative Committee Chair, SAT

Sheriff Pam Elliott, Edwards County, Director, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Ricky Jones, Franklin County, Director, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Jess Ramos, Lampasas County, Director, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Greg Capers, San Jacinto County, Director, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Larry Spence, Willacy County, Chaplain, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Harold Eavenson, Rockwall County, Immediate Past President, National Sheriffs' Association; Border Security Committee Co-Chair, National Sheriffs' Association.

Sheriff Chris Kirk, Brazos County, Former President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas; Government Affairs Committee Chair, National Sheriff's Association

Sheriff Gary Painter, Midland County, Former President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas; President, Western States Sheriff's Association

Sheriff Maxey Cerliano, Gregg County, Former President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Don Sowell, Grimes County, Former President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Dennis Wilson, Limestone County, Former President, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas

Sheriff Bill Waybourn, Tarrant County, Legislative Committee Vice-Chair, SAT

Steve Westbrook, Executive Director, Sheriff's Assoc. of Texas