

Message

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**To:** noreply@techmis.com  
**Subject:** DHS Morning Briefing (9-30-21)  
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# DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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**Editorial Note:** The DHS Daily Briefing is a collection of news articles related to Department's mission. The inclusion of particular stories is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse the political viewpoints or affiliations included in news coverage.

**TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff**

**DATE: Thursday, September 30, 2021 6:00 AM ET**

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[IL] Chicago installing 'Bleeding Control Kits' around city amid gun violence

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Homeland Security officials told Pentagon 'no major incidents of illegal activity' after Capitol riot began

## **Secret Service**

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[NY] Oneida police warn of counterfeit bills circulating around city

[KY] Lexington Man Sentenced to 120 Months for Investment Fraud

[FL] Ocoee man gets prison for using fake IDs in lawmakers' names to pass bad checks at Lowe's stores

[IN] Body of missing teen found

[TX] Local high school student arrested on child porn charges

[NE] Fake \$100 bill used at Lincoln garage sale

[Nigeria] Businessman docked for possession of fake dollars, euro

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Risk of oil spills may rise as climate change creates more monster storms

[IN] Steel plant restarts after discharge into Indiana waterway

[CA] Coast Guard: Report of plane crashing off Carlsbad coast unfounded

## CISA/Cybersecurity

Lawmakers demand briefing on FBI's decision to withhold Kaseya decryption key

House passes legislation to strengthen federal cybersecurity workforce

Standardizing the playbook for responding to cyber vulnerabilities, incidents

CISA to maintain 'rumor control' site to counter false claims in future elections

## Terrorism Investigations

Investigating the threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism

[NY] N.Y. Uber driver tried to travel to Afghanistan to join the Taliban, prosecutors say

[DC] Jan. 6 investigators subpoena organizers of rallies that preceded Capitol attack

[WA] US jury convicts leader of neo-Nazi threat campaign

## National Security News

U.S., Europe Team Up to Address Chip Shortage, Tech Issues

[Afghanistan] Defense Secretary blames State Dept. for delay in Afghanistan evacuation

[Afghanistan] Taliban warns US against invading airspace or face 'negative consequences'

[China] Milley confirms he told China he would call ahead of US attack, claims Esper ordered calls based on intel

[China] Milley says he won't 'tip off the enemy' to 'surprise' plans

[North Korea] North Korea Kim Jong Un Says U.S. as Ongoing Threat

## **Top News**

### **New DHS commission will look at best law enforcement practices: Mayorkas**

ABC News [9/29/2021 11:31 AM, Luke Barr, 37K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday announced the formation of the Law Enforcement Coordination Council - an effort to "Institutionalize best practices in law enforcement," Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in an interview with ABC News. The LECC, chaired by Mayorkas, is the "First ever" department-wide body that will serve as a governing organization for the department's agencies like the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Mayorkas said. During his previous stint at the department starting in 2009, best practices for law enforcement training and use-of-force policies have been a subject of Mayorkas' portfolio. "We are bringing a greater, in my opinion, a greater degree of organization, cohesion to [law enforcement policies]" Mayorkas said. "And the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council is comprised not only of the agencies that perform the law enforcement mission, but also offices within our department that have significant equities oversight offices as well, for example, such as the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the office of privacy and the office of the inspector general." The commission being announced Wednesday was not influenced by photos of border patrol agents on horseback aggressively pursuing migrants attempting to cross the southern border, Mayorkas said. "These efforts began well before the incident at issue," Mayorkas said. "We have received broader inquiries for some time now, with respect to our training, our practices and procedures are policies to include use of force ... and as we are communicating in response to those inquiries, we felt it appropriate in the service of

transparency, to communicate directly to the public," he said. Mayorkas said that he doesn't have a sense of timing on when the investigation into the border patrol agents on horseback will be complete. "I know that the investigators understand the need to move both thoroughly and quickly, and they're conducting the investigation independently," he said. Mayorkas explained that the results of the commission and best practices will be integrated into the department's federal law enforcement training center. Mayorkas also said that the commission will look into various Department of Homeland Security agency policies, to ensure that any law enforcement policy discrepancies between agencies is "intentional" to fit the needs of that agency. Mayorkas said the department will move with "deliberate speed" in getting these policies up and running and sharing them with the public but did not offer any concrete timeline.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 12:29 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K]

[Yahoo! News](#) [9/29/2021 1:17 PM, Ivana Saric, 13869K]

### **Border Patrol agents must be vaccinated by Nov or face being fired: Whistleblower**

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 5:00 PM, Breck Dumas, 9251K] reports U.S. Customs and Border Patrol agents have been put on official notice by the Biden administration that they must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Nov. 1 or face being fired, according to a whistleblower who sounded the alarm to House Judiciary Committee ranking member Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio. The purported deadline for Border Patrol agents to get vaccinated comes as the DHS struggles to manage the ongoing crisis at the southern border, and Republicans warn that terminating agents over President Joe Biden's vaccine mandate for federal workers could not come at a worse time. In a letter to DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Jordan and Immigration and Citizenship subcommittee ranking member Rep. Tom McClintock, Calif., accused the Biden administration of "now openly targeting the heroic men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol" with the threat of pink slips. The pair told Mayorkas, "We hope that for the safety of our country that you see the error in this decision, choose to support the heroes of CBP who put their lives on the line every day, and find reasonable accommodations for CBP officers who do not choose to comply with this mandate for personal or medical reasons."

### **About 4,600 Haitians have been expelled from the US since September 19, DHS says**

[CNN](#) [9/29/2021 12:48 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports approximately 4,600 Haitians have been removed from the United States on repatriation flights from Texas to Haiti since September 19, a Homeland Security spokesperson told CNN on Wednesday. The Department of Homeland Security has been conducting regular removal flights to Haiti. Since September 19, it has conducted 43 repatriation flights from Del Rio, Texas, to Haiti. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas cited the toll of the pandemic on economies as a contributing factor to the surge of migrants over recent months and defended the continued use of a public health authority, known as Title 42, to swiftly expel those who arrive. "The fact of the matter is -- this is not specific to Haitian diaspora -- but the world is still reeling from a pandemic. And the downturn of economies have caused people in greater numbers to leave their homes," Mayorkas said Monday during the annual Immigration Law and Policy Conference. But senior administration officials, including Mayorkas, have defended their decision, saying that they studied conditions and determined migrants could be sent back.

### **Homeland Security says to end Trump-era 'Remain in Mexico' policy in 'coming weeks'**

[USA Today](#) [9/29/2021 7:14 PM, Rebecca Morin, 6282K] reports President Joe Biden's administration announced Wednesday it will seek to end in several weeks a Trump-era policy that forced migrants to wait in Mexico for immigration hearings. The Department of Homeland Security said it will issue a memorandum terminating the Migrant Protection Protocol in the "coming weeks", but it will not take effect until the current injunction is lifted by court order. The Biden administration was forced to restart the program after attempting to end it earlier this year. The U.S. Supreme Court in August denied a request by the administration to stay a lower court order requiring it to restart the policy, also known as "Remain in Mexico." That essentially forced the administration to resume the policy. DHS has appealed the ruling in the lower courts. The Biden Administration has been working in "good faith" to restart the program, DHS

said in a statement. "The Department remains committed to building a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system that upholds our laws and values," DHS said in its announcement. "The Department also continues to process individuals in accordance with U.S. law and our mission." [Politico](#) [9/29/2021 8:13 PM, Myah Ward, 1707K] reports the move comes after a U.S. District Court in Texas said the administration's June 2021 memorandum ending Migrant Protection Protocols was against the law. The Supreme Court struck another blow to the Biden administration in August when it rejected the Justice Department's request for a stay that would have put the policy on hold while litigation over Biden's efforts to rescind was resolved in the courts — a victory for states like Texas and Missouri, which sued over the administration's repeal of the policy. Homeland Security said on Wednesday that it had worked to restart MPP to comply with the court's order and that its new memorandum aimed to "address the concerns raised by the courts with respect to the prior memorandum." "In the meantime, while the court injunction remains in effect, the Department has been working in good faith to re-start MPP in compliance with the order, and it will continue to do so," DHS said in a statement. "To that end, the Department, working with the Department of State, is engaged in ongoing and high-level diplomatic discussions with Mexico."

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 6:42 PM, Rafael Bernal and Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K]

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 8:55 PM, Breck Dumas, 9251K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/29/2021 3:55 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K]

### **Kamala Harris sees solution to migration crisis in coffee beans, credit cards and Wi-Fi**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/29/2021 11:06 AM, Noah Bierman, 3710K] reports that a team of experts in Switzerland has spent months smelling and tasting coffee harvested from the volcanic soil of Central America, trying to find farmers who can produce beans that will retain their flavor and complexity after they are ground up and packaged into Nespresso pods. It's a long way from Washington and the raging debate over immigration and the political fights on cable news over the U.S.-Mexico border. The expansion of a collaboration between small coffee farmers and Nespresso, a Swiss coffee giant, exemplifies the hope and limitations of a broader U.S. plan spearheaded by Vice President Kamala Harris to address the so-called root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Pitched to American audiences as a way to curb migration, the plan is premised on enlisting government and private companies to address crises in the region, which include drug cartel violence, natural disasters, environmental degradation, poverty and corruption. It calls for spending as much as \$4 billion in American taxpayer dollars and spurring at least \$750 million in private investments seeding an array of economic and social programs intended to instill everything from a more functional digital economy to democratic values. In the case of Nespresso, the U.S. administration hopes that the company's practice of paying farmers more for coffee beans and the expertise of its agronomists will diminish the allure of smugglers offering would-be migrants a perilous journey to the U.S.-Mexico border. The Biden administration's overarching strategy faces significant hurdles both in the United States and in Central America.

### **[Mexico] U.S., Mexico to hold high-level security talks on Oct 8**

[Reuters](#) [9/29/2021 7:33 PM, Diego Ore and Adriana Barrera, 5304K] reports U.S. and Mexican officials will hold high-level security talks on Oct. 8, Mexico's Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said on Wednesday. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland would participate in the talks in Mexico City, Ebrard said. "The main agenda is a document of understanding that we have been working on together with the United States...on the focus and priorities for security," he told reporters at an event in Mexico City

### **[Panama] Next border surge**

[Axios](#) [9/29/2021 8:26 PM, Stef W. Kight, 526K] reports Panama foreign minister Erika Mouynes expressed frustration to Axios that the Biden administration seemed caught off guard by the Haitian migrant crisis because "we sounded the alarm when we should have." Why it matters: The worst may still be coming. Mouynes said there are as many as 60,000 migrants — mostly Haitian — poised to make their way north to the U.S.-Mexico border. Panama is expecting more migrants to cross through the dangerous

jungles of the Darién Gap this month than in all of 2019 — nearly 27,000, according to Panamanian government estimates provided to Axios. Mouynes is calling on the U.S. to help enforce a plan coordinated with countries in the region, saying, ultimately, "Let's recognize that they all are heading toward the U.S." The foreign minister wrapped up meetings Monday and Tuesday in Washington with Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and members of Congress, among others. Mouynes expressed her exasperation to Axios after spending months warning leaders across the hemisphere of the impending Haitian wave. "We've engaged with every single authority that we can think of, that we can come across, to say, 'Please, let's pay attention to this,'" Mouynes said. A Homeland Security spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Panama is often the first country to provide medical help, food and shelter to northbound migrants — despite their travels through multiple South American countries like Colombia and Peru. "When we receive them on the Panamanian side, they're malnourished. The children are in terrible condition, so even getting them up to a healthy state takes time," the minister said.

### **[Afghanistan] Over 100 Americans evacuated from Afghanistan through private charter**

Axios [9/29/2021 3:11 PM, Shawna Chen, 526K] reports the State Department said Wednesday that it is vetting and verifying the identities of over 100 U.S. citizens and permanent residents who were evacuated from Afghanistan through a charter plane this week, Reuters reports. The founder of the nonprofit Project Dynamo, which chartered the flight out of Kabul with Human First Coalition, said U.S. Customs and Border Protection had denied the charter flight landing rights in the U.S. Bryan Stern told Reuters that the Department of Homeland Security had notified authorities at the Abu Dhabi airport in the United Arab Emirates that one of the evacuees posed a "problem," but wasn't sure if that is why landing rights were denied. Evacuees included nine Special Immigrant Visa holders, according to the organizations, as well as 59 children under the age of 18 and 16 under age 3. "Our embassy staff in the UAE has been working around the clock to verify the accuracy of the passenger manifest and is coordinating with DHS/Customs and Border Protection on the ground to ensure the passengers are screened and vetted before they are permitted to fly to the United States," a State Department spokesperson told CNN. All U.S.-bound flights "must follow the established safety, security, and health protocols before they are cleared for departure," a DHS spokesperson added. "This process requires flight manifests to be verified before departure to the U.S. to ensure all passengers are screened appropriately."

Reported similarly:

CNN [9/29/2021 11:59 AM, Jennifer Hansler and Jake Tapper, 4876K]

### **[Afghanistan] Americans evacuated from Kabul due to fly on to U.S.**

Reuters [9/30/2021 2:44 AM, Jonathan Landay, 5304K] reports more than 100 U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents evacuated to Abu Dhabi from Afghanistan aboard a charter flight are expected to fly on to the United States on Thursday, the State Department and flight organisers said. U.S. officials on Wednesday were working to verify the accuracy of the list of passengers aboard the charter plane, the State Department said, after the flight's organizers said Washington denied it landing rights. "Our embassy staff in the UAE has been working around the clock to verify the accuracy of the passenger manifest and is coordinating with DHS/Customs and Border Protection on the ground to ensure the passengers are screened and vetted before they are permitted to fly to the United States," a State Department spokesperson said. "We expect the passengers to continue onward travel tomorrow morning," the spokesperson added. Bryan Stern, a founder of the nonprofit group Project Dynamo that chartered the flight out of Kabul, said late on Tuesday that the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection agency had denied landing rights for the charter flight in the United States. In a subsequent interview on Wednesday, Stern said that DHS had identified to authorities at Abu Dhabi airport in the United Arab Emirates one person among the evacuees as "a problem," but he did not know definitively whether this was the reason that landing rights were denied. Stern said they are scheduled to leave on morning flight on Thursday to Chicago, for which he will pay half and the State Department will pay half. Twenty-eight U.S. citizens, 83 lawful permanent residents - green card holders - and six people with U.S. Special Immigration Visas granted to Afghans who worked for the U.S.

government during the 20-year war in Afghanistan were aboard the Kam Air flight, Stern said. "All U.S.-bound flights must follow the established safety, security and health protocols before they are cleared for departure," a DHS spokesperson said. "This process requires flight manifests to be verified before departure to the U.S. to ensure all passengers are screened appropriately."

### **[Afghanistan] Conditions deteriorate for American evacuees from Kabul stranded in UAE, organizers say**

FOX News [9/29/2021 7:57 AM, Emma Colton, 9251K] reports the Department of Homeland Security denied landing rights in the U.S. for a charter flight carrying more than 100 Americans and green card holders from Afghanistan, according to organizers of the evacuation effort. "They will not allow a charter on an international flight into a U.S. port of entry," Bryan Stern, a founder of non-profit group Project Dynamo, told Reuters of Customs and Border Protection. The evacuation on Tuesday was part of a multi-group effort from Project Dynamo, the Human First Coalition and The Shadow Warriors Project to bring the Americans home. Families are currently being held in a hangar at an airport in Abu Dhabi, according to organizers of the evacuation. The conditions are poor, Fox News has learned, with limited food and water, no shower options, poor bathrooms, and restricted movement due to them being on an airfield, organizers say. Families are sleeping on tile floors and hard plastic chairs with limited access to potable water.

## **Citizenship and Immigration Services**

### **Senate parliamentarian rejects Democrats' Plan B for Dreamers and other immigrants**

The Los Angeles Times [9/29/2021 5:37 PM, Jennifer Haberkorn, 3710K] reports a key Senate official dealt a second blow to immigration advocates who are hoping to secure a path to citizenship in the Democrats' social spending bill, ruling Wednesday that a second proposal would not comply with Senate rules, according to a document obtained by the Los Angeles Times. Democrats wanted to change the immigration registry, a once-obscure part of immigration law that allowed certain people in the country since 1972 to apply for citizenship, to be updated to include more recent arrivals. The Senate parliamentarian, Elizabeth MacDonough, said changing the date of entry for eligibility would not be allowed in the bill. "We'll go to Plan C," said Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.). He declined to reveal what that is. Roll Call [9/29/2021 3:09 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports that following her meeting Wednesday with Senate Democrats, Parliamentarian Elizabeth MacDonough rejected plans to update the immigration registry through reconciliation, according to a Senate aide. MacDonough told lawmakers that updating the registry would be a "weighty policy change," according to materials obtained by CQ Roll Call. She hinted that any bill adjusting the status of millions of undocumented immigrants would not pass muster under Senate rules for budget reconciliation bills. "The change in status to LPR [lawful permanent residency] remains a life-long change in circumstances the value of which vastly outweighs its budgetary impact," she said.

Reported similarly:

Bloomberg [9/29/2021 3:08 PM, Laura Litvan, 6400K]

The Hill [9/29/2021 4:30 PM, Jordain Carney, 1776K]

CBS News [9/29/2021 3:27 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K]

### **US diversity lottery winners wait on visas as time runs out**

The AP [9/29/2021 2:59 PM, Amy Taxin] reports more than 20,000 people have sued after they were declared winners of the visa lottery and turned in the required paperwork but never got an interview or a shot at coming to the United States. The government has issued about a quarter of the visas allotted for the fiscal year ending in September after processing was halted during the coronavirus pandemic and then resumed at a much slower pace as other visa applications got priority, their attorneys said. A State Department official said the pandemic led to "profound reductions" in its capacity to process visas. While

embassies and consulates have been instructed to try to prioritize the lottery cases, the U.S. likely won't issue the number of visas it could for the soon-to-be-ending fiscal year, the official said.

### **What is the Immigrant Registration Law and how it could give the "green card" to millions of undocumented immigrants**

Telemundo 51 [9/28/2021 2:47 PM, Staff, 14K] reports that uncertainty reigns around the next step for Democratic congressmen to open the path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants. Senator from New Jersey, Bob Menéndez, reported last week that he plans to modify the Registry Law, created in 1929 and previously amended to protect undocumented families. Currently the registration date is for those who arrived in the country before January 1, 1972, but Democrats intend to change the registration date to 2010, which would benefit some nine million undocumented, according to estimates. After attempts to include the plan to grant citizenship to millions of undocumented immigrants under the Reconciliation Bill failed, Democrats opted for a plan B to achieve that goal and the new focus is the Registration Act. Senators Dick Durbin, Alex Padilla, Bob Menéndez, Ray Luján and Catherine Cortez Masto seek to modify the registration date to expand the range of immigrants who benefit. The Registry Law allows undocumented persons who are living in the United States before January 1, 1972, to request legal resident status, provided they meet the criteria. Although the Democrats focus efforts on changing the date from 1972 to 2010, it would not be the only alternative in which they work. However, the Registration Law is a feasible alternative to benefit the undocumented, dreamers and people with temporary protected status, agricultural workers, among other non-citizens. If Congress succeeds in changing the registration date, millions of non-citizens could potentially apply for the status. According to the Department of Homeland Security, 47% of undocumented immigrants in the United States in 2018 had arrived before 2000. Depending on the date that Congress appoints, many of these undocumented residents could qualify for registration.

### **[Mexico] About 3,000 migrants are still waiting in Mexico for their asylum appointments in the US, many live in fear**

Univision [9/29/2021 11:34 AM, Jorge Cancino, 366K] reports that some 3,000 migrants are waiting in Mexico for their asylum appointments in United States courts, after federal immigration authorities returned them under a policy implemented in the era of Donald Trump. The Migrant Protection Program, also known as Stay in Mexico, was activated in January 2018 as part of the previous government's 'zero tolerance' immigration policy. "In CONECTA there are about 3,000 people whose prosecution was suspended due to the litigation promoted by the States of Texas and Missouri," Sibylla Brodzinsky, communications director of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, told Univision News. in Mexico. "Within that group there are people from other countries," in addition to Mexico, she added. CONECTA is the digital page activated by UNHCR to help asylum seekers waiting in Mexican territory. Brodzinsky also said that in the waiting group "There are people with active PPM cases, others with closed cases and still others who are part of mixed families." UNHCR defines mixed families as groups that were in the process of having the Washington government confirm or deny their eligibility to return to the United States after the temporary cancellation of the program in January and continue their migratory asylum processes in the United States. Known as the Migrant Protection Program or Remain in Mexico Program, it was created at the end of 2018, was operational for two years and was canceled in January of this year by the Joe Biden government. But a federal court in Amarillo ordered the Department of Homeland Security to reinstate him. In the ruling, Judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk said that the cancellation of the program had been arbitrary and that the government violated the Law of Administrative Procedure. The Justice Department appealed the ruling to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, but both instances upheld the lower court's decision in response to a lawsuit brought by Texas and Missouri, both ruled by Republicans. Telemundo20 [9/29/2021 6:28 PM, Staff, 20K] reports that, in the midst of the crisis and with no encouraging outlook in sight, migrants who have been stranded in the city of Tijuana for several months now face another concern: the growing violence that plagues this Mexican border. The northwestern state of Baja California has registered more than 2,300 victims of organized crime so far this year. Of these, nearly 1,500 have occurred in Tijuana and only 128 are from September, according to data from the state Attorney General's Office. In the midst of this



situation are the migrants living in the Agape shelter in the Nueva Aurora neighborhood, who in the same week experienced two armed confrontations between police and criminals in terror. On September 14, the first confrontation occurred after Municipal Police officers chased a pair of armed men to the cemetery next to the migrant shelter, detaining one of them. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

### **[Afghanistan] Afghans left behind face visa, logistical challenges as friends, family try to get them out**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) [9/29/2021 6:40 PM, Elizabeth Trovall, 183K] reports Mohammad is one of many U.S. allies and other vulnerable Afghans struggling to flee their native country, despite receiving help from Houston-area attorneys, family members and U.S. military veterans. While the Biden administration has pledged its support for at-risk Afghans, there is concern they are being forgotten as they face a web of legal and logistical challenges to getting to safety. Mohammad, for example, is still waiting for an initial approval of his Special Immigrant Visa, a protection designated for Afghans and Iraqis who helped the U.S. military. Every time he asks about his case, it takes a month or so to hear back. The visa would allow him and his wife to come to the U.S., but he said it would be “a miracle” if they manage to stay alive with the visa process moving at such a crawl. In a written statement, a State Department spokesperson reaffirmed the Biden administration’s commitment to processing special visa applications of people still in Afghanistan. “We will honor our commitment to SIV (Special Immigrant Visa) applicants who stood by us and risked their lives in support of our mission in Afghanistan,” the spokesperson said.

## **Customs and Border Protection**

### **Fake COVID-19 vaccine cards aren’t just dangerous, they’re illegal: Attorneys general**

[USA Today](#) [9/29/2021 7:02 AM, Josh Stein and Herbert Slatery, 6282K] reports U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in Memphis, Tennessee, recently made a strange but increasingly more common seizure: a package filled with counterfeit COVID-19 vaccination cards imported from China. More than 120 similar packages filled with thousands of fake cards, with typos and misspelled words, have been seized this year in Memphis alone. As more municipalities, music venues, universities and employers institute vaccine requirements, many unvaccinated people are reevaluating their decision and are getting the COVID-19 vaccine. On the other hand, some are deciding to violate the law by creating fraudulent vaccine cards. As chief legal officers for our states, we want all our constituents to understand that selling or using fake vaccination cards is illegal and can result in fines or jail time. Throughout the country, state attorneys general are responsible for enforcing consumer protection laws. Earlier this year, we led a bipartisan coalition of almost all of our fellow attorneys general in asking major e-commerce and social media companies, including Twitter and eBay, to prevent the sale of blank or fraudulently completed COVID-19 vaccination cards on their platforms. False and deceptive marketing and sales of fake COVID-19 vaccination cards likely violate consumer protection laws in many states, but more important, they severely threaten the health of our residents.

### **[MI] Michigan nurse charged with selling fraudulent COVID-19 vaccine cards**

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 8:48 PM, Caroline Vakil, 1776K] reports two Michigan residents, including a registered nurse, were arrested on Wednesday and charged with selling fraudulent COVID-19 vaccine cards. Bethann Kierczak, 37, faces charges of theft or embezzlement related to a healthcare benefit program and theft of government property. The complaint alleges that starting as early as May, the registered nurse distributed and sold real COVID-19 cards that had either been stolen or embezzled from a Veterans Affairs hospital. In order for the cards to look even more authentic, Kierczak used stolen or embezzled vaccine lot numbers for the cards, prosecutors say. Kierczak is accused of using Facebook’s Messenger feature to connect with potential buyers and sell the cards for between \$150 and \$200 each. Rapheal Jarrell Smiley, 32, was also arrested and faces charges of identity document fraud, trafficking in counterfeit goods and fraud involving department or agency seals. Prosecutors say Smiley operated a scheme to distribute and sell COVID-19 vaccination cards, though these cards were fake from the onset.

The Detroit resident is accused of getting the cards from two Chinese shippers and then using several social media accounts to advertise the sale of the COVID-19 vaccine cards.

### **[TX] Illegal immigrants turn to drain pipes to sneak into U.S.**

The Washington Times [9/29/2021 3:34 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports a group of illegal immigrants used a drain pipe Wednesday to sneak into the country in Hidalgo, Texas, according to Border Patrol agents who made the arrest. Agents were tipped to the group after being told people were using the local sewers. "In total, authorities arrested 20 migrants who were found to have used the drainage system to enter the country," Customs and Border Protection said. A day earlier, in Brownsville, three migrants were found inside a drainage pipe in that city. Agents spotted shoe prints entering the pipe and apprehended the three when they tried to come out. Those incidents followed another attempt through Hidalgo's drains on Sept. 18, when agents arrested three groups of migrants. Agents say they spotted people going into the drain in the early morning. They joined with local police officers to set up a perimeter and nabbed one group of three, then an hour later caught three more.

### **[TX] Border cities to sue Biden for 'failure to enforce the laws'**

FOX News [9/29/2021 10:56 AM, Caitlin McFall, 9251K] reports that the county in Texas that witnessed the flood of 30,000 migrants earlier this month has said it will unite with neighboring counties to sue the Biden administration and push action at the southern border. "We've talked about immigration reform for as long as I can remember. Both parties have had control of Washington at one point or another over the last 20 years, and we have failed to do anything about it other than create the mess that we have today," Val Verde County Commissioner Beau Nettleton said in a Tuesday night meeting. Nettleton said it was time for fellow border counties and cities to join forces in a suit to challenge U.S. immigration policies that have led to the largest influx of migrants at the southern border in more than 20 years. U.S. Customs and Border Protection have reported more than 1.5 million illegal bordering crossings during the fiscal year 2021 - a figure that has not yet included the number of illegal encounters during the month of September. "I don't have the answer as to whether a lawsuit solves this problem, but it draws attention to this problem," Nettleton said. "They took the same oath of office that I did, which was to uphold the constitution they need to comply with that oath and do their job and stop this mess." President Biden has received fierce backlash from both Republicans and Democrats on the Hill for the administration's failure to address the crisis at the southern border. Democrats are furious over the continued use of Trump-era policies, like Title 42, which permits expedited deportations as a precaution to the coronavirus pandemic. Members of the GOP have claimed Trump-era policies that stymied that flow migrants have been made ineffective.

### **[TX] Del Rio residents respond to viral Border Patrol images taken near their community**

FOX News [9/29/2021 6:49 AM, Lisa Bennatan, 9251K] reports locals in Del Rio, Texas, who spoke with Fox News overwhelmingly supported Border Patrol, despite recent viral images from their community that sparked criticism and an internal investigation. "It brought me to tears," one longtime resident said. "These men are giving their lives, leaving their families, to come here and to secure us. I'm personally very thankful." The resident's wife added: "We've been here for 54 years ... I've watched when there was a multitude of people coming, their kindness to them." Images of Border Patrol agents on horseback catching Haitian migrants in Del Rio recently went viral. The agents were falsely accused of whipping the migrants. "We back them completely," the woman said. "We say don't lie about them. Please don't lie about them." Diane, who lives right on the border, told Fox News: "Border Patrol are phenomenal." In response to the photos, President Biden said it was "horrible," "outrageous" and that these people "would pay." Horse patrols were temporarily suspended while the Department of Homeland Security investigates the incident. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki was asked Monday whether new information released contrasting the narrative that migrants were whipped changed anything.

### **[WA] Greyhound Agrees to Pay \$2.2 Million Over Immigration Sweeps on Buses**

The New York Times [9/29/2021 6:32 PM, Michael Levenson, 24635K] reports Greyhound Lines will pay \$2.2 million to resolve a lawsuit filed by Washington State that accused it of allowing U.S. Customs and

Border Protection agents to conduct warrantless immigration sweeps on its buses, state officials said this week. Washington State's attorney general said the settlement would be used to provide restitution to passengers who were detained, arrested or deported after immigration agents boarded their buses at the Spokane Intermodal Center, and for partial reimbursement of his office's litigation costs. Greyhound failed to warn customers of the sweeps, misrepresented its role in allowing the sweeps to occur and subjected its passengers to discrimination based on race, skin color or national origin, according to the attorney general, Bob Ferguson. Mr. Ferguson's office estimates that since 2013, as many as 57,000 passengers may have been on buses that were boarded by immigration agents at the Spokane Intermodal Center. The office said that about 250 of those passengers might have been detained.

Reported similarly:

[Axios](#) [9/29/2021 7:20 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

## **Transportation Security Administration**

### **[FL] American Airlines passenger detained after allegedly opening emergency exit, walking on wing**

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 11:12 PM, David Aaro, 9251K] reports a passenger was detained Wednesday evening in South Florida after he allegedly opened a plane's emergency exit and walked on the wing. Officials said the incident happened around 7:30 p.m. on an American Airlines flight that had just arrived in Miami from Colombia. The passenger exited the plane as it reached the terminal at Miami International Airport. "During deplaning in Miami, a customer on American Airlines flight 920 with service from Cali, Colombia (CLO) to MIA exited the aircraft via an emergency exit. The customer was immediately detained by law enforcement. We thank our team members and law enforcement for their professionalism and quick action," American Airlines spokeswoman Whitney Zastrow told Fox News. The passenger was identified as Christian Segura, 33, an American citizen, Miami's WPLG-TV reported.

## **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

### **Hurricane Sam to kick up 'life-threatening' surf along East Coast this weekend**

[USA Today](#) [9/29/2021 5:45 PM, Doyle Rice, 6282K] reports that expect some dangerous surf if you're headed to the beach this weekend along the East Coast. "Significant" swells from Hurricane Sam though hundreds of miles offshore "will likely cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions, and beachgoers are urged to follow the advice of lifeguards and local officials through the upcoming weekend," the National Hurricane Center warned. It is also possible that wave action may produce minor flooding at times of high tide in areas prone to taking on water during nor'easters, AccuWeather said. "Right now we're not forecasting it to make landfall over any coastal locations, but it's certainly a big hazard for ships at sea, and again those swells are impacting a large area of the western Atlantic," hurricane center senior specialist Richard Pasch said. Forecasters said large swells already were hitting the Leeward Islands and will spread to portions of the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, the Bahamas and Bermuda by Thursday or Friday as the storm curves northward. As of Wednesday morning, Sam was the most powerful storm on the planet, according to AccuWeather. The Category 4 hurricane, packing 130 mph winds, was churning 385 miles to the east-northeast of the northern Leeward Islands and moving northwest at 9 mph. Sam should maintain major hurricane intensity status (Category 3 or higher) because of light wind shear and warm water along its projected path, AccuWeather senior meteorologist Adam Douty said. Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Victor formed Wednesday afternoon in the far eastern Atlantic Ocean, the hurricane center said. It's expected to become Hurricane Victor within the next couple of days. The forecast for the storm, however, shows it curving north and staying away from land as it spins over the open ocean. Victor is the 20th named storm of the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season.

## **Federal response to wildfires must change, Forest Service chief says**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/29/2021 4:02 PM, Erin B. Logan, 3710K] reports the U.S. Forest Service needs to hire more firefighters and reconfigure how it mitigates the risk of wildfires that are growing more intense, the head of the agency told lawmakers on Wednesday. This year “has been devastating in not only the size and frequency of large wildfires but also in terms of sustained activity,” U.S. Forest Service Chief Randy Moore testified before the House Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry. Moore blamed the severity of recent fire seasons on extreme drought, a warming climate and a century of “overly aggressive suppression policies” that have made forests ripe for more destructive fires. As of Monday, about 46,000 fires have burned nearly 6 million acres across the West this year, destroying 4,500 structures and killing four federal firefighters this year, Moore said. About 27,000 firefighters have been deployed by the federal government to fight wildfires this year, but they are still stretched thin. The problem reached a critical point this summer when a burst of early wildfires began in the West amid extreme staffing shortages. A combination of low pay, competition from state and local fire departments and exhaustion from longer and more destructive fire seasons has left federal agencies scrambling to fill positions. The forest chief told lawmakers that his agency would instead focus on mitigating the impact of wildfires by more aggressively treating forests before fires begin. Such treatments include thinning underbrush and debris, and clearing dead branches and trees to reduce potential fuel for blazes. Moore testified that such treatments near Lake Tahoe helped stymie the spread of the Caldor fire last month, saving homes and lives.

#### **[VT] President signs disaster declaration after Vermont storms**

The [AP](#) [9/29/2021 4:06 PM, Staff] reports President Joe Biden has signed a disaster declaration for damage caused by storms that hit the southern Vermont counties of Windham and Bennington at the end of July, the office of Vermont Gov. Phil Scott said Wednesday. The presidential declaration comes after officials identified more than \$5 million in damage to public infrastructure from the storms on July 29 and 30. “We’re grateful for the help coming our way, as it will significantly lessen the financial impact of this storm on towns in Bennington and Windham counties,” Scott said in a statement. Previously awarded hazard mitigation funding coupled with the new disaster declaration will make it possible for affected communities to protect against future damage, the state said. “This is the time for towns to think big and make lasting changes to public infrastructure that will protect lives and cut the cost of future disaster recovery,” said Vermont Emergency Management Director Erica Bornemann.

#### **[LA] Hurricane Ida devastation lingers in Louisiana 1 month later**

The [AP](#) [9/29/2021 6:24 PM, Stacey Plaisance, 302K] reports that the land on which Audrey Trufant Salvant’s home sits in the small Louisiana town of Ironton has become an island in a sea of mud and snake-infested marsh grass. Nearby houses are disconnected from their foundations, a refrigerator is lodged sideways in a tree, and dozens of caskets and tombs from two nearby cemeteries are strewn across lawns for blocks. A month after Hurricane Ida roared ashore with 150-mph winds, communities all along the state’s southeastern coast - Ironton, Grand Isle, Houma, Lafitte and Barataria - are still suffering from the devastating effects of the Category 4 storm. Many, like Trufant Salvant, are bunking with relatives until they can get back into their homes. Others are staying in hotels or have left the state, she said. Some residents have returned to pick up what few belongings may have survived the flood, but she says they aren’t finding much to salvage - the storm surge generated by Ida rose as high as some homes’ rooftops. “The day that they allowed folks to come back in here, it was like a funeral,” she said. “Everybody was just heartbroken, because we had seen devastation before ... but we had never seen anything like this.” Churches and charity organizations are working to help, but the destruction is so far-reaching, there don’t seem to be enough donations to go around, said Michael Williamson, head of the United Way of Southeast Louisiana, which covers seven parishes hit by Ida. The storage room in the United Way’s New Orleans headquarters - typically filled with donated food, water, tarps and cleaning supplies for residents in storm-battered communities - is nearly bare. Donations have been slow to trickle in compared to previous storms, even smaller ones, and there’s not enough to meet the demand, Williamson said.

#### **[IL] Chicago installing ‘Bleeding Control Kits’ around city amid gun violence**

The Hill [9/29/2021 1:53 PM, Rema Rahman, 1776K] reports Chicago has begun installing “Bleeding Control Kits” across the city under the new Safe Chicago program amid an increase in gun violence. The city will install 426 Bleeding Control Kits in 269 Chicago buildings, including City Hall and Chicago Public Library locations. Each kit can treat up to eight victims. Every kit comes equipped with a tourniquet, gauze, shears, gloves, and an instruction manual on how to best use it in instances of “life threatening bleeding emergencies” that can result from falls, penetrating injuries (such as stabbings), gunshot wounds, and more. Announced earlier this month to coincide with National Preparedness Month, the program was launched by the Office of Emergency Management and Communications and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in partnership with the Chicago Fire Department, Chicago Police Department, and Assets and Information Services. As of Monday, Chicago has reported 2,688 shootings, an 11 percent increase from this time last year, as well as 602 homicides, marking a 4 percent increase. The data does not specify the homicide causes of death.

### **[HI] Hawaii’s Kilauea volcano erupts, lava fountains form in park**

The AP [9/29/2021 10:19 PM, Caleb Jones, 302K] reports one of the most active volcanos on Earth is erupting on Hawaii’s Big Island. Officials with the U.S. Geological Survey confirmed Wednesday that an eruption has begun in Kilauea volcano’s Halemaumau crater at the volcano’s summit. Webcam footage of the crater showed lava fountains covering the floor of the crater and billowing clouds of volcanic gas were rising into the air. The same area has been home to a large lava lake at various times throughout the volcano’s eruptive past. The eruption is not in an area with homes and is entirely contained within Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. “All signs indicate that it will stay within the crater,” said Ken Hon, the USGS scientist in charge of Hawaii Volcano Observatory. “We’re not seeing any indications that lava is moving into the lower part of the east rift zone where people live. Currently all the activity is within the park.” The volcano’s alert level has been raised to “warning” and the aviation code changed to red. Earlier Wednesday, officials said increased earthquake activity and ground swelling had been detected, and at that time raised the alert levels accordingly. Kilauea had a major eruption in 2018 that destroyed more than 700 homes and displaced thousands of residents. Before that eruption, the volcano had been slowly erupting for decades, but mostly not in densely populated residential areas. Before the major 2018 eruption, Kilauea had been erupting since 1983 and streams of lava occasionally covered rural farms and homes. During that time, the lava sometimes reached the ocean, causing dramatic interactions with the water.

## **Federal Protective Service**

### **Homeland Security officials told Pentagon ‘no major incidents of illegal activity’ after Capitol riot began**

Yahoo! News [9/29/2021 12:13 PM, John Bowden, 13869K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) sent an advisory to the US Army stating that “no major incidents of illegal activity” had occurred around the US Capitol even as the 6 January attack on the US Capitol had clearly begun. An email obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and published by Politico on Wednesday revealed that DHS sent the above guidance to the Army shortly before 1:40 p.m. local time, nearly an hour after a pipe bomb had been discovered at around 12:45 p.m. outside of the Republican National Committee (RNC) headquarters, located just a block from the Cannon House Office Building. The guidance covered the past two hours, during which officers from US Capitol Police were dispatched to respond to the scene of the bomb’s discovery. Other agencies, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the FBI, also responded to the bomb, as well as a second device discovered shortly after outside of the Democratic National Committee’s headquarters. At the same time that DHS was sending guidance dismissing the severity of what was occurring at the Capitol and around Washington, DC, the attack on the Capitol itself had already begun. Numerous media reports indicated that US Capitol Police barricades on the western perimeter of the complex had already been breached by the time DHS sent its advisory, and rioters including members of the right-wing Proud Boys group, known for their violent tactics, had already clashed with officers. DHS officials did not immediately respond to questions about the early afternoon guidance sent to the Army when contacted by The Independent, and

declined to answer Politico's inquiries. "Under Secretary Mayorkas' leadership, addressing domestic violent extremism is a top priority for DHS," an agency spokesperson told the news outlet. "The Department is working closely with federal, state, local, tribal, and non-government partners to improve our ability to detect, evaluate, and mitigate the threats posed by domestic terrorists."

## **Secret Service**

### **Secret Service agents are getting tapped out by the workload**

The [Federal News Network](#) [9/29/2021 12:10 PM, Eric White, 49K] reports that the mission of the Secret Service is stressing out its workforce. The National Academy of Public Administration said its employees are doing more than ever with less. Employees are working more overtime. And the agency is still recovering from recent budget cuts due to sequestration and hiring freezes. The Secret Service asked the academy to review its employee viewpoint survey results and recent efforts to improve workforce engagement. The academy said employee engagement has plateaued since 2019. It made 48 recommendations on how the Secret Service can build on recent progress. [Editorial note: consult audio at source link]

### **[NH] Peterborough, ConVal strike deal on scam fund repayment**

[Monadnock Ledger-Transcript](#) [9/29/2021 3:21 PM, Rick Green, 5K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the town of Peterborough, which was bilked out of a \$1.2 million payment intended for the ConVal School District, has reached an agreement with the district on how to start repaying the lost money. An additional \$125,000 per month will be added to the town's payment to the district through December "with the understanding that as soon as the Town was able we would bring the account current," Town Administrator Nicole MacStay said in an email Monday. The town's July 23 electronic payment to the school district went missing along with two payments to bridge contractor Beck & Bellucci. Fraudsters posing as the district and the contractor persuaded town staff members by email to change the routing of the transactions. Money lost in the scam totaled \$2.3 million before the Secret Service recovered \$594,331 intended for the bridge contractor. The town has repaid the balance of the money it owed to the Beck & Bellucci. It's not clear how much of the overall loss may be covered by the town's NH Primex insurance.

### **[NY] Oneida police warn of counterfeit bills circulating around city**

[NBC-WKTV News Channel 2](#) [9/29/2021 2:21 PM, Staff, 15K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Oneida City Police have seen an uptick in counterfeit \$20 bills circulating in the area, and want residents to be mindful when receiving cash. Police say the counterfeit bills they've confiscated have spelling errors and foreign characters on the front and back. Any businesses taking cash as payment should also look carefully for signs of the bills are phony before accepting them.

### **[KY] Lexington Man Sentenced to 120 Months for Investment Fraud**

The [United States Department of Justice](#) [9/29/2021 9:00 AM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a Lexington, Ky., man, William S. Evans, III, 69, was sentenced to 120 months in federal prison Tuesday, by U.S. District Court Judge Karen K. Caldwell, for commodities fraud and wire fraud. Evans, doing business as Turning Point Investments, purported to be a professional investor and solicited substantial amounts of money from numerous friends and acquaintances as investments, into a fund that he would manage by investing on the commodity futures market. According to his plea agreement, he accepted funds from more than 20 investors, amounting to nearly \$17 million, and invested a portion of that money on the commodity futures market, without registering as a commodity pool operator. Evans convinced investors to turn over savings and liquidate their retirement accounts, promising substantial gains, low-risks, and coverage for any tax penalties. He reported back to his investors that there were substantial gains on their investments, paid out distributions upon request, and continuously solicited more investments. However, in reality, Evans lost nearly all the funds he invested on the commodity futures market, paid people distributions out of other people's investments, and spent some of the investment

funds on personal expenditures. Evans pleaded guilty in June 2021. Evans was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$16,934,773.40. Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Robert Holman, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service; and Charles Vice, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions; made the announcement.

### **[FL] Ocoee man gets prison for using fake IDs in lawmakers' names to pass bad checks at Lowe's stores**

The [Orlando Sentinel](#) [9/29/2021 11:00 AM, Jeff Weiner, Positive, Secondary] reports a 51-year-old Ocoee man was sentenced to more than six years in prison this week for passing hundreds of fake checks at Lowe's stores across Central Florida — using fake IDs bearing the names of current and former politicians, according to federal authorities. Michael T. Watters pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft and wire fraud in June, as part of a plea deal with prosecutors. According to his plea agreement, Watters came under investigation by the U.S. Secret Service in May 2019, after a corporate fraud investigator reported that he had passed “numerous” counterfeit checks at Lowe's stores in the Orlando area to buy merchandise he later returned for cash. Federal investigators eventually determined Watters had passed 265 counterfeit checks at various Lowe's locations between December 2018 and May 2019, often while being recorded by surveillance cameras. In order to pass the fake checks, Watters presented Lowe's workers with a variety of fake IDs, his plea deal states, most of which featured the names, dates of birth and driver's license numbers of real people. Most of the people were current and former lawmakers, including several members of the state House and Senate, federal authorities said. The victimized lawmakers were identified only by initials in court records. In total, Watters' haul from the fraudulent transactions was more than \$50,000, according to the plea agreement.

### **[IN] Body of missing teen found**

The [Corydon Democrat](#) [9/29/2021 9:26 AM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] reports a week after a Corydon teenage was reported missing, his body was found within a couple of miles of his home. The Harrison County Sheriff's Dept., along with the FBI and Secret Service, had been looking for 14-year-old Jacob McCarty since he was reported missing by his father, Jeremiah McCarty, on Tuesday, Sept. 21. According to police, the teen was last seen at approximately 4 p.m. that day at his home. He had left home to take his dog, Isabella, a German shepherd, on a walk in the woods near his home. Harrison County Sheriff Nick Smith had shared in a Facebook video post that the police department has searched the area by ground and by air numerous times and had utilized K-9 teams, as well, but had been unable to find the teen. In a press release issued last night (Tuesday), the sheriff's department said it had received information from a person who said she may have seen Jacob and his dog walking west along Interstate 64 just after 5 p.m. on Sept. 21. This was followed by a business owner who provided security camera footage showing what appeared to be a person walking along I-64 just after 5 p.m. last Tuesday.

### **[TX] Local high school student arrested on child porn charges**

[Valleycentral.com](#) [9/29/2021 7:40 PM, Sydney Hernandez, 20K, Positive] reports a 17-year-old man from Donna was arrested for possessing hundreds of images and videos of child pornography, Wednesday morning. A federal investigation prompted the search of the teen's home on Date Palm Drive in Donna where agents and officers found the illegal images. Edmundo Parra Jr. was arrested by Donna Police around 7:30 Wednesday morning. Parra was taken into custody where he is facing the third-degree felony charge of the possession of child pornography in the state of Texas could lead to a conviction that imposes up to a \$10,000 fine and ten years in state prison. Judge Javier Garza issued Parra a \$5,000 dollar bond. The investigation conducted was by the Donna Police Department Criminal Investigations Division, United States Secret Service, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security Investigations.

### **[NE] Fake \$100 bill used at Lincoln garage sale**

[KOLN/KGIN](#) [9/29/2021 10:40 PM, Ellis Wiltsey, 20K, Neutral] reports one Lincoln family is putting out an alert after they received a fake \$100 bill during a weekend garage sale. They hope others can learn from their mistake and that people who are hosting similar sales are on alert. Christine Goodwin said the sale was to hopefully raise money to replace old appliances around her home. Cash is short in her family's

single-income home she shares with her husband and almost 2-year-old son. Now, they're out \$40 and the two items she was swindled out of as well. The fake \$100 bill looks and feel is pretty authentic until you take a much closer look. Small wording printed on it says it's not actual currency. Goodwin said the man who paid her with it hung around the garage sale for some time, perusing various items. The Better Business Bureau said scammers in this type of scenario will often target places like garage sales because the people running them are not trained to recognize the signs of a counterfeit bill. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

### **[Nigeria] Businessman docked for possession of fake dollars, euro**

Pulse [9/29/2021 3:03 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports the police charged Shehu of Kankia Street, Ungwar Sarki, Kaduna with a two-count charge of using as genuine counterfeit and cheating. The prosecution counsel, Fidelis Ogbobe told the court that the complainant, Halima Gambo of Bangu Street, off Durban Street, Wuse 2, Abuja reported the matter at the Area Commander's office, Metro- Maitama, Abuja. Ogbobe alleged that on June 2, the defendant, his wife, along with two others currently at large, conspired and deceived the complainant into transferring N5.2 million into his wife's bank account for a contract he was going to facilitate from Kaduna State Procurement Board for the complainant. The prosecutor in addition alleged that when it was discovered that the said contract was a fraud, the defendant offered to refund the complainant's money. The defendant however, pleaded not guilty.

## **Coast Guard**

### **Risk of oil spills may rise as climate change creates more monster storms**

ABC News [9/29/2021 10:05 AM, Julia Jacobo, 37K] reports that Hurricane Ida left a trail of destruction after slamming into the Gulf Coast, but offshore the Category 4 storm left something else in its wake: oil spills. Oil spills aren't uncommon with strong storms, but as climate change pushes up sea levels and creates stronger storms with more moisture, offshore refineries are going to need greater and greater protections. The Gulf of Mexico is "particularly vulnerable" because of the prevalence of storms, the low-lying geography, sea-level rise, receding shorelines and the presence of oil facilities, Christopher Vaccaro, a spokesman for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, told ABC News. Since offshore drilling began in the region in 1942, about 6,000 oil and gas structures have been installed in the Gulf of Mexico. On Sept. 4, the day before Ida made landfall in Louisiana, the Coast Guard announced that cleanup crews already were responding to a large oil spill at an offshore drilling about 2 miles south of Port Fourchon, Louisiana. The oil, which came from an underwater pipeline, appeared in satellite images to drift east for dozens of miles. More than 100 birds were found to be soaked in crude oil, according to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Coast Guard began investigating nearly 350 reports of oil spills as a result of the storm. "We've seen the damage that hurricanes do in regions that have offshore drilling and oil production and refining," Jacqueline Savitz, chief policy officer for ocean conservation nonprofit Oceana, told ABC News. "And we can expect that to continue." Oil spills are just another disastrous consequence from natural disasters made worse by warming temperatures. One of the many destructive results of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was the 8 million gallons of oil spilled as a result of the Category 5 storm.

### **[IN] Steel plant restarts after discharge into Indiana waterway**

The AP [9/29/2021 4:33 PM, Staff] reports operations resumed Wednesday at a steel plant in northwestern Indiana that was temporarily shut down after it leaked wastewater containing elevated levels of iron causing an orange plume in a Lake Michigan tributary. The U.S. Steel Midwest plant in Portage was back up and running Wednesday, according to The (Northwest Indiana) Times. U.S. Steel idled the plant about 30 miles (48 kilometers) east of Chicago as a precaution after it said a wastewater treatment facility experienced "an upset condition" that sent the rusty colored plume into the waterway Sunday. The U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are expected to release more details on the spill Wednesday, U.S. Steel spokeswoman Amanda Malkowski said.



## **[CA] Coast Guard: Report of plane crashing off Carlsbad coast unfounded**

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [9/29/2021 4:23 PM, Karen Kucher, 302K] reports Coast Guard personnel conducted a search Wednesday afternoon off the coast of Carlsbad after a boater reported a small plane may have gone down, but the report turned out to be unfounded, authorities said. The agency called off the search by mid-afternoon after learning the aircraft had made a safe landing at a nearby airport, Petty Officer 1st Class Adam Stanton, a Coast Guard spokesman, said. Coast Guard crews aboard a helicopter and a boat began their search late Wednesday morning after a boater reported seeing the low-flying plane disappear from view, Stanton said. The person said they saw the aircraft flying low, turned around momentarily and then didn't see the plane again. Stanton said the person on the boat reported the possible crash on an emergency radio channel and it was relayed to the Coast Guard. The person who reported it didn't see any splash, crash or debris in the water, but Stanton said the agency searched for several hours anyway, just to be sure.

## **CISA/Cybersecurity**

### **Lawmakers demand briefing on FBI's decision to withhold Kaseya decryption key**

The [Hill](#) [9/29/2021 3:48 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the leaders of the House Oversight and Reform Committee on Wednesday demanded a briefing from the FBI on its decision to withhold for three weeks the decryption key necessary for companies impacted by the ransomware attack on IT company Kaseya to recover. The request came a week after The Washington Post first reported that the FBI, in consultation with other agencies, chose to hold on to the decryption key as part of a planned effort to disrupt REvil, the Russian-based cybercriminal group behind the attack on Kaseya. "Although the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reportedly obtained a digital decryptor key that could have unlocked affected systems, it withheld this tool for nearly three weeks as it worked to disrupt the attack, potentially costing the ransomware victims—including schools and hospitals—millions of dollars," Committee Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and ranking member Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.) wrote in a letter sent to FBI Director Christopher Wray Wednesday. "We request information to understand the rationale behind the FBI's decision to withhold this digital decryptor key and the agency's approach to responding to ransomware attacks," the lawmakers wrote. Wray defended the decision in the face of intense questioning by members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee last week. "When it comes to the issue of encryption keys or decryption keys, there is a lot of testing and validating that is required to make sure that they are going to actually do what they are supposed to do, and there is a lot engineering that is required to develop a tool that is required to put the tool in use," Wray testified. "Sometimes we have to make calculations about how best to help the most people, because maximizing impact is always the goal." He also stressed that the FBI made the decision in conjunction with agencies including the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), describing it as a "complex, case-specific" issue.

### **House passes legislation to strengthen federal cybersecurity workforce**

The [Hill](#) [9/29/2021 2:42 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the House on Wednesday passed bipartisan legislation aimed at strengthening the federal cybersecurity workforce, an issue that has garnered support following a year of massive information security incidents. The Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program Act, sponsored by Reps. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) and Nancy Mace (R-S.C.), would establish a program to allow cybersecurity professionals to rotate through multiple federal agencies and enhance their expertise. The bill would also encourage federal agency leaders to identify cybersecurity positions that can be rotated through government, and give the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) jurisdiction over the Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program. "We have to make sure that our government is protected from increasing cyberattacks," Khanna said Wednesday in a statement provided to The Hill. "That doesn't just mean ensuring the Pentagon and the Department of Defense are well-equipped to tackle these threats. It means ensuring that we have a comprehensive approach to cybersecurity implemented across all of our federal agencies."

### **Standardizing the playbook for responding to cyber vulnerabilities, incidents**

The Federal News Network [9/29/2021 12:30 PM, Patience Wait, 49K] reports that it is hard to quantify how much the federal government has been hobbled in its responses to cyber incidents by not having uniform procedures to identify, remediate and recover from vulnerabilities and attacks. There is no doubt that the lack of a single set of standards makes it difficult for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to track agencies' responses, their effectiveness and their compliance with National Institute of Standards and Technology standards such as multi-factor authentication. Section 6 of President Joe Biden's cyber executive order aims to address this shortcoming by having CISA work with the director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Federal Chief Information Officers Council, the Federal Chief Information Security Officers Council, the director of the National Security Agency, the Attorney General and the director of National Intelligence. They are tasked with creating a standard set of operational procedures "To be used in planning and conducting a cybersecurity vulnerability and incident response activity respecting federal civilian executive branch" information systems. This playbook, as the executive order names it, will incorporate all appropriate standards laid out by NIST, and lay out what milestones signify progress and completion through all phases of incident response. At the same time, the progression through those steps must allow for flexibility so it can be used for a variety of responses.

### **CISA to maintain 'rumor control' site to counter false claims in future elections**

The Hill [9/29/2021 12:40 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports that the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) will use its "rumor control" website to counter disinformation and misinformation during future elections despite the site's role in former President Trump ousting several of the agency's top officials in 2020. CISA Director Jen Easterly made the announcement Wednesday, noting her concern around misleading election claims and saying the site would be one of the efforts to combat disinformation and misinformation that the agency is pursuing ahead of next year's midterm elections. "So rumor control, when I looked at this as a private citizen, I saw what CISA was doing, which is really making sure that the American people have the facts that they need," Easterly said during a keynote at the Aspen Institute's Cyber Summit. "I worry a lot about misinformation and disinformation as a citizen, but also as a mom." "If you don't have the facts, if you don't have the best information, you can't make the best decisions," Easterly said. "So we are going to continue with rumor control, we are also going to continue with some innovative things, graphic novels, which is kind of cool." The rumor control site, first used in 2020, was one of the key reasons Trump fired former CISA Director Chris Krebs following the 2020 presidential election. The White House also forced former CISA Deputy Director Matthew Travis and Bryan Ware, a former top CISA cyber official, to resign. The page worked to debunk voter fraud and election interference claims in the days after the 2020 presidential election. Krebs later blamed Trump for being a "big part of the disinformation" around the presidential election. Former CISA acting Director Brandon Wales, who took over CISA after Krebs and the other officials were forced out, said in December that the rumor control page would remain up through January and the Georgia Senate runoff elections, but Easterly's announcement Wednesday means the page will stay up indefinitely.

## **Terrorism Investigations**

### **Investigating the threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism**

CBS News [9/29/2021 5:24 PM, Nicole Sganga, 2612K] reports CBS News homeland security and justice reporter Nicole Sganga joins CBSN's "Red & Blue" to discuss Wednesday's House committee hearing on domestic terrorism and white supremacy in America. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

### **[NY] N.Y. Uber driver tried to travel to Afghanistan to join the Taliban, prosecutors say**

The Washington Post [9/29/2021 7:11 PM, Shayna Jacobs, 11773K] reports an Uber driver on trial for planning to travel to Afghanistan to kill U.S. citizens there was on his way to complete his mission when he was arrested at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport in July 2019, federal prosecutors said in opening statements Wednesday. Delowar Mohammed Hossain, 36, was headed to Afghanistan with a goal of becoming a member of the Taliban, a "violent, brutal group . . . who the U.S. government

designated as terrorists,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Ben Schrier said at the outset of Hossain’s trial in U.S. District Court in Manhattan. Hossain was expecting to fly to Thailand, his first stop on a journey to a conflict zone where he hoped he could help the Taliban murder many Americans, Schrier said. “He wasn’t just any other traveler — he was on a mission to Afghanistan to join the Taliban and kill Americans,” he said. “And he was on his way.” Hossain faces decades in prison if convicted on two counts: attempting to provide material support and resources to terrorism and attempting to support the Taliban. The recent withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan enabled the Taliban to swiftly regain control of the country. By 2019, when Hossain decided he would leave his family and join a fundamentalist group, the Taliban “had already killed thousands of Americans,” Schrier added. Hossain, of the Bronx, allegedly spent about a year plotting his trip. In that time, he studied literature of al-Qaeda, the Islamist terrorist group founded by Osama bin Laden. The literature included bombmaking instructions and a guide on pursuing jihad.

### **[DC] Jan. 6 investigators subpoena organizers of rallies that preceded Capitol attack**

Politico [9/29/2021 7:20 PM, Betsy Woodruff Swan, Kyle Cheney and Nicholas Wu, 1707K]

The Jan. 6 select committee has subpoenaed Katrina Pierson, a veteran Trump campaign operative who helped organize the Jan. 6 rally that preceded the insurrection at the Capitol. The subpoena was one of 11 issued to organizers of the events of Jan. 5 and Jan. 6, which drew thousands of Trump supporters — including those who turned violent at the Capitol — to Washington. Targets also included top organizers Amy Kremer and Caroline Wren, as well as Maggie Mulvaney — the niece of former Trump chief of staff Mick Mulvaney — who was described in official paperwork as the “VIP Lead” for the rally. The new round of subpoenas demands documents from the organizers by Oct. 13 and depositions between Oct. 21 and Nov. 3. The targets include organizers affiliated with a group called Women for America First, which helped lead the Jan. 6 rally at the Ellipse. The group’s leaders include Kremer and Wren. The panel specifically is asking Pierson about a reported Jan. 4 meeting she had with then-President Donald Trump at which he asked about a separate event featuring speakers like Ali Alexander and Roger Stone. Pierson reportedly informed Trump about a Jan. 5 rally organized by a group called the Eighty Percent Coalition, whose leader Cindy Chafian also received one of the 11 subpoenas.

Reported similarly:

CNN [9/29/2021 7:48 PM, Annie Grayer, Ryan Nobles, Whitney Wild, Zachary Cohen, 4876K]

### **[WA] US jury convicts leader of neo-Nazi threat campaign**

The AP [9/29/2021 6:21 PM, Gene Johnson, 2701K] reports a federal jury in Seattle on Wednesday convicted a leader of a neo-Nazi campaign to threaten journalists and Jewish activists in three states. The jury deliberated for about 90 minutes Wednesday following a two-day trial before convicting 25-year-old Kaleb Cole of five felony charges, including conspiracy, mailing threatening communications and interfering with a federally protected activity. He could face a decade in prison when Judge John C. Coughenour sentences him in January. Cole, most recently of Montgomery, Texas, was a leader of a hate group called Atomwaffen Division. He and four others were charged last year with having cyberstalked and sent Swastika-laden posters to journalists and employees of the Anti-Defamation League in Washington state, Arizona and Florida, telling them, “You have been visited by your local Nazis,” “Your Actions have Consequences,” and “We are Watching.” The posters included images such as a hooded figure preparing to throw a Molotov cocktail at a house, and the words “Death to Pigs” — the same message followers of Charles Manson scrawled in victims’ blood during a home invasion murder. Cole has been on law enforcement’s radar since at least 2018, when he was stopped at U.S. Customs upon returning from a trip to Europe. Authorities searched his cell phone and found photos of him at various sites throughout Europe, displaying a white supremacist flag and performing the Nazi salute.

## **National Security News**

### **U.S., Europe Team Up to Address Chip Shortage, Tech Issues**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) [9/29/2021 6:23 PM, Yuka Hayashi] reports U.S. and European Union officials agreed to join forces in an effort to boost the semiconductor supply chain and maintain leadership in emerging technologies. In a joint statement Wednesday, the new U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council said the two governments will “seek to strengthen their competitiveness and technological leadership by developing common strategies to mitigate the impact of non-market practices at home and in third countries.” While the statement didn’t mention China by name, Beijing’s economic practices—including subsidies for favored industries—were one of the factors behind the commission’s formation. “We know a big part of this is due to the behavior of China,” a senior European trade official said. In their meetings Wednesday, officials discussed ways to reinforce semiconductor supply chains and to strengthen export controls and investment screening to protect sensitive technologies and data. The two sides will also develop and implement artificial-intelligence systems that will protect privacy and human rights. The U.S. was represented by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai. [Reuters](#) [9/29/2021 7:25 PM, Nandita Bose, 5304K] reports senior cabinet officials from both continents pledged to cooperate on the screening of investments on export controls for sensitive dual-use technologies and on the development of artificial intelligence (AI).

### **[Afghanistan] Defense Secretary blames State Dept. for delay in Afghanistan evacuation**

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 11:26 AM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Wednesday blamed the State Department for the last-minute evacuation of allies from Afghanistan. “The call on how to do that and when to do it is really a State Department call,” Austin said in response to a question from Rep. Jim Langevin (D-R.I.). The Biden administration has come under intense scrutiny for a chaotic withdrawal that left behind many Afghan allies, including those seeking a special immigrant visa (SIV) following their assistance to the U.S. military. Austin said the State Department pumped the breaks on a quick exit following pushback from then-Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. “Their concerns rightfully were that, No. 1, they were being cautioned by the Ghani administration that if they withdrew American citizens and SIV applicants at a pace that was too fast, it would cause a collapse of the government that we were trying to prevent. And so, I think that went into the calculus,” Austin said. He also said that slow SIV processing stalled the military operations. “A number of things kind of came together to cause what happened to happen. But again, we provided our input and we certainly would have liked to see it go faster or sooner,” Austin said. For his part, Langevin criticized the Biden administration for waiting well into the withdrawal to begin its rushed evacuation. “I wish the administration had been more thoughtful and not had rushed this. I’ve yet to hear the answer to the question, though, of why did we not start withdrawing American citizens and SIVs sooner. We knew we were going to be withdrawing,” he said. Rep. John Garamendi (D-Calif.) said lawmakers had been given assurances from Ghani and other Afghan leaders they would be able to stabilize the country so long as there was not a massive exodus of Afghans.

Reported similarly:

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 12:08 PM, Brooke Singman, 9251K]

### **[Afghanistan] Taliban warns US against invading airspace or face ‘negative consequences’**

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 1:10 PM, Caitlin McFall, 9251K] reports that the Taliban on Wednesday warned the U.S. against flying drones over its “Sacred airspace” or there could be “negative consequences.” “We recently saw [the] United States violating all international rights, laws and commitments made to the [Taliban] in Doha, Qatar, as Afghanistan’s sacred airspace is being invaded by U.S. drones,” a spokesperson said on Twitter. “We call on all countries, especially [the] United States, to treat Afghanistan in light of international rights, laws and commitments in order to prevent any negative consequences.” The Pentagon did not reply to the Taliban warnings and instead directed Fox News to comments made by press secretary John Kirby, who said the U.S. retains “All necessary authorities to execute over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations.” “We remain confident in these capabilities moving forward,” he told reporters Friday. “Without speaking to specific rules of engagement surrounding airstrikes, there is currently no requirement to clear airspace with the Taliban. And we do not expect that any future over-the-horizon counterterrorism strikes would hinge on such a clearance.” President Biden said following the

withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan that the U.S. will rely on "Over-the-horizon" capabilities to counter terrorism in the now Taliban-controlled nation.

### **[China] Milley confirms he told China he would call ahead of US attack, claims Esper ordered calls based on intel**

FOX News [9/29/2021 12:52 PM, Brooke Singman, 9251K] reports that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley confirmed that he told his Chinese counterpart that he would likely call ahead of any potential U.S. attacks on Beijing, maintaining he had that conversation at the direction of then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper after assessing intelligence suggesting heightened Chinese concerns about escalation between the two "great" powers. Milley addressed allegations that he held "secret" calls with his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Li Zuocheng of the People's Liberation Army, in October 2020 and days after the Capitol riot in January 2021, which were included in "Peril," a book co-authored by Washington Post correspondents Bob Woodward and Robert Costa. Milley has faced calls to resign since the revelations were made public earlier this month. The "peril" book Costa claims that Milley contacted Li after he had reviewed intelligence that suggested Chinese officials believed the United States was planning an attack on China amid military exercises in the South China Sea. The book claims Milley contacted Li a second time to reassure him that the U.S. would not make any type of advances or attack China in any form. On Wednesday, during a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee focused on the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, Milley responded to questions about the allegations. Milley explained that there was a "body of intelligence" that led to the call with his Chinese counterpart that was "persuasive" to Esper and himself, that the Chinese "Thought wrongly that the United States is going to attack them." "I am certain, guaranteed certain, that President Trump had no intent to attack," Milley said Wednesday. "And it was my task to make sure I communicated that, and the purpose was to de-escalate." [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

### **[China] Milley says he won't 'tip off the enemy' to 'surprise' plans**

The Hill [9/29/2021 12:10 PM, Morgan Chalfant, 1776K] reports that Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Wednesday that he would never tip off an enemy to any "surprise" U.S. attack plans as he defended himself from Republican criticism over calls he made to his Chinese counterpart during the Trump administration. Milley acknowledged that he told Gen. Li Zuocheng of China "I'll probably give you a call" before the U.S. launched an attack against China, but he said the comment was part of a broader effort to tamp down Chinese fears about an imminent U.S. attack on orders of then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper. "I'm not going to tip off the enemy about what the United States is going to do in an actual plan. What I'm trying to do is persuade an adversary that is heavily armed that was clearly and unambiguously according to intelligence reports very nervous about our behavior and what was happening inside this country and they were concerned that we, President Trump was going to launch an attack. He was not going to launch an attack," Milley told the House Armed Services Committee during testimony Wednesday. "At the direction of the secretary of Defense, I engaged the Chinese in order to persuade them to do that. I would never tip off any enemy to any kind of surprise thing that we were going to do. That is a different context than that conversation," Milley added. Earlier during Wednesday's hearing, Rep. Vicki Hartzler (R-Mo.) asked Milley if reports were true that he told Li he would give him a call before a U.S. attack in a call last year. The calls between Milley and Li, which took place on Oct. 30 and Jan. 8, were recently revealed in the book "peril." "As part of that conversation, I said, 'Gen Li, there's not going to be a war, there's not going to be attacks between great powers,'" Milley answered, describing his Oct. 30 call with Li. "'And if there was, the tensions would build up, there would be calls going back and forth from all kinds of senior officials.' I said, 'Hell, Gen. Li, I'll probably give you a call, but we're not going to attack you. Trust me. We're not going to attack you.'"

### **[North Korea] North Korea Kim Jong Un Says U.S. as Ongoing Threat**

The Wall Street Journal [9/30/2021 2:09 AM, Timothy W. Martin] reports Kim Jong Un said the U.S. threat against North Korea remains "utterly unchanged" under President Biden, accusing Washington of using increasingly cunning methods and words. In a policy speech to his rubber-stamp legislature, Mr. Kim didn't mention or criticize Mr. Biden by name, though specified his assessment was proved by the

American deeds done over the past eight months, according to a Thursday state-media report of his remarks. The North Korean leader ordered officials to take tactical measures that would firmly protect the country's sovereignty. "The U.S. is touting 'diplomatic engagement' and 'dialogue without preconditions,'" Mr. Kim said, "but it is no more than a petty trick for deceiving the international community and hiding its hostile acts." The State Department said the U.S. harbors no hostile intent toward North Korea and remains ready to meet without preconditions. "We hope the DPRK will respond positively to our outreach," it said in a statement, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. [Bloomberg](#) [9/29/2021 10:37 PM, Jeong-Ho Lee, 6400K] reports North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent a fresh warning to the U.S. and offered a concession to South Korea to restore communications links, just after Pyongyang claimed it tested a new hypersonic missile designed to evade U.S. defenses. Kim accused the U.S. of being a "fundamental danger" to the international community and said in a speech on the second day of a parliament meeting he would boost his nuclear capabilities. Pyongyang for years has been trying to drive wedges between Washington and its allies, hoping to use any discord to its advantage. North Korea has also been warming up to South Korea in the past week, perhaps looking to win concessions from President Moon Jae-in before he leaves office in May. Moon has made reconciliation with Pyongyang a top policy priority and another summit with Kim could help his legacy and give his progressive party a boost in presidential elections to replace him when his term ends next year. In an olive branch for Seoul, Kim said he would restore hotlines set up under Moon with South Korea from early October that have been silent for months due to political rancor. Kim said the move was "part of the efforts for realizing the expectations and desire of the entire Korean nation to see the earlier recovery of the north-south relations from the present deadlock and durable peace," KCNA reported. Over the weekend, Kim Yo Jong, the North Korean leader's sister, reached out to South Korea and said Pyongyang would consider taking part in another summit declaring an end to the 1950-53 Korean War -- if Seoul adopted a less hostile policy.

**{End of Report} [RETURN TO TOP](#)**

Message

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 9/21/2021 9:43:37 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: VP comment

They were sent back to their duty station. Chief was concerned and wanted that taken out of the PAG, I met him half way leaving it in as just an "if asked." The narrative being driven through leaks, the union, and Fox News is that the media is misleading --- as they described it -- wrongly calling it whips when they were reins, that videos from other angles show they were far enough, and that the expletive comment overheard was after a man pushed a woman in front of the horse. So I think there will be resistance to including anything on the agents pending more from the investigation.

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:39 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C); MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: VP comment

I've got this on the investigation – one sec.

---

**From:** (b) (6)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:37 PM  
**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Got it. Looking now. I think an email first would be best. Then we can do the video.

WH is asking for any updates on the investigation:

- Length of time investigation will take (weeks? A month?)
- Any interim actions taken (anything we can say about agents being assigned other duties)

They would like this info tonight.

S1 will do MSNBC's Joy Reid to try to calm things down.

Thanks much!

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:54 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Attached is the text. It could be just an email to personnel, or we can replace the video, or we can do as both the email and the video. I changed it to match your edits in the prior script.

---

**From:** (b) (6)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:42 PM  
**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Sounds good! Can we clear the email before it goes?

Slight edits to the script attached.

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:28 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

(b) (5)

---

**From:** (b) (6)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:21 PM

**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Should we have B1 send something like this out in an employee email? Would be good to have a stronger statement from him on this incident, but also to thank BP for their work & know they are under tough situation.

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 2:28 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

There's a fuller public affairs guidance working its way through to include more on how we use horse patrol units and why. (see attached) The key portions of that are as follows, though I don't have confirmation that signage is up on the campsite, just at processing facilities, nor that it's culturally sensitive/available in multiple languages:

*Regarding the incident that occurred between U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) horse patrol units and migrants seeking to enter the United States in Del Rio, Texas, CBP is conducting an internal investigation and is cooperating with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General. CBP stresses honor and integrity in every aspect of our mission and expects our officers and agents to adhere to the oath they take to uphold the laws of this country. We will continue to prioritize processing migrants in a safe, orderly, and humane way.*

*Our agents have overwhelmingly done the best they can under very difficult circumstances, but that does not mean we allow misconduct or mistreatment of migrants to occur and are taking this incident seriously.*



*Operational guidance has been provided to horse patrol units to keep order, as well as to look for any migrants that are in need or medical distress. Any abuse or mistreatment of a migrant is unacceptable. It is against CBP's policy, training and our core values.*

## **Background**

*The operational guidance provided to horse patrol units includes:*

- A strong reminder that any verbal or physical abuse of migrants is not tolerated, regardless of whether migrants are in CBP custody or not;
- To patrol along the river, identify migrants in medical distress or vulnerable populations.
- To guide migrants to location where we have food, water, shelter, and medical services.
- As needed, to request transport or assistance.
- The long reins used to maintain control and maneuver the horses are never to be used as whips or lariats;
- OPR now has a 24/7 presence in Del Rio, Texas to respond to any reported incidents; and
- In all processing facilities, [including throughout the camp at DelRio] CBP has posted [culturally sensitive signage] [in multiple languages] advising migrants of their rights and how to report any allegations of mistreatment, consistent with language needs and .

*If asked.*

*The Horse Patrol Units identified as part of the incident that is being investigated have returned to their duty station and are no longer working in Del Rio.*

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 2:09 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: VP comment

(b) (6)

Here's an update on this:

The horse patrol unit from Carrizo station has been returned to Carrizo and is no longer working in Del Rio. Specific leadership messaging to horse patrol units continuing to work in Del Rio has been, "patrol along the river for migrants in medical distress or vulnerable populations. Guide them to location where we have food, water, shelter, and medical services. As needed, request transport or assistance."

Thank you  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

--  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Advisor to the Chief of Staff

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

From (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 1:35 PM

To: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

MIRANDA, LUIS A

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Subject: VP comment

Do you have updated guidance on what you're providing to agents?



Courtney Subramanian

@cmsub

...

@VP told reporters she's "deeply troubled" by images of border patrol agents on horseback trying to rein in Haitian migrants at the southern border. Says she'll talk to @SecMayorkas about it today.

1:03 PM · Sep 21, 2021 · TweetDeck

(b) (6)

Assistant Secretary  
Office of Public Affairs

Message

**From:** (b) (6)  
**Sent:** 11/6/2021 5:02:38 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: NPR: The inquiry into border agents on horseback continues. Critics see a 'broken' system  
**Attachments:** C1 to S1 Memo on CBP AIT initiative 11.5.21 OC v2.docx; CBP Engagement Announcement Draft.docx

Pulling together a few folks/threads on the issue. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) sent the attached memo outlining all the work they are doing in this space, which is fantastic. In addition, CBP reached out to OPA about the engagement/announcement (below) which reflects our discussions so far. I think we need to think it through a bit more but I think we mostly have consensus. Maybe we can have a quick call this weekend? (Also attaching a draft announcement of the engagement which I can explain further when we chat.)

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 7:17 PM  
**To:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** Media Roundtable: Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency

(b) (6) we are planning a media roundtable with a select group of national reporters at CBP HQ, to include the Commissioner, and Office of Professional Responsibility leadership. The goal will be to establish a clearer understanding of the transparency and accountability measures CBP has in place, debunk current lines of criticism, and softening the ground ahead of the eventual horse patrol investigation (without commenting directly on it). Note, no active investigations or litigation will be discussed.

Below are details on the format, and topics, below that some of the extended talking points on these topics. The Commissioner had discussed this with S1, and it is being included in a memo to him as a follow up from that meeting. The memo reiterates an invitation to S1 to participate in the roundtable, possibly to deliver opening remarks. Of course, we will build this around his schedule if he is available and we can certainly adjust any of the details in coordination with you. Please let me know how we can move this forward quickly. We have an increasing number of inquiries on the Border Patrol CIT's specifically, but the broader transparency conversation illuminates those, so I would rather get this done at the earliest possible opportunity. Please let me know if I can provide any more detail or context, and we can also get on a call to talk through the details.

- **Format:**
  - In-person, on-the-record roundtable with national media. No video cameras, but would be entirely on the record, and we would allow stills. We would welcome your participation to provide opening remarks.
- **Topics:**
  - Accountability and transparency framework, including an overview of how processes have evolved (such as the creation of the Office of Professional Responsibility) and the multi-tiered oversight framework. This includes how CBP investigates and reports use of force incidents and in-custody deaths. We believe there's good story to tell about the changes we've made in the last five years and walking through these changes and the current processes will be an important step forward with transparency.
  - Debunking current lines of criticism, while acknowledging that the discipline process does fail us, and how we are working to improve through ongoing reviews, highlighting

our new accountability and transparency website. This includes clarifying the role of Border Patrol investigative units.

- Previewing upcoming transparency measures:
  - Body Cam policy updates and best practices
  - Vehicle pursuit policy

## Key Points

- CBP takes all allegations of employee misconduct seriously and strives to be as transparent as possible regarding the release of investigative information to the public. The DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties provides oversight and investigation into allegations of civil rights violations, and we are working under the mandates of President Biden's equity orders and new Departmental initiatives to review policies, striving for a model of excellence.
- As part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), CBP has a multi-tiered oversight framework in place to address allegations of misconduct involving agency personnel. Allegations of serious and criminal misconduct are initially referred to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and may be investigated by that office or CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR). Complaints involving mismanagement or less serious misconduct may also be assigned to fact finders trained by OPR within CBP's operational components.
- To help ensure key stakeholders, including the public, have insight into CBP's oversight processes, we have launched a new section on our website allowing easy access to a variety of relevant resources including our annual discipline report, employee arrest data, searchable information regarding use of force trends, the results of our National Use of Force Review Board, a copy of our procedures for reviewing in-custody deaths, and public statements regarding each such death during FY21. CBP employees and officers perform their duties with honor and distinction, and we will not tolerate corruption or abuse within our ranks.
- CBP stresses honor and integrity in every aspect of our mission and expects officers to adhere to the oath they take to uphold the laws of this country, whether on or off duty. CBP will not tolerate hateful, misogynist, or racist behavior or any conduct that is unbecoming of the honor we hold as public servants. DHS, including CBP, is participating in an internal review as directed by Secretary Mayorkas to identify and terminate intolerable prejudice, and to reform policies and training.
- DHS, including CBP, is participating in an internal review as directed by Secretary Mayorkas to identify and terminate intolerable prejudice, and to reform policies and training. CBP is working to review policies and to underscore the need to respect the dignity of every individual, fight against discrimination, safeguard civil rights and civil liberties, and increase transparency and accountability.
- Important reforms have been implemented over the past 11 years. First, in 2015, CBP established a new use of force review process which placed the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) in charge of overseeing all internal use of force reviews. Second, in early 2016, OPR gained statutory authority to conduct criminal and administrative investigations regarding CBP personnel.
- CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) leads CBP's Use of Force Incident Team (UFIT) process, which includes a comprehensive review of incidents leading to the facts and circumstances being presented before CBP's National Use of Force Review Board

(NUFRB). The NUFRB is comprised of voting members from CBP's operational components along with representatives of the Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties as well as the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. The NUFRB reviews serious use of force incidents to determine whether the actions of CBP personnel were consistent with agency policy as well as to identify any training, tactics, or policy issues requiring further review.

### **Border Patrol CIT/CIIT**

- The U.S. Border Patrol maintains teams with specialized evidence collection capabilities across the southwest border. These teams consist of highly trained personnel available to respond around the clock to collect and process evidence related to CBP enforcement activities as well as critical incidents. In the case of serious incidents involving CBP personnel, members of these teams are sometimes called upon to assist investigators from CBP OPR and other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. This is a vitally important capability as many critical incidents involving CBP operations occur in remote locations where other agencies may be unwilling or unable to respond.
- The U.S. Border Patrol disbanded their critical incident team in San Diego several years ago. Critical incident response teams in other sectors focus only on collecting evidence related to crimes that the U.S. Border Patrol regularly interdicts such as drug smuggling, documenting incidents in which there has been property damage such as vehicle accidents or other similar liability, and lastly providing support to investigative agencies including CBP OPR, FBI, and other state and local agencies when reviewing critical incidents and use of force incidents involving CBP personnel.

V/R,  
Luis.

Luis Miranda  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Public Affairs



**U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection**

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**From:** [REDACTED] (b) (6)  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 6, 2021 12:35 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (b) (6)  
**Subject:** FW: NPR: The inquiry into border agents on horseback continues. Critics see a 'broken' system

Privileged

**(b) (5)**

**(b) (6)**

(b) (6)

Acting Principal Deputy General Counsel  
Department of Homeland Security

(b) (6)

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From: Mayorkas, Alejandro (b) (6)

Sent: Saturday, November 6, 2021 12:13 PM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: NPR: The inquiry into border agents on horseback continues. Critics see a 'broken' system

Thank you very much, (b) (6)

Ali

Alejandro N. Mayorkas  
Secretary

---

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Saturday, November 6, 2021 12:01:05 PM

To: Mayorkas, Alejandro (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: FW: NPR: The inquiry into border agents on horseback continues. Critics see a 'broken' system

Flagging. We weren't aware this piece was coming, but we have not been able to say much about the investigation. CBP has seen a number of these types of pieces the last couple weeks and is interested in having a roundtable with reporters to explain the investigation process.

**NPR: The inquiry into border agents on horseback continues. Critics see a 'broken' system (Joel Rose)**

Images of Border Patrol agents on horseback clashing with Haitian migrants in Del Rio, Texas, were still in heavy rotation on cable news when the Homeland Security secretary promised a swift investigation.

"It will be completed in days, and not weeks," Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers.

But people who knew the Border Patrol — and who've tried to hold its agents accountable for alleged misconduct — knew how hard that would be.

"I chuckled," said James Wong, a former deputy assistant commissioner for internal affairs at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

More than six weeks later, the Biden administration has yet to announce any disciplinary action. That comes as no surprise to Wong. Before he retired in 2011, it was his job to look into allegations of misconduct against Border Patrol agents.

"They treated everybody else as an outsider," Wong said in an interview. "I was often told when I would question some of their decisions that I didn't understand, because I had never worn green."

Critics of the Border Patrol say misconduct investigations move slowly, with little transparency, and rarely deliver more than a slap on the wrist.

"These investigation and discipline systems at the border agencies are really broken and need a complete overhaul," said Clara Long, an immigrants' rights advocate with the nonprofit Human Rights Watch.

The Department of Homeland Security won't say when the investigation will be finished — but does pledge to be transparent about its findings.

The last time the Border Patrol faced this much scrutiny was in the summer of 2019. Agents were caught using a private Facebook group to share posts and images that mocked dead migrants and sitting lawmakers, including sexualized images of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

"It was horrendous," said **Mark Morgan**, the acting commissioner of CBP at the time in an interview with NPR's All Things Considered.

"Some of the images that were out there — absolutely horrendous, wrong and not consistent with the way that CBP, or specifically Border Patrol, conducts themselves — period," Morgan said.

An internal disciplinary board at CBP found that 60 agents committed misconduct, and recommended firing two dozen of them. But only two were ultimately fired, according to a recent report by the House Oversight and Reform Committee. Most of the other agents are now back at work.

"There's a lack of accountability and a lack of oversight," said Daniel Martínez, a sociologist at the University of Arizona who's studied how CBP treats migrants in its custody. "DHS seems to be operating behind this veil of secrecy. And it seems to be this cycle that keeps repeating itself," Martínez said in an interview.

The Border Patrol's critics worry that's happening again with the investigation into Del Rio.

Images of Border Patrol agents on horseback confronting Black migrants, mostly from Haiti, drew widespread condemnation — even from the top ranks of the Biden administration.

"It's outrageous. I promise you, those people will pay," President Biden said during a news briefing.

But those agents on horseback have their defenders, too.

"The agents were sent out there to do a specific job. They did exactly what they were sent out there to do," said **Brandon Judd**, the president of the union that represents Border Patrol agents.

Judd says the agents were swinging their horses' reins, not whips, and that no migrants were actually injured. He argues the investigation has been flawed from the start, because high-ranking officials within the administration weighed in early on.

"Those investigators have no choice but to find wrongdoing, which is why it's taking so long," Judd said in an interview.

If you talk to critics of the Border Patrol, they actually agree with Judd about one thing: The way agents in Del Rio acted toward migrants is not really unusual.

"Some of the conduct that we saw in Del Rio, while obviously atrocious to people who saw those photos, is pretty much within normal agency practice," said Clara Long with the nonprofit Human Rights Watch.

Her group released a report last month documenting more than 150 complaints of misconduct at CBP, including serious allegations of physical and sexual abuse of migrants in custody. But it's not clear if those complaints were ever investigated, because CBP won't say.

"If the Border Patrol was a police department operating somewhere in the United States, the Department of Justice would be all over it," Long said.

But former CBP commissioner **Gil Kerlikowske**, who led the agency during the Obama administration, argues it's a mistake to blame all Border Patrol agents for the actions in Del Rio.

"That just kind of misses the mark," Kerlikowske told NPR. "There are people that shouldn't be there. There are people that need to be disciplined. But it really isn't the culture ... of the Border Patrol that has resulted in some of these actions that have been seen so publicly."

Still, other former CBP officials say there are deeper problems at the Border Patrol. James Wong, who used to work in internal affairs at CBP, says the Border Patrol sees itself less as a law enforcement agency, and more as a "paramilitary force."

"I've had Border Patrol agents in the past tell me that they will not retreat, and they will not give up one foot of American soil," Wong said. "They view these people as the enemy. And to me, that's troubling."

The Border Patrol's critics say that's what the images from Del Rio reveal. And why they don't expect the investigation to make much of a difference — no matter how or when it ends.

###



Message

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** 9/21/2021 10:45:30 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

**Attachments:** ForReview-B1-Script-VideoFacts-shorter.docx

(b) (6) here's a second video script for B1 that goes along the lines of the fact sheet.

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:48 PM

**To:** (b) (6) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

- OPR investigation will be done by Fri/Sat – note that if DHS OIG takes over, the timeline increases significantly
- OPR takes a few days to pull together their interviews etc. and prepare the report of investigation
- That report would be presented to the commissioner early to mid next week
- At that time, Troy, OCC and senior BP leadership could take immediate action. Options include:
  - Paid administrative leave
  - Paid administrative leave plus revocation of law enforcement authorities
  - Unpaid leave
- Troy/OCC/BP leadership could also then refer the case to the disciplinary review board, which would take at least 7 weeks to come up with a course of action that then is proposed to the employee, who has 30 days to respond.

I have fewer details about the post investigation part because once we have the findings from OPR, leadership can take action and also report out on that action. So that is about a week away.

---

**From:** (b) (6)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:37 PM

**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Got it. Looking now. I think an email first would be best. Then we can do the video.

WH is asking for any updates on the investigation:

- Length of time investigation will take (weeks? A month?)
- Any interim actions taken (anything we can say about agents being assigned other duties)

They would like this info tonight.

S1 will do MSNBC's Joy Reid to try to calm things down.

Thanks much!

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:54 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Attached is the text. It could be just an email to personnel, or we can replace the video, or we can do as both the email and the video. I changed it to match your edits in the prior script.

---

**From:** (b) (6)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:42 PM

**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Sounds good! Can we clear the email before it goes?

Slight edits to the script attached.

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:28 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

(b) (5)

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**From:** (b) (6)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:21 PM

**To:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

Should we have B1 send something like this out in an employee email? Would be good to have a stronger statement from him on this incident, but also to thank BP for their work & know they are under tough situation.

---

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 2:28 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

There's a fuller public affairs guidance working its way through to include more on how we use horse patrol units and why. (see attached) The key portions of that are as follows, though I don't have confirmation that signage is up on the campsite, just at processing facilities, nor that it's culturally sensitive/available in multiple languages:

*Regarding the incident that occurred between U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) horse patrol units and migrants seeking to enter the United States in Del Rio, Texas, CBP is conducting an internal investigation and is cooperating with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General. CBP stresses honor*

*and integrity in every aspect of our mission and expects our officers and agents to adhere to the oath they take to uphold the laws of this country. We will continue to prioritize processing migrants in a safe, orderly, and humane way.*

*Our agents have overwhelmingly done the best they can under very difficult circumstances, but that does not mean we allow misconduct or mistreatment of migrants to occur and are taking this incident seriously.*

*Operational guidance has been provided to horse patrol units to keep order, as well as to look for any migrants that are in need or medical distress. Any abuse or mistreatment of a migrant is unacceptable. It is against CBP's policy, training and our core values.*

## **Background**

*The operational guidance provided to horse patrol units includes:*

- A strong reminder that any verbal or physical abuse of migrants is not tolerated, regardless of whether migrants are in CBP custody or not;
- To patrol along the river, identify migrants in medical distress or vulnerable populations.
- To guide migrants to location where we have food, water, shelter, and medical services.
- As needed, to request transport or assistance.
- The long reins used to maintain control and maneuver the horses are never to be used as whips or lariats;
- OPR now has a 24/7 presence in Del Rio, Texas to respond to any reported incidents; and
- In all processing facilities, [including throughout the camp at DelRio] CBP has posted [culturally sensitive signage] [in multiple languages] advising migrants of their rights and how to report any allegations of mistreatment, consistent with language needs and .

*If asked.*

*The Horse Patrol Units identified as part of the incident that is being investigated have returned to their duty station and are no longer working in Del Rio.*

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 2:09 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** RE: VP comment

**(b) (6)**

Here's an update on this:

The horse patrol unit from Carrizo station has been returned to Carrizo and is no longer working in Del Rio. Specific leadership messaging to horse patrol units continuing to work in Del Rio has been, "patrol along the river for migrants in medical distress or vulnerable

populations. Guide them to location where we have food, water, shelter, and medical services. As needed, request transport or assistance.”

Thank you

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

--

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Advisor to the Chief of Staff

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** (b) (6)

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 1:35 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** VP comment

Do you have updated guidance on what you're providing to agents?



**Courtney Subramanian**

@cmsub

...

@VP told reporters she's "deeply troubled" by images of border patrol agents on horseback trying to rein in Haitian migrants at the southern border. Says she'll talk to @SecMayorkas about it today.

1:03 PM · Sep 21, 2021 · TweetDeck

(b) (6)

Assistant Secretary  
Office of Public Affairs

Message

**From:** DHS Daily [dhs@techmis.com]  
**Sent:** 9/22/2021 10:13:36 AM  
**To:** noreply@techmis.com  
**Subject:** DHS Morning Briefing (9-22-21)  
**Attachments:** DHS Morning Briefing (9-22-21).pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of DHS. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize and/or trust the sender. If you feel this is a suspicious-looking email, please report by using the Report Phish button option.



# DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
By TechMIS  
[www.TechMIS.com](http://www.TechMIS.com)

[Mobile User Copy](#)

**Editorial Note:** The DHS Daily Briefing is a collection of news articles related to Department's mission. The inclusion of particular stories is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse the political viewpoints or affiliations included in news coverage.

**TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff**  
**DATE: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 6:00 AM ET**

## Top News

[DHS secretary condemns treatment of Haitian migrants but says US will ramp up deportations](#)

[White House faces bipartisan backlash on Haitian migrants](#)

[U.S. preparing to nearly double deportations to Haiti as some returnees decry being shackled](#)

[DHS chief Mayorkas says border numbers are dropping, insists border is closed](#)

[Officials: Many Haitian migrants are being released in US](#)

[Harris 'deeply troubled' by treatment of Haitian migrants](#)

[Biden Reacted in Horror to Video of Border Agents; Pledges to Get Border 'Under Control'](#)

[Biden Asks Court to Let Him Scrap Trump's Remain-in-Mexico Rule](#)

[UN agencies raise concerns about US deportations of Haitian migrants](#)

[\[TX\] Haitian migrants take over DHS transport bus in Texas, flee the scene](#)

[\[Canada\] Mayorkas pressed on land border closure with Canada](#)

[\[Mexico\] Mexican government cracks down on Haitian migrants in Ciudad Acuña](#)

[\[Haiti\] Deported Haitians try to rush back into plane amid anger](#)

[\[Afghanistan\] Afghanistan Aftermath's Risk of Terrorism Cited by Senate Panel](#)

[\[Afghanistan\] U.S. national security officials express concern about terror threats tied to Afghanistan](#)

[\[Afghanistan\] Lindsey Graham: Terrorists will 'infiltrate' US border if Biden does not change course](#)

[\[Afghanistan\] Lawmakers push for numbers behind Afghan evacuation](#)

### **Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

[\[Haiti\] ICE officers injured by Haitian migrants after deportation flights land in Port-au-Prince](#)

### **Citizenship and Immigration Services**

[Biden to double refugee cap despite slow resettlement pace](#)

[Major companies vow to train, hire Afghan refugees arriving in U.S.](#)

[\[DC\] Protesters press Congress for path to citizenship as Democrats' plan hits obstacle](#)

[\[NV\] Governor: Nevada getting first 150 Afghans for resettlement](#)

[\[WA\] Immigrant rights activist targeted for deportation can stay](#)

### **Customs and Border Protection**

[Border Patrol council VP pushes back on media's claim of agents 'whipping' migrants](#)

[Democrats support probe into border altercation with Haitians](#)

[GOP investigates FAA drone ban that shut down coverage of migrant camp](#)

[\[TX\] Texas rancher says she encountered 23 illegal immigrants on property, says Border Patrol overwhelmed](#)

### **Transportation Security Administration**

[U.S. to require COVID vaccination on arrival for some foreign nationals with exemptions, memo says](#)

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

[Northern Hemisphere's summer of wildfires let off record-breaking carbon emissions](#)

[\[LA\] Louisiana delegation split over debt-hike bill with disaster aid](#)

[\[MT\] Gianforte sends National Guard to aid in virus response](#)

[\[CA\] D.C. could send California billions for fire recovery — but there's a catch](#)

### **Secret Service**

[Secret Service agents warn fleets about 'fuel skimming' thieves](#)

[Federal agencies buying up Chinese drones previously deemed a national security threat: report](#)

[\[GA\] Guest speakers announced for Save America rally at Georgia National Fairgrounds](#)

[\[AL\] Former Chick-fil-A Employee Pleads Guilty for Scheme to Steal Funds](#)

[\[FL\] Apopka custodian used as 'Money Mule' to transfer \\$3.1M to Nigerian police barracks](#)

[\[NE\] Chamber president warns that Kearney business accepted fake \\$50 bill](#)

[\[CA\] San Ramon High School Student Shooting: Man Found Guilty](#)

### **Coast Guard**

[\[WA\] Coast Guard rescues hiker who was missing for a week](#)

## CISA/Cybersecurity

Treasury department will sanction crypto exchanges that help channel payments to hackers

FBI held back ransomware decryption key from businesses to run operation targeting hackers

'Anonymous' hackers claim to hit website hosting firm popular with Proud Boys

The Mercenary Threat of U.S. Hackers-for-Hire

[IA] Russian hackers target Iowa grain co-op in \$5.9 million ransomware attack

[China] Justice Department investigating Zoom's China ties over Five9 deal

## Terrorism Investigations

Wray warns Taliban takeover in Afghanistan could inspire US-based extremists

## National Security News

Biden, at U.N., calls for unity in addressing the pandemic and climate change

Biden to tap intelligence expert Corless for Treasury terrorism post

House sends bill aiding 'Havana Syndrome' victims to Biden's desk

[Israel] Spending bill contains \$1 billion for Israel's rocket defenses

[Afghanistan] What happens now to U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan?

[China] Biden to China: We do not want "a new Cold War"

## **Top News**

### **DHS secretary condemns treatment of Haitian migrants but says US will ramp up deportations**

The New York Times [9/21/2021 8:38 PM, Eileen Sullivan, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, 24635K] reports images of Border Patrol agents on horses, pushing back Haitian migrants crossing the Rio Grande to try to reach U.S. soil, have prompted outrage among Democrats and called into question President Biden's decision to swiftly deport thousands who had been arriving en masse at a small Texas border town. Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday called the treatment "horrible" and said she planned to discuss the issue with Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the secretary of the Homeland Security Department, which has started an investigation. "Human beings should never be treated that way," Ms. Harris said. "And I'm deeply troubled about it." Asked if Mr. Biden had seen the images, the White House press secretary, Jen Psaki, said: "He believes that the footage and photos are horrific. They don't represent who we are as a country. And he was pleased to see the announcement of the investigation." The Hill [9/21/2021 4:21 PM, Rebecca Beitsch and Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports GOP senators on Tuesday grilled Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas over the influx of Haitian refugees seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border and viral images of Customs and Border Patrol officials on horseback chasing migrants away. Mayorkas told lawmakers there would be no tolerance for the abuse of migrants during his appearance before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. "I was horrified to see the images, and we look forward to learning the facts that are produced from the investigation, and we will take actions that those facts compel," he said. "We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant, period," Mayorkas added, nodding to his agency's commitment to investigate the officers' behavior. While the event has placed a renewed focus on the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) treatment of migrants, Mayorkas said the administration has no plans to cease flights to a country that in a matter of months has seen an earthquake and an assassination attempt that have led to severe instability. "We are increasing the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day," Mayorkas said. "And we're hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent because it backs up the words that we have spoken since the very outset: that irregular migration is not the way to enter the United States. It will not

work." On the Afghanistan front, lawmakers aired frustration with Mayorkas over a lack of data disclosed by an administration that had boasted of evacuating more than 124,000 people but hasn't provided a precise breakdown of the different categories of people who fled the country. Mayorkas said roughly 12,000 Afghans remain at different military sites while they await vetting to enter the U.S. and that 60,000 Afghans have entered the country. Of those, he said nearly 8,000 are either U.S. citizens or residents, while about 1,800 are SIV holders. But he did not provide numbers on Afghans who fit into the Priority 1 and Priority 2 categories created for vulnerable Afghans and others who assisted in a range of U.S. projects. The [US News & World Report](#) [9/21/2021 2:28 PM, Kaia Hubbard, 4947K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas traveled to Del Rio on Monday and has directed that Office of Professional Responsibility personnel "be on site full-time to ensure that the responsibilities of DHS personnel are executed consistent with applicable policies and training and the Department's values," the DHS said. Mayorkas told CNN's "New Day" on Tuesday that he was "horrified" by images and footage he has seen of the scene at the border. "I'm going to let the investigation run its course. But the pictures that I observed troubled me profoundly."

Reported similarly:

[NPR](#) [9/21/2021 11:07 AM, Bill Chappell, 4917K]

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 3:15 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K]

### **White House faces bipartisan backlash on Haitian migrants**

[Reuters](#) [9/21/2021 5:37 PM, Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K] reports U.S. President Joe Biden faced bipartisan anger on Tuesday over the handling of an impromptu, mainly Haitian, migrant border camp in Texas, with Republicans saying security was lax and Democrats worried about the humanitarian situation. Several United Nations agencies also voiced concerns about the deportation of migrants to Haiti, citing instability in the poor Caribbean nation, where a presidential assassination, rising gang violence and a major earthquake have spread chaos in recent weeks. The U.N.'s refugee agency said expulsions without screening for protection needs were "summary," "inconsistent with international norms and may constitute refoulement." U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said the situation was complex and that the United States needed "to do a lot more" to support the basic needs of people in Haiti. Several hundred have already been sent to Haiti from the camp in Del Rio, Texas, since Sunday. Thousands more have been moved into U.S. detention for processing and more flights are slated. One arrived in Haiti on Tuesday. The camp's population peaked at up to 14,000 at the weekend, but has since diminished. Following an outpouring of anger over an incident in which mounted U.S. border agents in cowboy hats used horse reins like whips to intimidate the migrants, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas emphasized that U.S. border agents were delivering medical attention and were working with the Red Cross. Mayorkas said he was horrified by the images of the mistreatment, echoing increasingly strident criticism from the White House which said the footage "does not represent who we are as a country." Despite the risk of being returned to Haiti, many migrants remained in the Del Rio camp. [USA Today](#) [9/21/2021 5:33 PM, Savannah Behrmann, 6282K] reports "There are going to be investigations," said Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., Chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, who called the footage "unacceptable." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., called the reports of mistreatment and "use of what appear to be whips" to be "deeply troubling." She also called for an investigation. The Department of Homeland Security ramped up deportation flights of Haitians back to Haiti and transported migrants to different processing centers along the border. But the president has also been pressured by refugee and asylum advocates, as well as fellow Democrats, to do more to help the asylum seekers. [The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 11:34 AM, Jordain Carney, 1776K] reports that Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) on Tuesday urged the Biden administration to stop its deportation of Haitian immigrants along the U.S.-Mexico border, arguing that the decision to return them to Port-au-Prince "defies common sense." "I'm told there are four flights scheduled to deport these asylum-seekers back to a country that cannot receive them. Such a decision defies common sense. It also defies common decency," Schumer said from the Senate floor. "I urge President Biden and [Homeland Security] Secretary [Alejandro] Mayorkas to immediately put a stop to these expulsions and to end this Title 42 policy at our southern border. We cannot continue these hateful and xenophobic Trump policies that disregard our refugee laws," Schumer added. The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 10:55 PM, Sean Sullivan and Nick Miroff, 11773K] reports that



many immigrant-rights activists have increasingly concluded that Biden has failed to live up to his campaign vows to defend vulnerable foreigners seeking a better life in the United States. Their fury marks a new inflection point in Biden's ongoing struggles with immigration. The [AP](#) [9/21/2021 5:31 PM, Alexandra Jaffe, Colleen Long and Ben Fox] reports that reflecting the urgency of the political problem for the administration, Homeland Security chief Alejandro Mayorkas said Tuesday the images "horrified" him, a seeming shift in tone from a day earlier, when he and others were more sanguine about the situation at the border. More than 6,000 Haitians and other migrants have been removed from the encampment in Del Rio, and Mayorkas predicted a "dramatic change" in the number of migrants there within the next two to four days as the administration continues the removal process. Vice President Kamala Harris also weighed in, telling reporters in Washington that she was "deeply troubled" by the images and planned to talk to Mayorkas about the situation. Asked about the images on Tuesday, Mayorkas told lawmakers that the issue had been "uppermost in my mind" ever since he had seen them. He said the department had alerted its inspector general's office and directed that staff from the Office of Professional Responsibility be present round-the-clock in Del Rio. "I was horrified to see the images, and we look forward to learning the facts that are adduced from the investigation, and we will take actions that those facts compel," Mayorkas said. "We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant. Period." Previously, during a Monday press conference, both Mayorkas and Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz played down the incident, with Ortiz telling reporters that the agents were working in a difficult and chaotic environment and trying to control their horses. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Mayorkas spoke Monday before he had seen the images. "He believes this does not represent who we are as a country and does not represent the positions of the Biden-Harris administration," Psaki told reporters on Tuesday.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 5:24 PM, Brett Samuels, 1776K]

[Axios](#) [9/21/2021 11:46 AM, Erin Doherty, 526K]

### **U.S. preparing to nearly double deportations to Haiti as some returnees decry being shackled**

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 2:04 PM, Nick Niedzwiadek, 1707K] reports Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told Congress on Tuesday that the Biden administration is aiming to relocate the thousands of migrants camped along the U.S. border in Del Rio, Texas by the month's end. "Our goal is to do so within the next 10 days or nine days," Mayorkas said in response to questioning from Sen. James Lankford (R-Ok.). Mayorkas told members of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs committee that officials "expect to see dramatic results within the next 48 to 96" hours, at which point they'll have a better grasp of the remaining task. Mayorkas said that the administration is continuing to ramp up "the frequency and number" of repatriation flights for the migrants, the bulk of whom hail from Haiti. He said that DHS is also transporting them to other processing centers in order to expedite the process and get them out of the makeshift campsite along the U.S.-Mexico border that has ballooned in recent days to include thousands of would-be asylum seekers. Mayorkas had been peppered with questions about the fast-developing situation involving Haitian migrants, as well as the Biden administration's approach to border security and illegal border crossings more broadly. The White House has decried the alleged behavior by the agents, some of whom appeared to be using whips or similar objects to intimidate the migrants. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Professional Responsibility opened an investigation on Monday into the situation. The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 2:58 PM, Widlore Merancourt, Anthony Faiola, and Nick Miroff, 11773K] reports the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation is already dealing with a convergence of crises — including the aftermath of a presidential assassination, a deadly earthquake, worsening food insecurity and rising social anarchy amid a grab for territory by gang warlords. On Sunday and Monday, several hundred migrants per day arrived on up to three flights to Port-au-Prince, with four flights scheduled for Tuesday. International agencies have been told that the United States will begin ramping up to "six to seven" flights daily, to Port-au-Prince as well as Haiti's second-largest city, Cap-Haïtien, starting Wednesday. A spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security said the department could not confirm the flight plans, citing operational and security factors. However, one U.S. official confirmed that the flights would increase to six or seven per day, split between the two Haitian cities. The official was not authorized to discuss the plan and spoke on the condition of anonymity. The State Department said Monday that Secretary of State Antony Blinken

had spoken with Henry about “cooperation to repatriate Haitian migrants on the Southern border of the United States.” “The United States and Haiti share a mutual concern for the safety of Haitian citizens and discussed the dangers of irregular migration, which puts individuals at great risk and often requires migrants and their families to incur crippling debt,” the State Department said. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told senators Tuesday that DHS intends to empty a Del Rio, Tex., camp — where in the past week thousands of Haitian migrants have gathered — within the next 10 days. He said he expected “dramatic results” over the next two to four days as authorities send caravans of buses to transport migrants out of Del Rio. On Tuesday, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, condemned the U.S. deportations, saying they denied “most people arriving at the southwest U.S. land border any opportunity to request asylum.”

Reported similarly:

[Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 4:36 PM, Amber Phillips, 11773K]

### **DHS chief Mayorkas says border numbers are dropping, insists border is closed**

The [Washington Times](#) [9/21/2021 8:30 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas suggested his department has turned the corner on the border surge, telling senators Tuesday that the number of people being arrested this month has begun to tick down from the unprecedented level of July and August. Under questioning from Republicans, Mr. Mayorkas defended his handling of the border and said the plans the Biden administration developed are beginning to bear fruit. “It is, in fact, working. We have seen in the last several weeks, if not the month, a drop in the number of encounters at the United States border,” the secretary told the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. He also projected confidence that his department has taken the right steps to dismantle the migrant camp of mostly Haitians that sprung up on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande, serving as a major breach of the border. Mr. Mayorkas said the number of people in the camp has been cut to below 10,000, and some Haitians who showed up in northern Mexico eyeing the crossing have even begun to turn back, which he said was due to the get-tough approach. That includes up to three deportation flights from Texas to Haiti each day. “We’re hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent because it backs up the words we have spoken,” the secretary said. Sen. James Lankford, Oklahoma Republican, pointed out that 107,000 people this year have been caught and released on a promise that they would return to get a court date for their deportation proceedings. Nearly 30,000 of them have already missed their deadline to do so, meaning they are absconders. Mr. Mayorkas promised they would be “a priority” for deportation, if they can be found. The secretary also revealed the latest data on the Afghan evacuation, saying 60,000 people have been brought out of Kabul and have reached the U.S. Mr. Mayorkas said very few Afghans have been flagged and denied entry to the U.S. He said it was a “de minimis” amount. “We have not found many people with derogatory information relative to those who qualify for admission to the United States by reason of their status,” the secretary said. [FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 12:27 PM, Jessica Chasmar, 9251K] reports that Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisted that the U.S. borders are closed during a heated exchange with Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wisc., on Tuesday. During a Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing, Johnson grilled the DHS secretary on the surge of illegal immigration under the Biden administration. “You have repeatedly stated that our borders are not open, they’re closed. Do you honestly believe that our borders are closed?” Johnson asked. “Senator, I do, and let me speak to that -” Mayorkas responded before being cut off by the senator. The senator then asked the DHS secretary to give “ballpark” estimates for how many migrants of the 1.3 million apprehended since October are still being detained, as well as how many have been deported and how many have been released into the U.S. The men continued to talk over one another, but Mayorkas said he ultimately couldn’t provide the estimates. “If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned. Your journey will not succeed and you will be endangering your life and your family’s lives,” Mayorkas said Monday. “This administration is committed to developing safe, orderly and humane pathways for migration. This is not the way to do it.”

**Officials: Many Haitian migrants are being released in US**

The [AP](#) [9/22/2021 2:12 AM, Elliot Spagat, Maria Verza and Juan A. Lozano, 1707K] reports many Haitian migrants camped in a small Texas border town are being released in the United States, two U.S. officials said, undercutting the Biden administration's public statements that the thousands in the camp faced immediate expulsion. Haitians have been freed on a "very, very large scale" in recent days, according to one U.S. official who put the figure in the thousands. The official, with direct knowledge of operations who was not authorized to discuss the matter Tuesday and thus spoke on condition of anonymity Many have been released with notices to appear at an immigration office within 60 days, an outcome that requires less processing time from Border Patrol agents than ordering an appearance in immigration court and points to the speed at which authorities are moving, the official said. The Homeland Security Department has been busing Haitians from Del Rio to El Paso, Laredo and Rio Grande Valley along the Texas border, and this week added flights to Tucson, Arizona, the official said. They are processed by the Border Patrol at those locations. A second U.S. official, also with direct knowledge and speaking on the condition of anonymity, said large numbers of Haitians were being processed under immigration laws and not being placed on expulsion flights to Haiti that started Sunday. The official couldn't be more specific about how many. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 1:11 AM, Brie Stimson, 9251K] reports the head of the U.N refugee agency said the expulsions might violate international law by sending refugees back to life-threatening situations and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said the deportations "defy common sense," Reuters reported. DHS confirmed to Fox News Tuesday that three U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were injured after "two separate disruptions" by Haitian migrants when they deplaned on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince. The injuries were not life-threatening.

Reported similarly:

[FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 1:11 AM, Brie Stimson, 9251K]

[Univision](#) [9/22/2021 3:37 AM, Staff, 366K]

### **Harris 'deeply troubled' by treatment of Haitian migrants**

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 12:42 PM, Brett Samuels, 1776K] reports that Vice President Harris on Tuesday condemned the treatment of Haitian migrants at the southern border after images circulated appearing to show Border Patrol agents on horseback grabbing individuals seeking to enter the U.S. "What I saw depicted, those individuals on horseback treating human beings the way they were was horrible," Harris told reporters after an event to promote the White House's economic agenda. "I fully support what is happening right now, which is a thorough investigation into what is going on there. But human beings should never be treated that way, and I'm deeply troubled about it," she said. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) earlier Tuesday announced it is investigating the treatment of Haitian migrants by Customs and Border Protection agents after video and images surfaced of the agents on horseback chasing down migrants at the southern border. "DHS does not tolerate the abuse of migrants in our custody and we take these allegations very seriously," the department said in a statement on Twitter. "We are committed to processing migrants in a safe, orderly, and humane way. We can and must do this in a way that ensures the safety and dignity of migrants." Harris was tasked by President Biden earlier this year with overseeing efforts to address root causes of migration from Central America. Asked if her responsibilities will extend to Haiti, Harris expressed sympathy for the plight of Haitians in the wake of multiple natural disasters and the assassination of their president.

Reported similarly:

[Axios](#) [9/21/2021 2:57 PM, Shawna Chen, 526K]

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 2:06 PM, Adam Shaw and Peter Hasson, 9251K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/21/2021 9:50 AM, Dave Boyer, 381K]

### **Biden Reacted in Horror to Video of Border Agents; Pledges to Get Border 'Under Control'**

[Bloomberg](#) [9/21/2021 1:19 PM, Justin Sink, 6400K] reports that President Joe Biden believed scenes of border patrol agents on horseback intimidating Haitian migrants were "horrific and horrible" and is fully committed to a Department of Homeland Security investigation into the matter, the White House said

Tuesday. "I don't know anyone who could watch that video and not have that emotion," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said during an interview with CBS News. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Professional Responsibility launched an probe into the incident in Del Rio, Texas, on Monday to determine possible disciplinary action. Video from the site showed asylum-seeking migrants shielding their heads in what appeared to be fear of the agents on horseback using reins as whips. "I think it's important for people to know this is not who we are," Psaki said. "That's not who the Biden-Harris Administration is, and we're going to absolutely pursue that investigation and get to the bottom of what happened here." The Department of Homeland Security also said Monday night it would be dispatching additional personnel to the border to help oversee operations as a growing group of Haitians seek entry into the U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, joined other lawmakers Monday in condemning the administration's handling of the situation. "Reports of the mistreatment of Haitian migrants fleeing violence and devastation from natural disasters are deeply troubling," Pelosi said, calling for an investigation into "any acts of aggression or violence." [FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 12:26 PM, Adam Shaw and Ben Evansky, 9251K] reports that President Biden on Tuesday pledged to get the situation at the border "Under control" as his administration faces a fresh border crisis in Del Rio, where more than 10,000 migrants have descended in recent days. "We will get it under control," Biden said in response to a question about the border, after speaking at the United Nations General Assembly. He was then asked if his administration has it under control or will get it under control. "We will get it under control," he repeated. Biden's administration has been facing a surge in migration that has overwhelmed officials and capacity since taking office. In August there were more than 208,000 migrant encounters, the second month in a row where encounters have been above 200,000. While the administration has been repeating its claim that the border is not open, and noting that a significant number of encounters result in a Title 42 expulsion, it has been facing accusations from Republicans of encouraging mass migration by rolling back Trump-era policies like the Migrant Protection Protocols. More recently, it has been facing a surge in Haitian migrants in Del Rio, where more than 10,000 are currently gathered as they seek entry into the United States. A combination of reports of canceled deportation flights and the extension of Temporary Protected Status to Haitians already in the country, as well as dire conditions and political instability in Haiti, has fueled the crisis. The number at one point at the border was over 14,000, and there are reports of tens of thousands more on the way.

Reported similarly:

[CNN](#) [9/21/2021 10:26 PM, Chandelis Duster and Maegan Vazquez, 4876K]

### **Biden Asks Court to Let Him Scrap Trump's Remain-in-Mexico Rule**

[Bloomberg](#) [9/21/2021 12:16 PM, Erik Larson, 6400K] reports that the Biden administration urged a federal appeals court to let it cancel a controversial Trump-era policy requiring asylum seekers at the U.S. southern border to wait in Mexico for their cases to be processed. President Joe Biden is seeking to lift an injunction won by Texas and Missouri that is forcing him to re-implement a rule put in place in 2019. The U.S. Constitution gives the executive branch wide discretion over immigration policies, and Biden gave a proper justification for scrapping the measure, the U.S. Justice Department said in a court filing late Monday in New Orleans. The fight over former president Donald Trump's Migrant Protection Protocols comes as hundreds of thousands of people from Central America and other nations have surged across the Mexico border into the U.S. in recent months and detentions of migrants have soared. Republicans say the crisis is evidence that Trump's policies worked, while the Biden administration argues the "Remain in Mexico" rule is doing more harm than good. The injunction "threatens to profoundly disrupt the government's management of border security and foreign policy -- two areas that the Supreme Court has recognized are committed to the discretion of the executive branch," the Justice Department said in the filing. The administration argues U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Amarillo, Texas, was being unrealistic when he ruled that Trump's policy should remain in place until the border agency has enough capacity to detain hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants at the border "and millions of non-citizens unlawfully present inside the country." The case is *Texas v. Biden*, 21-10806, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (New Orleans).

## **UN agencies raise concerns about US deportations of Haitian migrants**

The Hill [9/21/2021 10:34 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that United Nations agencies on Tuesday expressed concerns about the U.S.'s deportation of thousands of Haitian migrants from Texas this week, saying that many of them had a right to seek asylum. "We are disturbed by the images that we have seen and by the fact that we have seen all these migrants and refugees and asylum-seekers in transport to Port-au-Prince," Marta Hurtado, a spokesperson for the U.N. Human Right office, said, according to Reuters. "We are seriously concerned by the fact that it appears there have not been any individual assessments of the cases ... and that therefore maybe some of these people have not received the protection that they needed," Hurtado added. The U.S. began deporting thousands of Haitian migrants this week to Port-au-Prince. On Monday, it was reported that the Biden administration was prioritizing single adults and families who are not seeking asylum for deportation. Unaccompanied minors and some families will be permitted to stay in the U.S. and be given asylum hearing dates. Around 12,000 migrants are believed to have sheltered under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, living in squalid conditions. Due to the threat of deportation, hundreds of migrants have reportedly crossed back into Mexico. Spokesperson for the U.N. Refugee Agency Shabia Mantoo called for the U.S. to consider all claims of asylum, regardless of if a migrant is a refugee, Reuters reported. "While some people arriving at the border may not be refugees, anyone who ... claims to have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their country of origin - they should have access to asylum and to have their claim assessed before being subjected to expulsion or deportation," said Mantoo.

Reported similarly:

Reuters [9/21/2021 7:35 AM, Stephanie Nebehay, 5304K]

Axios [9/21/2021 8:44 AM, Oriana Gonzalez, 526K]

## **[TX] Haitian migrants take over DHS transport bus in Texas, flee the scene**

FOX News [9/21/2021 4:59 PM, Bill Melugin, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports a group of Haitian migrants on Monday took over a bus being used to transport them to a different immigration processing station in Texas, before fleeing the area, sources told Fox News. Multiple sources told Fox that the bus, traveling from Del Rio to Brownsville, was taken over by migrants who didn't want to be removed from the U.S. back to Haiti. The migrants forced their way off the bus and fled. All were later caught. The bus is said to have been contracted by DHS and did not have law enforcement on board. National Border Patrol Council President Brandon Judd mentioned the incident at a press conference alongside Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who called for the perpetrators to be prosecuted. The Biden administration has surged agents and resources to the area and ramped up deportation flights, while DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has warned illegal immigrants they won't be allowed in the country. "If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned. Your journey will not succeed and you will be endangering your life and your family's lives," Mayorkas said. "This administration is committed to developing safe, orderly and humane pathways for migration. This is not the way to do it."

## **[Canada] Mayorkas pressed on land border closure with Canada**

Roll Call [9/21/2021 4:53 PM, Suzanne Monyak, 119K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas dodged questions from senators Tuesday about the criteria used to justify keeping the nation's northern land border closed to fully vaccinated Canadians, hours after the U.S. renewed its border restrictions for another month. Testifying on "threats to the homeland" before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Mayorkas would not directly respond to queries from Chairman Gary Peters, D-Mich., and Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., about the reasoning behind barring Canadians who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 from driving to the U.S. Mayorkas also signaled the fate of the northern border may be tied to that of the U.S.-Mexico border, where the federal government currently enforces strict asylum and entry restrictions amid record-high migration levels. "We are taking it iteratively. We are looking at the situation, not only at the ports of entry at our northern border but also at our southern border," he said. Peters asked Mayorkas to provide his office and the public with the "specific criteria the administration is using to justify ongoing restrictions for fully vaccinated Canadians at land ports of entry." Mayorkas said he "most certainly will" but did not provide any metrics at

the hearing. The Homeland Security chief added that he was “mindful” of the effects the border closure has had on Canadian-American families and on border communities that rely economically on tourism. He said the administration is “reviewing both the public health and the family impact consequences of our decision on a daily basis.”

### **[Mexico] Mexican government cracks down on Haitian migrants in Ciudad Acuña**

USA Today [9/21/2021 5:42 PM, Lauren Villagran, El Paso Times, 6282K] reports Mexican authorities have begun rounding up Haitian migrants here in a crackdown that involved law enforcement at every level of government. Convoys of local police, Coahuila state investigative agents, Mexico’s federal immigration agency and the National Guard patrolled the streets of Ciudad Acuña on Monday and early Tuesday, chasing down dozens of people and loading them into vans. Once apprehended, the agents loaded them into a van emblazoned with the insignia for Mexico’s National Migration Institute, or INAMI. Coahuila’s Vanguardia newspaper reported Tuesday that INAMI had chartered flights to transport migrants, including numerous Haitians, from the border town of Piedras Negras, Coahuila, to Tapachula, Chiapas — where Mexico has one of its largest migrant detention centers. Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard told reporters in a morning news conference that he had been in touch with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken regarding the “significant, notable recent flow of Haitian nationals that are coming from Brazil and Chile, not Haiti.” He didn’t address Mexico’s response at the northern border, but said that Haitians were receiving false information about opportunities in the U.S. “They aren’t asking for refugee status in Mexico, except a small percentage of them,” Ebrard said. “They are basically asking for the freedom to travel to the United States.” After the Department of Homeland Security extended permission to apply for Temporary Protected Status to Haitian nationals living inside the U.S. as of July 29, “people in the Haitian network told their people in Brazil and Chile, ‘you need to go to the United States quickly,’” Ebrard said. “They are tricking them.” U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price on Tuesday said Blinken and Ebrard discussed “the common goal of promoting safe, orderly, and humane migration” as well as “the need for a coordinated regional effort to stem the flow of irregular migration.”

The AP [9/21/2021 2:00 PM, Julie Watson, Juan A. Lozano and Elliot Spagat] reports discussion Monday at the Tijuana restaurant offered a snapshot of Haitians’ diaspora in the Western Hemisphere, which picked up steam in 2016 and has shown little sign of easing, demonstrated most recently by the more than 14,000 mostly Haitian migrants assembled around a Del Rio bridge. The town has only about 35,000 people. Nearly all Haitians reach the U.S. on a well-worn route: Fly to Brazil, Chile or elsewhere in South America. If jobs dry up, slowly move through Central America and Mexico by bus and on foot to wait — perhaps years — in northern border cities like Tijuana for the right time to enter the United States and claim asylum. Haitians shifted over the summer to Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, across from Del Rio. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Monday that it was unusually sudden.

### **[Haiti] Deported Haitians try to rush back into plane amid anger**

The AP [9/21/2021 5:47 PM, Pierre-Richard Luxama] reports dozens of migrants upset about being deported to Haiti from the U.S. clashed with authorities while trying to rush back into a plane that landed Tuesday afternoon in Port-au-Prince. Meanwhile, the future of thousands of migrants who remain along the Mexico-Texas border is in limbo. U.S. expulsion flights are expected to continue while Mexico was flying and busing some of the migrants away from the border. So far, more than 6,000 Haitians and other migrants had been removed from an encampment at Del Rio, Texas. Reuters [9/21/2021 8:50 AM, Gessika Thomas and Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K] reports angry scenes broke out at Haiti’s main airport on Tuesday among migrants sent home from a squalid Texas border camp, as U.S. President Joe Biden faced mounting pressure to stop an expulsions policy the U.N. refugee chief said may be illegal. Nearly 10,000 migrants, mainly Haitian, remain in worsening conditions in the impromptu camp that sprang up under a bridge spanning the Rio Grande from the Texas town Del Rio to Mexico’s Ciudad Acuña. In recent days, U.S. authorities have removed at least 4,000 people from the site for processing in detention centers. Some 523 Haitians have been deported to their homeland on four flights, with repatriations set to continue on a regular basis, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said. Following an outpouring of anger over an incident in which mounted U.S. border agents in cowboy hats used horse reins like whips to intimidate the migrants, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas

emphasized that U.S. border agents were delivering medical attention and working with the Red Cross. Mayorkas said he was horrified by the images, echoing increasingly strident criticism from the White House, which said the footage "does not represent who we are as a country." The agents under investigation have been assigned administrative duties and are no longer dealing with migrants, Mayorkas said. He also ordered that the conduct of personnel in Del Rio be consistent with the policies, training and "the values of this department."

### **[Afghanistan] Afghanistan Aftermath's Risk of Terrorism Cited by Senate Panel**

Bloomberg [9/21/2021 1:02 PM, Chris Strohm and Ellen M. Gilmer, 6400K] reports that Senators pressed top U.S. national security officials Tuesday about the country's vulnerability to terrorism from the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and from the thousands of evacuees arriving in the U.S. "These recent events have put a heightened foreign terrorist threat top-of-mind," Senator Rob Portman, an Ohio Republican, said at a hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. FBI Director Christopher Wray said the bureau is working with state and local agencies to "get in front of any radicalization" of Afghan evacuees in the U.S., relying on more than 200 joint terrorism task forces to monitor potential threats. "We're putting a heavy focus on community outreach as the evacuees settle here in the United States," Wray said. Defending the ongoing vetting of Afghan evacuees, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said "we continue to screen and vet individuals seeking to arrive in the United States." "We have not relaxed our vigilance over the years," Mayorkas added. More than 60,000 people have been brought into the U.S. from Afghanistan so far, Mayorkas said. About 7% are U.S. citizens, 6% are lawful permanent residents and 3% are Afghans who have received special immigrant visas, Mayorkas said. The rest are vulnerable individuals and those whose applications haven't yet been approved, he said. Mayorkas didn't provide any new information on vetting, reiterating past points that the U.S. gathers biographic and biometric information and relies on experts to conduct screening and vetting before allowing people into the country. "We have not found many people with derogatory information relative to those who qualify for admission to the United States," Mayorkas said. The Homeland Security Department would seek to remove any Afghan evacuees who raised red flags, possibly to a third country, he said. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

### **[Afghanistan] U.S. national security officials express concern about terror threats tied to Afghanistan**

The Los Angeles Times [9/21/2021 5:46 PM, Erin B. Logan, 3710K] reports top U.S. national security officials on Tuesday said they were concerned about the threat posed by foreign terrorist groups following American military forces' chaotic exit last month from Afghanistan. National Counterterrorism Center Director Christine Abizaid testified before Congress that the Taliban's reemergence and takeover of Afghanistan could set the stage for terrorist groups to rebuild there. The Taliban sheltered Al Qaeda as the group planned the Sept. 11 attacks. Abizaid testified that the likelihood of major attacks on American soil had diminished in the two decades since the Sept. 11 attacks. While the danger is "less acute" than in 2001, she said, preventing attacks remains a challenge because the threat is "more ideologically diffuse and geographically diverse." Abizaid was joined during the hearing by FBI Director Christopher A. Wray and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas who agreed that terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan posed mostly a regional threat. However, Wray testified that the U.S. pullout from Afghanistan and the Taliban's rapid takeover of the country could inspire extremists living in the U.S. and other Western countries to engage in violence. Wray added that his agency has also been doggedly tracking the threat posed by domestic terrorist groups, particularly since a pro-Trump mob swarmed the Capitol on Jan. 6. He testified that the FBI has about 2,700 active domestic terrorism investigations, up from about 1,000 in spring 2020. He said he has doubled the number of personnel devoted to investigating such cases. Portman and other lawmakers also raised concerns about how well Afghan refugees and evacuees are being vetted by U.S. officials. The U.S. evacuated 124,000 people from Kabul's airport in the days after the Taliban took over the city. Mayorkas said the Department of Homeland Security is carefully screening Afghans. He said more than 60,000 people have been brought to the U.S. from Afghanistan. About 7% are U.S. citizens, 6% are lawful permanent residents and 3% are Afghans who have received special immigrant visas for their work on behalf of the U.S. government. The

rest are vulnerable individuals whose applications are being carefully reviewed and processed, he testified. "We have a screening and vetting architecture," Mayorkas said. "We have greater cooperation amongst the federal agencies in the counter-terrorism, intelligence and law enforcement communities. We remain ever vigilant in that regard."

Reported similarly:

[AP](#) [9/21/2021 2:50 PM, Eric Tucker]

[ABC News](#) [9/21/2021 2:55 PM, Luke Barr and Alexander Mallin, 37K]

[CBS News](#) [9/21/2021 4:24 PM, Nicole Sganga, 2612K]

### **[Afghanistan] Lindsey Graham: Terrorists will 'infiltrate' US border if Biden does not change course**

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 10:31 AM, Staff, 9251K] reports that Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., warned Tuesday that the chaos in the Middle East may soon attempt to "infiltrate" the U.S. via the southern border, as Biden faces criticism on his Afghanistan withdrawal and handling of immigration policy. LINDSEY GRAHAM: The chaos in the Middle East is going to come to us here at home through the border if we don't change something. How easy would it be for some terrorist group to hire a cartel and take them into the United States through the southern border? Nothing changes until you change our asylum law but I'm really worried about the narrative out there that America was defeated in Afghanistan and every jihadist is going to Afghanistan-and there will soon be an effort to infiltrate this country through the southern border if we don't do something about it.

### **[Afghanistan] Lawmakers push for numbers behind Afghan evacuation**

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 3:15 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports lawmakers on Tuesday aired frustration over a lack of data disclosed by the Biden administration, which has boasted of evacuating more than 124,000 people from Afghanistan but haven't provided a precise breakdown of the different categories of those who fled the country amid and after the U.S. withdrawal. Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), speaking to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, pointed to a gap between the 60,000 people who have been brought into the U.S. and the total number evacuated. "We don't know the remaining where they're going, who they are, are they coming here or not, we don't know the breakdown of refugees and parolees, we don't know the breakdown of SIVs — Special Immigrant Visas — and what are called partial SIV immigrant visas or folks that were American citizens and green card holders, there's some very basic pieces of information that we keep trying to be able to get," Lankford said. Mayorkas did offer some figures in the hearing, saying that roughly 12,000 Afghans remain at different military sites while they await vetting to enter the U.S. He also pointed to previously released numbers from the administration, noting that of the 60,000 Afghans who have entered the U.S., nearly 8,000 are either U.S. citizens or residents, while about 1,800 are SIV holders, having obtained visas after assisting the U.S. military. But he did not provide numbers how many fit into the Priority 1 and Priority 2 categories created for vulnerable Afghans and others who assisted in a range of U.S. projects.

## **Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

### **[Haiti] ICE officers injured by Haitian migrants after deportation flights land in Port-au-Prince**

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 9:55 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports a number of Haitian migrants who had been deported from the United States injured three Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince, Fox News confirmed on Tuesday. A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson told Fox News that a number of adult migrants who had been deported from the U.S. caused two separate disruptions at the airport after deplaning in the Haitian capital. "Haitian crowd control officers responded to both incidents and resolved the situations," the spokesperson said. "ICE fully respects the rights of all people to peacefully express their opinions, while continuing to perform its immigration enforcement mission consistent with our priorities, federal law and agency policy," the



spokesperson said. The agency also confirmed that three ICE officers sustained non-life-threatening injuries.

## **Citizenship and Immigration Services**

### **Biden to double refugee cap despite slow resettlement pace**

Roll Call [9/21/2021 3:27 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports President Joe Biden would fulfill a longtime promise by raising the refugee admissions cap to 125,000 for fiscal 2022, but reaching that number could prove difficult after a year on track to have the lowest resettlement numbers in recent history. On Monday, the State Department announced the administration's intent to raise the refugee admissions cap to 125,000 for fiscal 2022. The refugee admissions picture is slightly complicated by the arrival of thousands of at-risk Afghans since Afghanistan's collapse in August. Many are in line for special immigrant visas, which do not count toward overall refugee numbers, while others have been granted humanitarian parole rather than traditional refugee benefits. The proposed regional admissions goals would sharply increase the number of expected arrivals from "Near East/South Asia," from a projected level of 13,000 to 35,000. It also would accept up to 40,000 refugees from Africa, 15,000 from East Asia, 10,000 from Europe and Central Asia, and 15,000 from Latin America and the Caribbean. The remaining 10,000 refugees may be from anywhere in the world. The State Department is planning for the likelihood that ramping up refugee admissions program capacity to meet Biden's goal could be a lengthy process with uncertain results. The Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, according to the report, will only fund the domestic refugee program and its overseas components at a level supporting 65,000 refugees at the start of fiscal 2022 "in the interest of careful stewardship of taxpayer resources," as well as operational constraints related to COVID-19. "Those funding levels will be re-evaluated and increased as appropriate as the year progresses and it becomes clearer how much progress can be made against the target," the report said.

### **Major companies vow to train, hire Afghan refugees arriving in U.S.**

Axios [9/21/2021 1:24 PM, Erin Doherty, 526K] reports that more than 30 major companies have promised to hire and train Afghan refugees coming to the U.S., per a press release from the Tent Partnership for Refugees, the group spearheading the effort. The big picture: The 33 companies, including Amazon, Facebook, Pfizer and UPS, are joining the Tent Coalition for Afghan Refugees, a coalition founded by Hamdi Ulukaya, the founder and CEO of yogurt and food company Chobani. An initial group of 37,000 Afghans arrived in the U.S. this month and are heading to states across the country. Driving the news: Amazon said it will offer refugees jobs in the company's warehouses or transportation hubs and in tech and corporate roles. The company will also pay for training and education programs. Pfizer's efforts to include Afghans in the workforce range from "Hiring them into our workforce, to mentoring Afghan refugees and preparing them for their new workplaces," per CEO Albert Bourla. What they're saying: "I've said this before and I'll say it again - the moment a refugee gets a job, it's the moment they stop being a refugee," Ulukaya said in a statement. "It's the moment they can stand on their own two feet; it's the moment they can make new friends; it's the moment they can start a new life."

### **[DC] Protesters press Congress for path to citizenship as Democrats' plan hits obstacle**

The Washington Post [9/21/2021 12:20 PM, Ellie Silverman, 11773K] reports that this was finally a moment of hope for Pavel Mena, an undocumented immigrant who has been living in the United States for six years. He saw Democratic leaders pushing to insert sweeping immigration provisions in the \$3.5 trillion budget package and believed the long-awaited promise of providing a pathway to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants in the United States would finally happen. The Senate parliamentarian, who was evaluating if this measure was enough of a budget matter to be considered in the package, advised against it, ruling it is "Not appropriate" for that type of measure. He said he pays taxes with an IRS-issued Individual Taxpayer Identification Number since he is unable to receive a Social Security number and has continued to work in construction during the pandemic as an "essential worker" doing waterproofing. "We are contributing to the economy, and we already prove it," said Mena, 40 of Reisterstown, Md., who is the sole provider for his pregnant wife; three children ages 15, 9 and 19

months; and mother-in-law. "We're valuable here to pay taxes. We're valuable here to help build the economy, and they even call us 'essential.'" On Tuesday, Mena is joining other immigrants, advocates and community members in Washington to push back, demanding that Congress include a pathway to citizenship in the budget reconciliation package and emphasizing the crucial role of immigrants in the U.S. economy. They are also pressing Congress to pass ambitious climate legislation and support caregivers, arguing these issues disproportionately affect communities of color.

### **[NV] Governor: Nevada getting first 150 Afghans for resettlement**

The AP [9/21/2021 7:41 PM, Staff, 495K] reports the U.S. State Department plans to resettle 150 Afghans in Nevada, with about 100 expected to go to northern areas including Reno and Sparks and about 50 to the Las Vegas area, Gov. Steve Sisolak's office said Tuesday. Immediate resettlement plans were not disclosed and the governor's office said the first people to arrive under the federal Afghan Placement and Assistance program weren't available for immediate interviews "for concerns for their safety." The state was awaiting word from the federal government about how many Afghan refugees and special immigrant visa holders will eventually be sent to Nevada, Sisolak said in a statement. "Nevada is and will continue to be a welcoming state for all," said the governor, a Democrat. "I am proud of our long-standing tradition of resettling refugees and other eligible populations fleeing from persecution fearing for theirs and their families' lives and safety." Sisolak said his Governor's Office for New Americans was working through Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, which serves as the state's Office of Refugee Resettlement. Deacon Thomas Roberts, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, said the lack of affordable housing was a key factor in allocating 50 people to southern Nevada and 100 to the north. He noted also there are differences in services and benefits available through regular Catholic Charities services and those provided to Afghan evacuees. The Biden administration has set a goal of taking in 125,000 refugees and their families to the U.S. next year.

### **[WA] Immigrant rights activist targeted for deportation can stay**

The AP [9/21/2021 4:54 PM, Gene Johnson] reports a Northwest immigrant rights activist who had been facing deportation says she can now remain in the U.S., after the Department of Homeland Security agreed to drop her case. Maru Mora Villalpando, a Mexico City native, has been in the U.S. since overstaying a visa in 1996. She said Tuesday that an immigration judge last week approved the decision to drop deportation proceedings against her, amid the Biden administration's re-evaluation of immigration enforcement priorities. ICE denied targeting her or any other immigrant for political reasons, and immigration judge Brett Parchert rejected her arguments on those grounds. Mora Villalpando had no criminal record and her case posed no such security issues. She and her attorney, Devin Theriot-Orr, requested that the agency use its prosecutorial discretion to drop her case, and the agency agreed, she said.

## **Customs and Border Protection**

### **Border Patrol council VP pushes back on media's claim of agents 'whipping' migrants**

FOX News [9/21/2021 2:31 PM, Staff, 9251K] Video: HERE reports National Border Patrol Council Vice President Art Del Cueto pushed back against mainstream media claims of agents whipping migrants. During an interview on "America Reports" Tuesday, Del Cueto explained agents are not assigned whips and the techniques used were within safety protocol to protect both the agent and the horse involved in the incident.

### **Democrats support probe into border altercation with Haitians**

Roll Call [9/21/2021 5:32 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers Tuesday he was "horrified" by images of Border Patrol agents on horseback confronting Haitian migrants along the Rio Grande, but said he would let an investigation reveal what happened. "We look forward to learning the facts. We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant. Period," he told members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Committee. Vice President Kamala Harris called the images “horrible” and said she supported a full investigation. “Human beings should never be treated that way, and I’m deeply troubled about it,” she said Tuesday, adding she planned to speak with Mayorkas later. During his visit to Del Rio a day earlier, Mayorkas said the Border Patrol chief explained his horse-mounted agents carried “long reins” used to help control their animals — and not whips as some accounts reported. He told reporters at the site that department officials would “investigate the facts to ensure that the situation is as we understand it to be. And if it’s anything different, we will respond accordingly.” DHS said the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Professional Responsibility is investigating the situation and has notified the department’s inspector general’s office. “The footage is extremely troubling and the facts learned from the full investigation, which will be conducted swiftly, will define the appropriate disciplinary actions to be taken,” DHS said in a statement.

### **GOP investigates FAA drone ban that shut down coverage of migrant camp**

The Washington Times [9/20/2021 8:00 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Republican investigators demanded answers Tuesday from the Federal Aviation Administration over its decision last week to impose a ban on drone flights near the Texas migrant camp that sprang up on the banks of the Rio Grande. Kentucky Rep. James Comer and fellow Republicans on the House Oversight Committee said the ban was “totally devoid” of a justification and, given the details, it’s tough to avoid the conclusion that the FAA was trying to protect the Biden administration from embarrassing images. “Using government resources to conduct such blatant censorship is exactly the kind of abuse of power that must be rooted out of our government — to say nothing to the basic lack of transparency,” the House Republicans wrote in a letter that The Washington Times obtained first. The drone ban went into effect the night of Sept. 16, just as the camp was swelling to 5,000 people and as media interest was growing. Federal authorities were keeping the public away from the site on the ground, but aerial images captured the size of the gathering. The ban lasts until Sept. 30. In the announcement, the agency said drones that break the ban could be destroyed in a “security action” by the Department of Homeland Security, the Justice Department or even the Defense Department. The FAA, in a statement to the Times, said the Border Patrol requested the ban “due to drones interfering with law enforcement aircraft on the border.” The agency said news agencies are able to get exemptions, and Fox News, Reuters and the Associated Press have applied and been approved.

### **[TX] Texas rancher says she encountered 23 illegal immigrants on property, says Border Patrol overwhelmed**

FOX News [9/21/2021 10:27 AM, Amy Nelson, 9251K] reports that Texas ranchers are calling for help as the crisis at the U.S. southern border continues to affect American citizens. Laura Allen, a rancher in Val Verde County, told Fox News’ Lawrence Jones that 23 illegal immigrants trespassed on her property in one night. As part of Governor Greg Abbott’s “Operation Lone Star,” the Texas Department of Public Safety has been able to aid in combatting the surge of illegal immigration as Border Patrol remains overwhelmed with the surge of migrants, particularly in Del Rio. “We actually intervened and had them taken from Border Patrol, handed over to DPS for prosecution,” Allen said of the migrants that entered her property. “They’re being processed for criminal trespassing.” “DPS has stepped in and been able to do something out in the areas that Border Patrol is not able to get to.” Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas visited Del Rio, Texas, Monday as thousands of migrants were seen under the International Bridge. Mayorkas issued a stern warning to people traveling into the United States illegally. “The border is not open and people should not take the perilous journey here,” he said. “We are returning people to other countries.” Allen said on “Fox & Friends” that local officials are “fed up” with the situation at the border. “They’re tired. We’ve dealt with more than we should ever have to deal with. We’ve seen more than we should ever have to see.” She said the crisis is an “insurmountable obstacle” without help from Washington.

## **Transportation Security Administration**

## **U.S. to require COVID vaccination on arrival for some foreign nationals with exemptions, memo says**

Reuters [9/21/2021 6:14 AM, Andrea Shalal and David Shepardson, 4947K] reports under new U.S. rules, foreign nationals admitted to the United States on humanitarian grounds, who are not required to have COVID-19 vaccinations, will have to agree to be vaccinated upon arrival, according to a planning document seen by Reuters. The White House on Monday said it would lift restrictions that bar many non-U.S. citizens from traveling to the United States by air starting in November. The United States will require nearly all foreign nationals age 12 and over to show proof of COVID-19 vaccines before entering the country. Exemptions to that policy will include "children, COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial participants and humanitarian exceptions for people traveling for an important reason and who lack access to vaccination in a timely manner," the planning document said. Most people who receive those "very limited" exemptions would be required to agree to get vaccinated upon arrival, the document said. It was not immediately clear how or where vaccines would be administered or if the travelers would have to quarantine while waiting for their immunity to build.

## **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

### **Northern Hemisphere's summer of wildfires let off record-breaking carbon emissions**

CNN [9/21/2021 11:38 AM, Amy Woodyatt, 4876K] reports that the amount of carbon emitted from severe wildfires that tore across many parts of the Northern Hemisphere this summer broke records, according to data from the European Union's Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service published Tuesday. Intense blazes, including fires in hotspots in the Mediterranean, North America and Siberia, let off more than 2.7 billion metric tons of carbon over the summer, with July and August both breaking monthly records for emissions from fires. More than half of July's emissions could be put down to fires in North America and Siberia. Europe experienced its hottest summer on record this year and the Mediterranean also broke temperature records by large margins, as did parts of the Arctic and Canada. Human-made climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent and intense, and dry conditions and heatwaves in the Mediterranean this year turned the region into a wildfire hotspot, letting off large quantities of smoke pollution. Meanwhile, wildfires in the Arctic -- a region that has warmed more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet since 2000 -- released 66 million tons of CO2 between June and August, Copernicus said. The boreal fire season usually lasts from May to October, and activity peaks between July and August. "Throughout the summer we have been monitoring wildfire activity across the Northern Hemisphere. What stood out as unusual were the number of fires, the size of the areas in which they were burning, their intensity and also their persistence," Mark Parrington, senior scientist and wildfire expert at Copernicus, part of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, said in a statement.

### **[LA] Louisiana delegation split over debt-hike bill with disaster aid**

The Hill [9/21/2021 12:25 PM, Scott Wong, 1776K] reports that Hurricane-battered Louisiana's congressional delegation is divided over Democrats' package to avert a government shutdown, raise the nation's legal debt limit, and allocate nearly \$30 billion in emergency aid responding to Hurricane Ida and other natural disasters. Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.) said he'll break with his GOP leaders and "probably" vote to pass the package "because my state needs the help," even as he predicted it would fail in the Senate. The state's other senator, Republican Bill Cassidy, hasn't made up his mind yet about how he'll vote, and the delegation's only Democrat, Rep. Troy Carter, will vote yes. But two Louisiana Republicans in House leadership — Minority Whip Steve Scalise, who runs the GOP's vote-counting operation, and Rep. Mike Johnson, who helps run GOP messaging — are urging their colleagues to vote down the Democratic proposal when it comes to the floor later Tuesday. They are complaining that President Biden and the Democrats are spending too much, imposing higher taxes and driving up inflation through their separate \$3.5 trillion social safety net package. "If you notice the debt that [Democrats have] incurred just this year alone to fund things like bailing out failed states, paying people not to work and then ultimately now to pass this [\$5 trillion-plus] tax-and-spend bill ... we're not the only ones against it. Most American people don't want this level of spending and taxes that are going to increase inflation even higher," Scalise told reporters after huddling with House Republicans. "Democrats want to bring bad policies like

that, they're the ones that are going to have to answer for it," Scalise added. "They shouldn't try to tie it, by the way, to a bill that funds basic needs of government, and the Senate made it clear they're not going to go for this."

### **[MT] Gianforte sends National Guard to aid in virus response**

The [AP](#) [9/21/2021 5:20 PM, Staff] reports National Guard soldiers will assist Montana hospitals with their COVID-19 response as the state struggles with a surge in infections, Gov. Greg Gianforte announced Tuesday. A total of 70 soldiers will assist six different hospitals in Helena, Billings, Butte, Missoula and Bozeman. They will begin helping the hospitals either this weekend or next weekend, according to an announcement from the governor's office. The Guardsmen will support staffing with non-medical intensive care assistance, environmental services, patient data entry and virus testing. Gianforte has stopped short of issuing any statewide mask or vaccine requirements even as some communities face record high COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. The decision to mobilize the National Guard comes after Gianforte announced last week that 10 Guardsmen would begin assisting Billings Clinic and seven additional Guardsmen would assist in the state lab. Gianforte also directed Montana Disaster and Emergency Services to assist hospitals in the process of securing full reimbursements from FEMA for their COVID-19 staffing needs, after several hospitals reported last week that they faced staffing shortages that complicated their efforts to respond to the pandemic. State health officials reported 1,181 new COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, bringing the total number of active cases to just under 10,000. Over 370 people were reported hospitalized with the virus as of Tuesday, and 1,901 Montana residents have died of the virus since the onset of the pandemic.

### **[CA] D.C. could send California billions for fire recovery — but there's a catch**

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) [9/21/2021 5:21 PM, Tal Kopan, 495K] reports billions of dollars that could cover the loss of burned vines and smoke-tainted wine grapes. Hundreds of millions to help with drought, and hundreds of millions more for hazardous fuels management. Democrats on Tuesday unveiled a nearly \$30 billion disaster relief package that could be a godsend to Northern California's wildfire-ravaged and drought-stricken communities. But in classic Washington fashion, there's a catch — the money is tied up in a partisan game of chicken. With funding set to run out next Thursday, Democrats unveiled a bill to keep the federal government open for another year on Tuesday. That bill is paired with a \$28.6 billion supplement for disaster relief, including recent wildfires, drought, hurricanes and floods, and \$6.3 billion to support Afghan evacuees. While it's unclear exactly how much California would get of the overall disaster package, it is expected to cover the \$7.7 billion that the state's U.S. senators have requested based on estimates of California's need. Those provisions are largely uncontroversial and have bipartisan backing. But their fate is intertwined, for now, with Democrats' efforts to raise the debt limit — a cap on federal borrowing that Congress regularly has to raise in order to prevent the U.S. from defaulting.

## **Secret Service**

### **Secret Service agents warn fleets about 'fuel skimming' thieves**

The [Commercial Carrier Journal](#) [9/21/2019 2:00 PM, Aaron Huff, Neutral, Secondary] reports two Secret Service agents came to the Comdata user conference in Orlando on Sept. 13 to warn fleet managers about fuel skimming, an illegal activity that costs the trucking industry millions every month. Long before the Secret Service was tasked with protecting U.S. presidents, the agency was founded in 1865 to suppress counterfeiting. That mission continues today with investigating credit card fraud. Fuel thieves are spreading rapidly along the I-10 corridor from Florida through Texas, Arizona and into California, they said. Most are immigrants from Cuba, via Miami, said Special Agent Roger Fuentes. "Guys who did drugs have switched to this. It is a lot less dangerous." Traditional card controls, such as setting daily limits for gallons and dollar amounts, have limited ability to prevent fuel fraud. As an example, Lomonaco said he recently investigated a case where a state National Guard unit lost \$800,000 over a three-month period from thieves using counterfeit GSA fuel cards. Jon Bernstein, Comdata's vice president of product innovation, followed the presentation from the Secret Service agents to discuss available tools for fleets to

prevent fraud. Comdata has a product that uses GPS and vehicle tank capacity data from ELD telematics systems to enhance pre-authorization fuel controls, he said. When a card is swiped at the pump, Comdata instantly verifies that the vehicle is at the location using GPS data from the telematics system, he said.

**Federal agencies buying up Chinese drones previously deemed a national security threat: report**  
FOX News [9/21/2021 10:21 PM, Andrew Mark Miller, 9251K, Neutral, Primary]

Federal law enforcement agencies in the Biden administration are reportedly purchasing surveillance drones from China that have previously been labeled a potential national security threat by the Pentagon. The U.S. Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have recently acquired surveillance drones from the Shenzhen-based company DJI, around the same time the Defense Department deemed products from the Chinese company to be a potential national security threat, according to an Axios report. Procurement records show that the Secret Service bought eight DJI drones on July 26 just three days after the Defense Department issued a statement warning about possible threats posed by the company's products. Around the same time, records show that the FBI bought 19 drones from DJI. DJI is one of the most popular drone manufacturers in the industry, and the company requires those who purchase their products to download proprietary software and provide to users their own mapping databases that have the potential to be monitored remotely. Concerns about the company's products being used to advance China's interests have been longstanding and include a 2017 statement from the Department of Homeland Security that claimed with "moderate confidence" that DJI was "providing U.S. critical infrastructure and law enforcement data to the Chinese government."

**[GA] Guest speakers announced for Save America rally at Georgia National Fairgrounds**  
13WMAZ [9/21/2021 3:37 PM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] Video: [HERE](#)

Former President Donald Trump is making a stop in Central Georgia in just a few days, and organizers of the rally have released a schedule. Guests will be screened by the United States Secret Service upon entry. The intent of the rally is to drum up support for a slew of candidates that have declared they're entering statewide races. Perhaps the biggest candidate is Herschel Walker, the UGA legend who previously announced he would be running against Sen. Raphael Warnock in 2022. He recently received an endorsement from the former POTUS. Trump has also thrown his support behind state senator Burt Jones for the Lieutenant Governor position currently held by Geoff Duncan, who announced he would NOT be seeking re-election in May, and Jody Hice for Secretary of State.

**[AL] Former Chick-fil-A Employee Pleads Guilty for Scheme to Steal Funds**

The United States Department of Justice [9/21/2019 3:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a former Chick-fil-A employee pleaded guilty today to participating in a conspiracy to defraud his former employer and committing bank fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Prim F. Escalona and U.S. Secret Service Special Agent in Charge Patrick M. Davis. Larry James Black, Jr., 37, of Center Point, the former Director of Hospitality at Chick-fil-A Five Points, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud before U.S. District Judge Madeline H. Haikala. Black's sentencing hearing is scheduled for January 20, 2022. Black's co-defendant, Joshua Daniel Powell, 40, of Moody, a former manager at the same location, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud in June. Powell's sentencing hearing is scheduled for October 20, 2021. According to the plea agreement, between April 2018 and January 2018, Black and Powell devised and implemented a scheme to divert \$492,000 in customer payments to bank accounts under their control. Black and Powell used these accounts to receive customer credit card payments intended for Chick-fil-A Five Points. Many of these payments were for catering orders from large customers. To effectuate the scheme, Black and Powell used fraudulent email and digital payment accounts that imitated the look of official Chick-fil-A accounts. In addition to these fraudulent "Chick-fil-A" accounts, Black and Powell also utilized a personal email account belonging to Powell to intercept virtual credit card payments that were made on behalf of an additional customer. Black used the fraud proceeds to support his lifestyle, including the purchase of high-end luxury vehicles and vacations. The U.S. Secret Service Cyber Fraud Task Force investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward J. Canter prosecuted the case.

### **[FL] Apopka custodian used as 'Money Mule' to transfer \$3.1M to Nigerian police barracks**

Click Orlando [9/21/2021 11:34 PM, Mike Holfeld, 188K, Neutral, Secondary]

The U.S. Secret Service has uncovered a multi-million dollar scheme that used a young Apopka janitor as a "money mule" to transfer cash, money orders and unemployment benefits to a Nigerian police barracks over the last six years. Senior Special Agent Roger Fuentes, of the Orlando Secret Service, told News 6 the young man was convinced he was helping a woman he met and fell in love with on social media to assist a struggling church congregation. "He admitted that they pledged their undying love," Fuentes said. "He believed this woman cared for him." Investigators are convinced the words behind the romance were probably authored by men. News 6 has confirmed the photos of the woman he loved were of an adult film star used to perpetuate a lie that lasted six years. The woman has nothing to do with the scheme. "He had no idea," Fuentes told News 6. "It was romance scams, it was vacation rental scams, it was internet sales scams, any kind of scam you can think of they were funneling it through him." Agents acting on a tip from the Apopka Police Department were waiting for the young man when he arrived home from his shift a few weeks ago. Fuentes said they confiscated \$100,000 in cash, along with stacks of money orders, gift cards and unemployment debit cards from California and Arizona. The man, who asked not to be identified, first met the woman on Facebook when he was just 19 years old.

### **[NE] Chamber president warns that Kearney business accepted fake \$50 bill**

The Grand Island Independent [9/21/2021 10:05 AM, Staff, 25K, Neutral, Secondary]

The Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce is issuing a warning to its members that a Kearney business had received a counterfeit \$50 bill. "I just received communication from a business that they received a counterfeit \$50 bill," Chamber President Derek Rusher said in the warning. "When comparing the fake \$50 to an authentic \$50, they looked and felt identical because they bleached a \$1 bill before printing on it." Rusher said that when the fake bill was held up to the light it did not have the presidential water mark. "But it was difficult to even catch that." The victimized business didn't know it was a fake bill until their bank caught it as a \$1 bill when going through the currency counter. Rusher advised the chamber membership to pass along the warning about fake \$50 bills.

### **[CA] San Ramon High School Student Shooting: Man Found Guilty**

The Patch [9/21/2019 11:01 AM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a jury convicted a Fremont man Wednesday of second-degree murder for the killing of a San Ramon high school student in 2018, Alameda County prosecutors said Thursday. Christian Kelling, 24, was found guilty of shooting and killing California High School student Damani Chadly, 17, on Dec. 4, 2018, in Fremont after selling marijuana to Chadly, according to prosecutors. Kelling exchanged four ounces of marijuana for \$400 from Chadly and a friend at about 11 p.m. in the 34000 block of Torrington Court, prosecutors said. Chadly allegedly paid for the marijuana with counterfeit bills. Prosecutors said the exchange was arranged on Snapchat. When Kelling realized the bills were counterfeit, he opened fire with a 9 mm gun on the vehicle that Chadly was in, according to prosecutors. Kelling fired five times at the car and hit Chadly, who was in the front passenger seat, prosecutors said. Chadly died at the scene. The driver of the car, Robert Johnston, was also struck by gunfire, according to prosecutors. He was hit on his right hand and left arm and crashed the car into a home when he realized he was shot. Johnston ran from the car because he was afraid Kelling would shoot him again, prosecutors said. Kelling fled to Texas and was with family there when he was arrested by a U.S. Marshals Service team on Dec. 12, 2018. Kelling is currently being held without bail at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

## **Coast Guard**

### **[WA] Coast Guard rescues hiker who was missing for a week**

NBC News [9/21/2021 11:42 AM, Wilson Wong, 37K] reports a hiker who was missing for a week was rescued in Washington state late Sunday, authorities said. Jerren Fisher, 26, was hoisted from a ravine in Olympic National Park by a helicopter crew about 8 p.m., the U.S. Coast Guard said in a statement. He was flown to the Olympic Regional Airport and taken to a hospital where he was stable. Fisher had a

travel plan for a solo hike between Sept. 8 and 12, according to the National Park Service. He "was planning on camping at Enchanted Valley, Marmot Lake, Camp Pleasant, and Sundown Lake before returning to his vehicle via Graves Creek Trailhead," the park service said in a statement. "Park rangers then located Fisher's vehicle at the Graves Creek Trailhead and initiated a hasty search." A family member reported Fisher was missing, prompting authorities to begin their search efforts on Thursday, officials said. "Search and rescue personnel hiked into the wilderness Thursday afternoon from the Graves Creek Trailhead towards Sundown Lake following Fisher's itinerary in reverse as well as from the North Fork Skokomish Trail," the park service said.

## **CISA/Cybersecurity**

### **Treasury department will sanction crypto exchanges that help channel payments to hackers**

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 1:06 PM, Gerrit De Vynck, 11773K] reports that the U.S. government is stepping up its efforts to disrupt the infrastructure hackers use to make money from breaking into and holding hostage computer networks, announcing sanctions against one virtual currency exchange and warning U.S. companies it could be legally risky for them to pay off hackers that hit their systems. The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control announced sanctions Tuesday against Suex, an exchange that lets people buy and sell virtual currencies with regular credit cards, according to its website. The government said as much as 40 percent of known transactions run by Suex were criminal. "We are going to continue to look at the ecosystem and look for actors that are taking similar actions," Anne Neuberger, the White House's deputy national security adviser on cybersecurity, said during a call with reporters. Ransomware attacks, where hackers lock out a company or organization from its computer system and demand a ransom payment to restore access, more than doubled from 2019 to 2020. The government sees them as both a criminal menace, and a national security threat. In February, a hack on the Colonial Pipeline fuel-delivery network led to fuel shortages up and down the East Coast. President Biden has told Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose country is known to host many of the ransomware gangs responsible for the surge, that he would take "Any necessary action" to defend critical infrastructure against cyberattacks. On Monday, Iowa-based New Cooperative, a major buyer and distributor of grain and feed, said it had been hit by a ransomware attack, though it was able to find a workaround to keep most of its business running. The announcement Tuesday is part of the government's attempts to lower the frequency and profitability of ransomware attacks. It has urged companies to increase their cybersecurity practices, such as requiring all employees to use two-factor authentication.

Reported similarly:

[New York Times](#) [9/21/2021 4:50 PM, Alan Rappeport, Andrew E. Kramer and David E. Sanger, 24635K]

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 10:31 AM, Sam Sabin and Victoria Guida, 1707K]

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 10:34 AM, Maggie Miller, 1776K]

### **FBI held back ransomware decryption key from businesses to run operation targeting hackers**

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 2:58 PM, Ellen Nakashima and Rachel Lerman, 11773K] reports that the FBI refrained for almost three weeks from helping to unlock the computers of hundreds of businesses and institutions hobbled by a major ransomware attack this summer, even though the bureau had secretly obtained the digital key needed to do so, according to several current and former U.S. officials. The key was obtained through access to the servers of the Russia-based criminal gang behind the July attack. Deploying it immediately could have helped the victims, including schools and hospitals, avoid what analysts estimate was millions of dollars in recovery costs. But the FBI held on to the key, with the agreement of other agencies, in part because it was planning to carry out an operation to disrupt the hackers, a group known as REvil, and the bureau did not want to tip them off. Also, a government assessment found the harm was not as severe as initially feared. The planned takedown never occurred because in mid-July REvil's platform went offline — without U.S. government intervention — and the hackers disappeared before the FBI had a chance to execute its plan, according to the current and former officials. The previously unreported episode highlights the trade-offs law enforcement officials face between trying to damage cyber criminal networks and promptly helping the victims of ransomware —



malware that encrypts data on computers, rendering them unusable. The White House has made fighting ransomware a priority, and President Biden has urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to rein in ransomware criminals operating out of Russia. "The questions we ask each time are: What would be the value of a key if disclosed? How many victims are there? Who could be helped?" said one individual familiar with the matter, who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter. "And on the flip side, what would be the value of a potential longer-term operation in disrupting an ecosystem? Those are the questions we will continue to have to balance."

### **'Anonymous' hackers claim to hit website hosting firm popular with Proud Boys**

CNN [9/21/2021 10:53 PM, Sean Lyngaas, 4876K] reports the hacking collective Anonymous last week claimed to have stolen and leaked reams of data held by Epik, a website hosting firm popular with far-right organizations like the Proud Boys. The more than 150 gigabytes of data swept up in the breach shine a light on years of online activities from far-right groups, including those who tried to overturn the 2020 presidential election. While researchers are still sifting through the data, Epik has historically provided web hosting services to an array of conspiracy theorists, and for conservative media networks like Parler and Gab. The breach also undercuts Epik's pledge to customers that it can safeguard their anonymity, no matter what dangerous conspiracy theories they spread online. For that reason, experts told CNN the hack could have repercussions for how far-right groups organize and try to protect themselves online. "A breach like this will force some of these actors to find security providers outside of North America, in Europe, to possibly step up their security game," Gabriella Coleman, a professor of anthropology at Harvard University, told CNN. Coleman said the data dump "confirmed a lot of the details of the far-right ecosystem."

### **The Mercenary Threat of U.S. Hackers-for-Hire**

The Washington Post [9/22/2021 4:05 AM, Bobby Ghosh, 11773K] reports that in the summer of 2012, an Iranian computer virus named Shamoon wiped data from tens of thousands of computers at two of the Middle East's most important energy companies, Saudi Aramco and Qatar's Ras Gas. Shamoon was no Stuxnet: Unlike the Israeli digital weapon that destroyed nuclear centrifuges in the Islamic Republic, the virus that attacked the energy companies did little damage to their operations. But the demonstration of their vulnerability panicked policy makers in the Gulf Arab states. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Oman all turned to the U.S. for expertise to protect their vital national resources against cyberattacks. With the blessings of the Obama administration, American defense contractors specializing in cybersecurity were happy to help. To meet the surging demand for their services, these firms recruited cyber-operatives and analysts from U.S. intelligence agencies, offering what one former Federal Bureau of Investigations agent described to me as "buy-yourself-a-Ferrari" salaries. For some, their job description evolved from playing defense against hackers to going on the offense, heading attackers off at the pass. Others were assigned to counterterrorism operations, doing for their new clients what they had previously done for their country, and often using the same tools. Nobody in Washington heard the sound of a can of worms being opened. But it wasn't very long before there were inklings of where the worms had wriggled off to. Within a couple of years, word was filtering back to the U.S. intelligence community that some of their former colleagues were being deployed as cyber-spies, to hack into the phones and computers of political dissidents, rights activists and journalists. These targets included American citizens. The first clear sight of what the worms were up to came from a 2019 investigation by Reuters into the role of former U.S. intelligence operatives in a UAE operation that, among other things, allegedly snooped on government critics. Earlier this summer, the UAE was among several governments accused of using spyware created by the Israeli company NSO Group to hack the smartphones of journalists, activists and business executives worldwide.

### **[IA] Russian hackers target Iowa grain co-op in \$5.9 million ransomware attack**

The Washington Post [9/21/2021 6:16 PM, Jacob Bogage and Laura Reiley, 11773K] reports Russian hackers leveled a ransomware attack on an Iowa farming co-op and demanded \$5.9 million to unlock the computer networks used to keep food supply chains and feeding schedules on track for millions of chickens, hogs and cattle. Fort Dodge-based New Cooperative, a member-owned alliance of farmers that

sells corn and soy products, contained the breach and developed a workaround to continue accepting grain shipments and distributing feed, a person close to the company told The Washington Post, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information. But the cooperative took its computer network offline to isolate the incursion, the person said, and shuttered its soil-mapping software — a master-control system that optimizes irrigation and fertilization — as a precaution. Farmers, meanwhile, have taken to using paper scale tickets to log their grain hauls as they drop them off at the cooperative, said Tim Luginsland, Wells Fargo's food and agribusiness sector manager. The hacking group BlackMatter threatened to publish a terabyte of the cooperative's data, including invoices, research and development documents, and the source code to its soil-mapping technology, if it did not receive the ransom payment in cryptocurrency by Sept. 25, said cybersecurity experts who evaluated the attack. On Sept. 3, the FBI warned that agriculture producers were being targeted by cybercriminals. In June, another Russian cybercrime cell, REvil, carried out a ransomware attack on JBS, the world's largest meat producer. The company, which operates in the United States, Brazil, Canada and Australia, eventually paid an \$11 million ransom. Should the New Cooperative hack be seen as a success, national security experts worry it could lead to more attacks on agriculture producers, especially cooperatives. "Huge amounts of money move with the transfer of agricultural commodities — many, many millions of dollars are transferred back and forth," said Bobby J. Martens, the Iowa Institute of Cooperatives endowed professor of economics at Iowa State University. "The bad guys are going to see those transfers. There's a tremendous amount of money that exchanges hands in this area." The size of the hack — New Cooperative represents only a small portion of Iowa's fall harvest — and the cooperative's workaround limited the market impact of the breach, Luginsland said. But such threats may require significant security upgrades, the cost of which could be passed on to consumers.

### **[China] Justice Department investigating Zoom's China ties over Five9 deal**

The Hill [9/21/2021 6:00 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports the Department of Justice (DOJ) has opened an investigation into Zoom's \$15 billion deal to buy Five9 over of the videoconferencing giant's connections to China. The DOJ requested the Federal Communications Commission defer action on Zoom's application to acquire Five9 until Team Telecom, an interagency committee responsible for ensuring U.S. telecommunications security, completes a review, according to The Wall Street Journal. Five9 is authorized as a carrier connecting domestic and overseas networks, which drew the Team Telecom scrutiny. The Justice Department cited "the foreign relationships and ownership" as a potential national security risk in a letter regarding the partnership with Five9, an American customer service company. As a result, Zoom's \$15 billion deal remains on hold. Zoom's value soared as the U.S. workforce went remote during the pandemic, but its shares have fallen 20 percent in recent months. The company has responded to previous questions about its ties to China by pointing out that it is based in Silicon Valley and that its China-born chief executive, Eric Yuan, is a U.S. citizen, according to the Journal.

## **Terrorism Investigations**

### **Wray warns Taliban takeover in Afghanistan could inspire US-based extremists**

The Hill [9/21/2021 7:01 PM, Olafimihan Oshin, 1776K] reports FBI Director Christopher Wray warned Tuesday that the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan could inspire a new wave of extremism in the U.S. Wray testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that extremist groups have never stop plotting attacks on U.S. soil. He also said that the domestic terrorism caseload has skyrocketed since the spring of 2020, from around 1,000 possible investigations to 2,700. "We are concerned that, with developments in Afghanistan, among other things, that there will be more inspiration to the first bucket," Wray told the committee. "So I think we anticipate, unfortunately, growth in both categories as we look ahead over the next couple of years." This comes as National Counterterrorism Center Director Christine Abizaid also testified to the committee that the terrorism threat to the country is less "acute" than it was two decades ago. Abizaid also said that U.S. officials have been monitoring how terror groups al Qaeda and ISIS could rebuild their forces and conduct an attack on the U.S. "In the wake of our withdrawal, the question is, at what point does that regional threat build to a capability and intent

that is focused externally and particularly focused on the homeland?" Abizaid said. "I would say from an intelligence community perspective, that's one of our highest priorities, is just to monitor and assess the degree to which those groups actually present an external threat." [Editorial note: consult Top News for extended commentary]

Reported similarly:

[Axios](#) [9/21/2021 8:12 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

[Reuters](#) [9/21/2021 2:28 PM, Jan Wolfe, 4947K]

## National Security News

### **Biden, at U.N., calls for unity in addressing the pandemic and climate change**

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 7:20 PM, Anne Gearan, 11773K] reports that President Biden made a case Tuesday that the United States can compete with China economically and ideologically while cooperating to confront global threats like climate change and the coronavirus, as he tried to reassure allies with growing qualms about American leadership. In his first address to the United Nations as president, Biden also defended the messy end to nearly two decades of war in Afghanistan, affirmed U.S. support for the United Nations and an alphabet soup of international partnerships and pledged support for poorer countries often disproportionately affected by climate change. "We've ended 20 years of conflict in Afghanistan and as we close this era of endless war we are opening an era of endless diplomacy," Biden said in a measured address notable mostly for its contrast to the boastful tone and sour reception accorded President Donald Trump. Challenges that require a united response include "Ending this pandemic, addressing the climate crisis, managing shifts in global power dynamics, shaping the role of the world on vital issues like trade, cyber and emerging technologies and facing the threat of terrorism as it stands today," Biden said. Biden was meeting with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison later Tuesday, less than a week after the surprise announcement that Australia would purchase U.S.-made nuclear submarines, a major military challenge to China in its Pacific neighborhood. The arrangement infuriated France, which had contracted to provide less capable ships, with French officials claiming they were blindsided. The fence-mending follows several setbacks for Biden as he tries to rebuild trust among allies after four years of President Donald Trump. European allies have grown increasingly skeptical about Biden's message that "America is back" in light of an Afghanistan withdrawal that left NATO nations feeling sidelined and as he advances a China agenda many find needlessly confrontational. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Reported similarly:

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 3:27 PM, Nahal Toosi and Quint Forgey, 1707K]

[Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 1:09 PM, Brady Dennis, 11773K]

### **Biden to tap intelligence expert Corless for Treasury terrorism post**

[Reuters](#) [9/21/2021 3:55 PM, Andrea Shalal, 5304K] reports U.S. President Joe Biden will nominate Shannon Corless, a career intelligence expert, as assistant secretary of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence at the Treasury Department, the White House said on Tuesday. Corless currently oversees economic security, energy security, export controls, sanctions, supply chain, telecommunications, threat finance, and trade partnerships at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). If confirmed, Corless, a former naval intelligence officer, will be part of a team making decisions about sanctioning the Taliban and other issues impacting the flow of capital into Afghanistan.

### **House sends bill aiding 'Havana Syndrome' victims to Biden's desk**

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 6:51 PM, Andrew Desiderio, 1707K] reports the House on Tuesday unanimously passed a bill to aid Americans believed to be suffering from "Havana Syndrome," as the Biden administration struggles to understand how and why U.S. spies and diplomats are developing mysterious, debilitating brain injuries. The illness, believed to be the result of an invisible directed-energy attack, has

long stumped U.S. intelligence officials, and reports of what the government officially calls “anomalous health incidents” have skyrocketed in recent months. At the same time, the victims — which total around 200, officials say — have faced bureaucratic hurdles as they seek medical care for symptoms that can range from severe headaches to brain damage. After POLITICO first reported earlier this year the alarming increase in suspected incidents both on U.S. soil and abroad, Republican and Democratic lawmakers who serve on the House and Senate intelligence committees drew up legislation to boost medical resources for these individuals. The bill, dubbed the HAVANA Act, authorizes new funding for treatment and gives the CIA director and the secretary of state increased flexibility on how the money is spent. It also requires both to report regularly to Congress on the funding initiatives. Behind closed doors, lawmakers have expressed frustration with the intelligence community for what they perceive to be a failure to sufficiently address the matter in recent years. “There’s no higher priority than ensuring the safety of our people, and the individuals who’ve served our country now suffering from these troubling health incidents deserve answers and our support,” said House Intelligence Chair Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), who led the effort in the lower chamber.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 7:06 PM, Cristina Marcos, 1776K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/21/2021 4:35 PM, Joseph Clark, 381K]

### **[Israel] Spending bill contains \$1 billion for Israel’s rocket defenses**

[Roll Call](#) [9/21/2021 3:32 PM, John M. Donnelly, 119K] reports that the decision by Democratic leaders to remove military funding for Israel from a draft continuing resolution underscored a split in the party amplified by GOP criticism of the move. The \$1 billion for Israel’s Iron Dome rocket-defense shield was in an initial version of the resolution but, after progressives said they’d oppose the measure if it was included, was deleted from a subsequent version that the Rules Committee is readying for a floor debate and vote. House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., an advocate of the aid, said he’d put the funding in a separate bill and bring it to the floor later this week. Democrats were deeply divided over whether to include the \$1 billion in the continuing resolution or not. “The Iron Dome protects innocent civilians in Israel from terrorist attacks and some of my colleagues have now blocked funding it,” tweeted New Jersey Democrat Josh Gottheimer. “We must stand by our historic ally — the only democracy in the Middle East.” House Armed Services Committee member Elissa Slotkin of Michigan criticized her colleagues for “using a system that just saved hundreds, if not thousands, of lives as a political chit.” And one of the House’s staunchest progressives, Wisconsin Democrat Mark Pocan, was notably not among the liberals who pushed to have the \$1 billion for Iron Dome deleted from the bill. Pocan has become an ardent supporter of the system as a means of de-escalating the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Republicans, meanwhile, were unsparing in attacking Democrats over failing to provide this latest installment of long-running Iron Dome funding. The Israeli government had requested the \$1 billion in June, on the heels of Hamas rocket attacks on parts of Israel.

### **[Afghanistan] What happens now to U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan?**

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 7:00 AM, Sarah Kreps and Paul Lushenko, 11773K] reports President Biden promised retribution for the U.S. deaths after the Islamic State in the Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) attacked the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul on Aug. 26, killing 13 U.S. military personnel and dozens of Afghan citizens. On Aug. 29 the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) conducted a drone strike in Kabul that reportedly killed ISIS-K terrorists. Within days, New York Times reported that the strike killed an Afghan citizen who worked for an aid group affiliated with the U.S., as well as members of his family. On Thursday, U.S. CENTCOM commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie cited this investigation, calling the strike a “tragic mistake” that inadvertently killed 10 civilians, including children. Since 9/11, U.S. presidents have adopted drone warfare as a central feature of America’s foreign policy. In 2016, President Barack Obama conceded America was getting complacent with drones and discounting the risks. Some scholars contend that governments have a moral obligation to use drones because they minimize physical risk to military personnel. Advocates also argue that drones minimize civilian casualties, although evidence suggests that counterterrorism strikes have killed thousands of civilians. The force protection dividend of

drones — that they avoid military casualties — leads to a “moral hazard” dynamic. This means individuals take greater risks because they avoid the burden of the costs of these risks. Many analysts anticipate that Americans will be dismayed by these casualties. But research also suggests that Americans are more concerned with the consequences of strikes when Americans are directly affected. What makes drones so appealing to policymakers as a military tool is that they fly under the radar of public opinion, which insulates U.S. officials from criticism. A recent study conducted by our colleagues suggests that American support for the use of force abroad is mediated by the number of U.S. military casualties. These findings echo the results of another recent study. When presented with a hypothetical scenario, a majority of Americans perceived a drone strike against a terrorist that also resulted in a civilian casualty as legitimate.

### **[China] Biden to China: We do not want “a new Cold War”**

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 11:58 AM, Olivier Knox, 11773K] reports that President Biden told world leaders just now that he will confront China’s military and economic ambitions but promised “We are not seeking a new Cold War,” as he urged collective action to smother the pandemic and respond to the worsening climate crisis. “All the major powers of the world have a duty, in my view, to carefully manage their relationships so we do not tip from responsible competition to conflict,” Biden said in his first speech as president to the annual U.N. General Assembly. “The United States will compete, and we’ll compete vigorously, and lead with our values and our strength. We’ll stand up for our allies and our friends and oppose attempts by stronger countries to dominate weaker ones, whether through changes to territory by force, economic coercion, technical exploitation or disinformation,” he said. Biden also defended his withdrawal from Afghanistan as a necessary recalibration of American power and expressed hopes of reviving diplomatic efforts to roll back nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea. Its leader, President Xi Jinping, will be the final speaker to address UNGA on Tuesday, delivering a prerecorded message because he did not make the trip to New York. America’s tense relationship with the Asian superpower dominated the speech and yielded its most notable line: “We are not seeking a new Cold War, or a world divided into rigid blocs.” “The United States is ready to work with any nation that steps up and pursues peaceful resolution to shared challenges, even if we have intense disagreements in other areas, because we’ll all suffer the consequences of our failure if we do not come together to address the urgent threats like covid-19 and climate change or enduring threats like nuclear proliferation,” he said. FBI Director Christopher Wray and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas are testifying before the Senate Homeland Security Committee on 9/11’s impact on homeland security and on threats to the national security. Mayorkas said this morning he was “horrified” by images of horse-mounted Border Patrol agents attempting to grab Haitian migrants and use their animals to push them back toward Mexico and promised a “Swift” investigation, according to John Wagner. “I was horrified by what I saw,” Mayorkas said during an appearance on CNN. “I am going to let the investigation run its course, but the pictures that I observed troubled me profoundly.” Investigations are starting: DHS “Announced a formal inquiry into the episode, which it said Mayorkas directed after seeing the videos. Mayorkas said he has also directed the Office of Professional Responsibility, DHS’s internal oversight office, to send personnel to the area full-time.”

**{End of Report} [RETURN TO TOP](#)**

Message

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 2/1/2022 2:11:32 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** re: Republicans insist on release of report on alleged whippings at the border

(b) (5)

## Customs and Border Protection

### Republicans insist on release of report on alleged whippings at the border

FOX News [1/31/2022 6:56 PM, Michael Lee, 11051K] reports a group of Republican lawmakers penned a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisting the Biden administration release the findings of its investigation into accusations Border Patrol agents on horseback were photographed whipping Haitian migrants. "It has been more than four months since senior members of the Biden Administration, including President Biden and Press Secretary, Jen Psaki participated in a widely spread falsehood and accused United States Border Patrol agents of 'whipping' Haitian migrants attempting to illegally cross into the United States near Del Rio, Texas on September 19, 2021," reads the letter sent to Mayorkas Monday. At issue were September images that showed Border Patrol agents on horseback preventing Haitian migrants from crossing the border, with one picture showing an agent grabbing onto a migrant's shirt. The images became controversial after some media outlets and Democratic lawmakers incorrectly stated that the split reins used to control the agents' horses were "whips" being used on the migrants. "To see people treated like they did, horses barely running over, people being strapped – it's outrageous," President Biden said at the time, making a whipping motion with his hand. "I promise you, those people will pay. There will be an investigation underway now and there will be consequences. There will be consequences. Mayorkas had promised in September that a report on the incident would be available to lawmakers in "a matter of days, not weeks," a self-imposed deadline that has now been missed by over four months.

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Senior Attorney  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Advanced Training Center  
440 Koonce Road  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) cell)

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Message

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 9/20/2021 10:11:39 PM  
**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**CC:** PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** Re: Member level brief Request for Tuesday morning

10-4 Chief, thank you.

Respectfully,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Acting Deputy Director  
Strategic Communications Division  
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters  
Cell: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

On Sep 20, 2021, at 6:06 PM, ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) wrote:

Yes set it up with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 2:45:38 PM  
**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** FW: Member level brief Request for Tuesday morning

Chief,

Good afternoon. OCA/OLA are requesting a bi-partisan member level briefing tomorrow morning on the current Del Rio operational environment and the Horse Patrol reporting from today. Unsure of the schedule on the ground there, are you available for this briefing? Thank you.

Respectfully,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Acting Deputy Director  
Strategic Communications Division  
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters  
C: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

From: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 3:37 PM  
To: BPTasking (b) (7)(E)  
Cc: USBP-HQ-STRATCOM (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (7)(E)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Subject: Member level brief Request for Tuesday morning

Importance: High

BP

OLA called about 20 minutes ago requesting a bi-partisan member level brief for tomorrow morning on Del Rio. It would be both about the current operational environment and there will be questions related to the Horse Patrol Unit (note, Chairman Thompson's statement below). At minimum, DHS Policy will attend as well.

If BP could please provide available time blocks for potential briefers ASAP.

As always, many thanks for the many quick turnarounds we have been requesting.

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

From: Homeland Security Committee (b) (7)(E)  
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 2:14 PM  
Subject: Chairman Thompson Statement on Border Patrol's Mistreatment of Migrants at the Border

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<image002.png>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***Chairman Thompson Statement on Border Patrol's Mistreatment of Migrants at the Border***

**September 20, 2021** (WASHINGTON) – Today, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, released the following statement on [reports](#) of U.S. Border Patrol's treatment of migrants along the border.

**“Video and photos coming out of Del Rio showing U.S. Border Patrol's mistreatment of Haitian migrants along the border are horrific and disturbing. This mistreatment runs counter to our American values and cannot be tolerated. I call on Secretary Mayorkas to take immediate action to hold those responsible**



accountable and ensure that all migrants are treated in accordance with the law and basic decency, as this Administration has promised to do since day one.”

# # #

Media contact: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

<image003.png> <image004.png> <image005.png> <image006.png>

Message

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 9/20/2021 11:27:26 PM  
**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**CC:** PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)**  
**Subject:** RE: Member level brief Request for Tuesday morning

Chief,

OCA provided the below information in preparation for tomorrow's Member level brief with the Committee on Homeland Security. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

- 1) Logistically,
  - a. they are planning for about 45-60 min.
  - b. The Chair is likely to make very brief opening remarks, but only for about a minute or two. I am assuming the Ranking member may also have the same chance, but cannot confirm.
  - c. In addition to Chief Ortiz, the briefers are (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (Policy), and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ICE ERO Executive Associate Director. Briefers will have 5-7 minutes to provide an overview.
  - d. After that, it'll go to Q&A.
- 2) CHS majority is likely to ask questions related to conditions on the ground, deportations, and the event with the Horse Patrol Unit.
  - a. Regarding the Horse patrol unit, the staffer mentioned
    - i. Chairman Thompson was "horrified" when he saw the footage
    - ii. There will likely be a number of questions on this topic from Democratic members, including a general theme of expressing a commitment to "accountability"
    - iii. Other potential questions would be related to USBP policies and training
    - iv. This [story](#) from Vice was mentioned in the Chairman's [press release](#)
      1. Specifically in this article, the line "[This is why your country's shit](#), because you use your women for this," one officer on horseback shouted at a group of Haitian women" was mentioned by staff

Respectfully,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Acting Deputy Director  
Strategic Communications Division  
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters  
C: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 6:06 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)**  
**Subject:** Re: Member level brief Request for Tuesday morning

Yes set it up with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 2:45:38 PM  
**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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Acting Deputy Director  
Strategic Communications Division  
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters  
C: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# # #

Media contact: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)



Message

**From:** MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** 3/1/2022 11:13:58 PM

**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**CC:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** FW: B1 local media interviews last week

**Attachments:** Chief Ortiz media rundown week of Feb. 24, 2022.docx

Hi Chief, I got the media rundown from your interviews last week. Before we do any more interviews it would be helpful to schedule time for media training and prep to go over these like we did ahead of the Fox interview. The answer you gave a radio station on the horse patrol investigation, for example, could be problematic, so we can work on better ways to get your message across on those tough questions. I'm adding (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) so we can coordinate on media prep. As I've said before, I think you have a strong voice and a great presence, my goal is to help you avoid landmines and be successful.

V/r  
Luis.

>>>

- On Horse Patrol: "I will tell you that almost every agent that was involved in that event is back to work and riding horses, and I had a chance Sergio, over the last nine days...I've ridden horses four times with my agents out there in the field to demonstrate to them my support for horse patrol units and what they do each and every day, and they are doing a phenomenal job. And then with respect to the Del Rio event, I think that investigation is going to get wrapped up here relatively quickly. And we're going to find out you know, really, what the truth were was behind that that incident, and I'm confident that almost all those ages will be exonerated. And what we'll find is it was probably, you know, something that was mischaracterized."

Message

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 11/17/2021 3:09:10 PM  
**To:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**CC:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** FW: CIC compliments/complaints- Del Rio Horse incident  
**Attachments:** USBP Compliments Report (OCT).pdf; USBP Complaints Report (OCT) (005).pdf

Chief,

FYSA... the attached reports list dozens of compliments (18 pages) and complaints (3 pages) received by the CBP Information Center throughout the month of October for the USBP. The majority comment on the Horse Patrol. Compliment cases are processed and closed out by the Compliments and Complaints Branch (CCB). Closed cases are then forwarded to the appropriate Sector.

Very Respectfully...

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 9:46 AM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** CIC compliments/complaints- Del Rio Horse incident

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

In the compliments report for USBP for October 2021 – by far the majority was support for the horse incident in Del Rio. At the same time I had staff run a report on complaints for the same time period and focused on “horse” and Del Rio. Both reports are attached for your review, please let me know if you need anything else on this from the CIC or have questions.

Thanks

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Message

**From:** ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** 9/20/2021 3:33:39 PM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

Please address  
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**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 10:26:07 AM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) HUFFMAN, BENJAMINE C  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MILLER, TROY A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) PADILLA, MANUEL JR  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

Thanks. Will need TPs more generally as well on enforcement/use of force posture. Something short is fine for now - we will definitely need more if we start to see real unrest on the ground. Thank you--

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 11:16 AM  
**To:** HUFFMAN, BENJAMINE C (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
MILLER, TROY A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) PADILLA, MANUEL JR  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

We are communicating with the local leadership now. Update shortly.

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(A) Chief  
Law Enforcement Operations Directorate  
USBP Headquarters, Washington, DC  
Cell: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

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**From:** HUFFMAN, BENJAMINE C (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 11:15 AM  
**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MILLER, TROY A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
PADILLA, MANUEL JR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ORTIZ, RAUL L (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** RE: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

Looping in Chief Padilla and Chief Ortiz,  
I pasted what I believe to be the concerning part of the story below. We need find out what really happened and if appropriate, report to the JIC/OPR. Also work with OPA with the response.

**“Reuters journalists saw mounted officers wearing cowboy hats and vests emblazoned with “POLICE U.S. BORDER PATROL” blocking the path of migrants scrambling up the U.S. embankment carrying plastic bags and cardboard boxes.**

**After one of the officers in the vests unfurled a cord resembling a lariat like a whip and steered his horse to block the migrants, one tumbled back into the water. He got up and tried again, but the officer swung the cord again near his face.**

**In another incident, the same officer grabbed the back of the shirt of a migrant trying to run up the bank with bags of food.”**

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**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 10:55 AM  
**To:** MILLER, TROY A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) HUFFMAN, BENJAMINE C  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** Re: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

On it with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) right now, Sir.

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**From:** MILLER, TROY A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 10:54:35 AM  
**To:** HUFFMAN, BENJAMINE C (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

Deputy, FYSA: We need a good response. Troy

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** (b) (6)  
**Date:** September 20, 2021 at 10:44:35 AM EDT  
**To:** "Mayorkas, Alejandro" (b) (6)  
**Cc:** "MILLER, TROY A" (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) MIRANDA, LUIS A (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Subject:** Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

We are running down and will put together a statement. Will need to clarify what reins look like vs a horse whip, and clarify use of force.

**Reuters: "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border (Daina Beth Solomon and Alberto Fajardo)**



CIUDAD ACUÑA, Mexico, Sept 19 (Reuters) - A U.S. law enforcement officer on horseback wielded what appeared to be a lariat, whipping it close to the face of a man wading in the Rio Grande carrying a plastic bag of food.

It was just one desperate moment in a few hours of such scenes along the Rio Grande on Sunday.

Hundreds of Haitian migrants who have been camping under a bridge in the Texas town of Del Rio were trying to bring food and other supplies from Ciudad Acuña in the Mexican state of Coahuila, while U.S. officials have stepped up security at the border and started flying migrants out of the area, some to Haiti.

Migrants said their squalid encampment under a bridge on the U.S. side of the river was short of supplies. U.S. officials over the last few days had let migrants cross back and forth at a shallow point of the river. On Sunday, however, they told migrants they would not be able to return to the U.S. side if they ventured into Mexico.

"We're trapped," said Joncito Jean, 37, who had spent three days sleeping on a sheet on the ground with his wife and children, ages 3 and 4. He said he regretted the decision to come.

"There are no humane conditions... We have to break out to buy water."

More than 12,000 migrants, identified by officials on both sides as mostly Haitian, have been gathering under the bridge in recent days, awaiting immigration processing. Instead, U.S. officials began removing several thousand people from the camp over the weekend, including some who were later seen arriving in Haiti.

Still, several people who spoke to Reuters, most of whom traveled with their children, said they would take their chances to try to stay in the United States.

Mackenley Pearre, 25, left impoverished Haiti in July with his cousin, wife and 2-year-old daughter due to the worsening violence and inability to find work as an electrician. In July, Haiti's president was assassinated, and in August a major earthquake and powerful storm hit the country.

"You have to do something to not die of hunger," he said, eating a tamale given to him by a local resident on the Mexican side, one of several people who said they felt moved to help.

At a news conference in Del Rio Sunday, U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz said resources were available.

"We are providing food, water, portable toilets, towels, emergency medical technicians are available for first aid," Ortiz said.

"Over the next 6 to 7 days our goal is to process the 12,662 migrants that we have underneath that bridge as quickly as we possibly can," Ortiz said. "What we want to make sure is that we deter the migrants from coming into the region so we can manage the folks that are under the bridge at this point."

At the border, migrants waded deeper to try to evade law enforcement. Mostly men, many barefoot and in boxers, attempted trickier crossings through waist-deep water. Some migrants crossed at another point where water reached their necks.

Reuters journalists saw mounted officers wearing cowboy hats and vests emblazoned with "POLICE U.S. BORDER PATROL" blocking the path of migrants scrambling up the U.S. embankment carrying plastic bags and cardboard boxes.

After one of the officers in the vests unfurled a cord resembling a lariat like a whip and steered his horse to block the migrants, one tumbled back into the water. He got up and tried again, but the officer swung the cord again near his face.

In another incident, the same officer grabbed the back of the shirt of a migrant trying to run up the bank with bags of food.

Both people appeared to eventually slip past while the officers tried to hold back migrants who were scattering in all directions. A group of some two dozen people were later seen seated on the U.S. side of the river's edge behind yellow tape near several patrol cars.

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