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House of Representatives

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Ranking Member Robert Garcia Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs Hearing on “How the Border Crisis Impacts Public Safety” April 16, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Grothman.

On June 16, 2015, Donald Trump rode down the escalator at Trump Tower to launch his campaign for President.

He said, and I quote, “When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists.”

That’s who Donald Trump is. And he controls the Republican party, so here we are today.

He’s basing his 2024 campaign on the same racist rhetoric.

Just weeks ago, Trump referred to immigrants who entered the country illegally as “animals” nearly half a dozen times. He literally said, “Democrats say, ‘Please don’t call them animals, they’re humans.’ I said, ‘No, they’re not humans, they’re animals.’”

And he has repeatedly claimed that South American countries are emptying their what he calls “insane asylums” and “mental institutions” to send the patients to the United States as migrants.

That’s not happening. Even his own campaign couldn’t provide any evidence.

I’m an immigrant. I came here as a young child. My parents came to build better lives.

My mom worked as a health care worker and sacrificed her life to help people in her community during the pandemic.

When I took the oath to become a citizen, it was the proudest day of my life.

But Donald Trump wants to claim that people like me and my family are poisoning the blood of our country. That’s literally Hitler’s rhetoric.

It is disgusting and un-American.

And it has real consequences, which we saw in the white nationalist violence—like the white supremacists at Charlottesville who Trump called “very fine people.”

It provokes people like the White Nationalist who targeted people of Mexican decent in El Paso, murdering twenty-three innocent people.

I love this country, so I'm not going to sit down and let anyone divide us with racist lies.

Let's cut through the noise and actually look at some of the facts.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to quickly run through some unanimous consent requests.

Here's [NBC](#): "Trump's claims of a migrant crime wave are not supported by national data."

Here's [ABC](#): "No, migrants are not driving a surge in violent crime as Trump claims."

Here's [USA Today](#): "No, immigrants aren't more likely to commit crimes than US-born, despite Trump's border speech."

If you prefer academic sources, here's [research from Stanford](#) which looked at 140 years of data and finds conclusively that migration does not increase crime.

Right now, immigrants are sixty percent less likely to be incarcerated than people born in the United States.

And let's be clear—undocumented people are less likely to be incarcerated than native born people as well.

Here's a [Brennan Center report](#) which helpfully points out that, and I quote, "The spike in violent crime happened on Trump's watch, not Biden's. In 2020, the final year of the Trump presidency, murder rose by nearly thirty percent and assault by more than ten percent."

Guess what? Under President Biden, crime has fallen nationwide—especially violent crime.

But let's be clear: my colleagues in the majority have no credibility on these issues.

They're blocking funding for asylum officers and immigration judges.

They're trying to slash the Shelter and Services Program, which the border patrol calls a critical tool to aid cities and states who deal with migrants who are waiting to have their asylum cases reviewed.

And while Fox News shouts about "military age males" and try to scare people into thinking every Brown-skinned immigrant is a murder or a terrorist, my colleagues across the aisle are telling on themselves.

They don't want to solve crime, they want to campaign on it.

Just a few weeks ago, eighty percent of House Republicans signed onto a budget proposal which would end federal funding for community policing. And in the recent government funding bill, my Republican colleagues bragged that one of their top wins was cutting FBI funding.

And you still have no answer on gun violence. We've surpassed 107 mass shootings this year.

I was a mayor for eight years before coming to Congress—the Republican agenda wouldn't make anyone safer.

This hearing is a political stunt. But the majority can't hide the evidence: immigration benefits everyone.

Immigrants work hard and grow our economy. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office—the experts we rely on—found that immigration will add \$7 trillion to our economy over the next ten years.

The taxes that immigrants pay will actually reduce the deficit by a trillion dollars over that same period.

At the same time, the unemployment rate for U.S.-born workers averaged 3.6% in 2023, the lowest rate on record.

Immigrants do valuable, tough jobs—like the workers who tragically lost their lives in the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, or the essential workers who kept our country moving through COVID.

We all want an orderly and secure border. We need an asylum process that actually works. We need investments in the technology that can find fentanyl.

I was a mayor—I understand policing and public safety. But that's not what we're talking about today.

But Donald Trump doesn't want a solution. He wants division and fear, for political gain.

Everyone should reject his agenda. I yield back.

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