

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

**Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval
Legislation To Terminate the National Emergency Concerning the Southern
Border of the United States**

March 15, 2019

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.J. Res. 46, a joint resolution that would terminate the national emergency I declared regarding the crisis on our southern border in Proclamation 9844 on February 15, 2019, pursuant to the National Emergencies Act.

As demonstrated by recent statistics published by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and explained in testimony given by the Secretary of Homeland Security on March 6, 2019, before the House Committee on Homeland Security, our porous southern border continues to be a magnet for lawless migration and criminals and has created a border security and humanitarian crisis that endangers every American. Last month alone, CBP apprehended more than 76,000 aliens improperly attempting to enter the United States along the southern border—the largest monthly total in the last 5 years. In fiscal year 2018, CBP seized more than 820,000 pounds of drugs at our southern border, including 24,000 pounds of cocaine, 64,000 pounds of methamphetamine, 5,000 pounds of heroin, and 1,800 pounds of fentanyl. In fiscal years 2017 and 2018, immigration officers nationwide made 266,000 arrests of aliens previously charged with or convicted of crimes. These crimes included approximately 100,000 assaults, 30,000 sex crimes, and 4,000 killings. In other words, aliens coming across our border have injured or killed thousands of people, while drugs flowing through the border have killed hundreds of thousands of Americans.

The current situation requires our frontline border enforcement personnel to vastly increase their humanitarian efforts. Along their dangerous trek to the United States, 1 in 3 migrant women experiences sexual abuse, and 7 in 10 migrants are victims of violence. Fifty migrants per day are referred for emergency medical care, and CBP rescues 4,300 people per year who are in danger and distress. The efforts to address this humanitarian catastrophe draw resources away from enforcing our Nation's immigration laws and protecting the border, and place border security personnel at increased risk.

As troubling as these statistics are, they reveal only part of the reality. The situation at the southern border is rapidly deteriorating because of who is arriving and how they are arriving. For many years, the majority of individuals who arrived illegally were single adults from Mexico. Under our existing laws, we could detain and quickly remove most of these aliens. More recently, however, illegal migrants have organized into caravans that include large numbers of families and unaccompanied children from Central American countries. Last year, for example, a record number of families crossed the border illegally. If the current trend holds, the number of families crossing in fiscal year 2019 will greatly surpass last year's record total. Criminal organizations are taking advantage of these large flows of families and unaccompanied minors to conduct dangerous illegal activity, including human trafficking, drug smuggling, and brutal killings.

Under current laws, court decisions, and resource constraints, the Government cannot detain families or undocumented alien children from Central American countries in significant

numbers or quickly deport them. Instead, the Government is forced to release many of them into the interior of the United States, pending lengthy judicial proceedings. Although many fail ever to establish any legal right to remain in this country, they stay nonetheless.

This situation on our border cannot be described as anything other than a national emergency, and our Armed Forces are needed to help confront it.

My highest obligation as President is to protect the Nation and its people. Every day, the crisis on our border is deepening, and with new surges of migrants expected in the coming months, we are straining our border enforcement personnel and resources to the breaking point.

H.J. Res. 46 ignores these realities. It is a dangerous resolution that would undermine United States sovereignty and threaten the lives and safety of countless Americans. It is, therefore, my duty to return it to the House of Representatives without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP

The White House,
March 15, 2019.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : National emergency concerning the U.S. southern border, legislation to terminate, veto message.

Subjects: Defense and national security : Border security; Drug abuse and trafficking : Foreign narcotics traffickers; Homeland Security, Department of : Customs and Border Protection, U.S.; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Law enforcement and crime : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; Legislation, proposed : National emergency concerning U.S. southern border, legislation to terminate; Mexico : Border with U.S., infrastructure and security.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900151.