

United States Senate

March 22, 2021

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

There is a crisis at our southern border caused by your administration's radical immigration policies. In 2019, former Obama DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson said, "I know that 1,000 [apprehensions per day] overwhelms the system and I cannot begin to imagine what 4,000 a day looks like." But in response to your administration's policies and rhetoric promising exceedingly lax enforcement and a path to citizenship for every illegal alien, Border Patrol agents are reportedly apprehending 4,500 to 6,000 illegal aliens per day.

Despite your administration's refusal to admit that this is a crisis, the American people are beginning to understand the gravity of the situation. As part of our oversight duties as Senators, I and 14 of my colleagues will travel to the border this week to talk to the brave men and women on the ground who are working every today to stop this crisis and secure our border.

But it is not enough for members of the Senate to see what is happening—the American people must see. That is why I requested that members of the media be allowed to join us. But your administration clearly and emphatically refused to offer press access. This is outrageous and hypocritical.

At the beginning of your administration, Press Secretary Jen Psaki stressed the importance of "truth and transparency" and a "deep respect for the role of a free and independent press." At the beginning of the month, Secretary Mayorkas stated that he would adhere to principles of "openness and transparency." But now, when your administration faces a crisis of your own making, you are refusing to allow the very transparency you promised and that you demanded from prior administrations.

Denying the press the ability to observe, film, and report on the conditions at the border is not openness or transparency—it is hiding the truth from the American people. The press and the American people deserve more than denials and excuses from a podium. They deserve to see and understand the crisis for themselves with the help of reporters who are free and independent from your administration.

It is unacceptable that press is not allowed to join our delegation so that they can inform the American people about what is happening at our southern border. I call on you to reverse this decision immediately and commit to allowing free and fair reporting on the crisis at the border.

Sincerely,



Senator Ted Cruz