

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

February 11, 2022

The Honorable Gary Peters
Chairman
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters:

We write regarding the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee's oversight role over the United States' southern border. In just one year under the Biden administration, encounters of illegal aliens at the southern border soared to over 2 million.¹ U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reports that they encountered 178,840 aliens in December alone.² This new data reveals that CBP encountered more than two million illegal border crossers between January 2021 and December 2021. CBP encountered the highest number of migrants in recorded history during Fiscal Year 2021. As this crisis has continued to unfold, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee has not held one public hearing to specifically address the national security, human trafficking, drug smuggling and humanitarian issues under the committee's jurisdiction.

Border security and enforcement should not be a partisan issue, and this Committee has a long tradition of bipartisan action. Protecting Americans from all threats and illicit substances is a shared responsibility. Congress must perform the necessary oversight of this administration's open border policies, which are fueling deadly criminal activity and are tragically leading to the maltreatment of migrants entering the United States by barbaric cartels that subject them to torture, sex trafficking, forced labor and other human rights atrocities.

Another avoidable tragedy from this border crisis is the increase of drug overdoses in this country. Illicit fentanyl, made in Mexico and supplied by China, is flooding through our southern border and is the primary drug responsible for more than 100,000 American deaths in 2021.³ During the 117th Congress, the Committee

¹ [Southwest Land Border Encounters | U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(cbp.gov\)](#)

² [CBP Releases December 2021 Monthly Operational Update](#)

³ [Drug Overdose Deaths in the U.S. Top 100,000 Annually \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[Drug overdose deaths top 100,000 annually for the first time, driven by fentanyl, CDC data show - CNN](#)

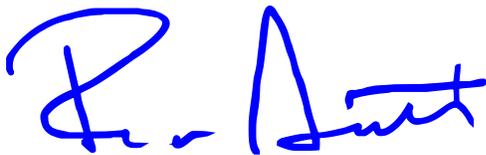
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has yet to hold one hearing on the drug epidemic caused by this border crisis. Further, there have been no Member meetings to discuss this serious epidemic, which is being driven by transnational criminal cartels along our border.

As members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, we should be focused on securing our border, enforcing all immigration laws, improving screening and vetting, protecting vulnerable migrants from being abused by savage cartels and providing all necessary resources to CBP and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain and remove all who violate our laws.

As we move forward, we urge you to schedule a hearing regarding the devastating crisis on the southern border at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
United States Senator



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator



Rand Paul M.D.
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Josh Hawley
United States Senator