



# NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Joseph Chaplik (R-3)

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Tuesday, February 13, 2024  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## House Republicans Unite to Protect State of Arizona from President Biden's Historic Open Border Crisis

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – All 31 Republican members of the Arizona House of Representatives are united in strong support of vital new legislation, [HB 2748](#), sponsored by Representative Joseph Chaplik, to combat the uncontrolled tide of illegal immigration into the United States via the Arizona border and to protect Arizonans.

In recent powerful testimony during a special [joint legislative session](#), border sheriffs underscored the severity of the open border crisis. In Cochise County alone, the sheriff's office has investigated 601 border-related crimes involving felony victims. In one case mentioned to legislators, a teenage driver, attempting to evade border law enforcement, reached speeds of 140 miles per hour before crashing while transporting four migrants. Legislators were further alarmed to learn that nearly a quarter of all fentanyl seized in the U.S. in 2022 was confiscated in or within 20 miles of Cochise County.

Despite continuous pleas for action, attempts to compel federal and state Democratic leaders have been met with silence. In August, [Republicans urged](#) Governor Hobbs and Attorney General Mayes to hold President Biden accountable for his failed border policies in court, to no avail. Meanwhile, the crisis continues to escalate:

- Encounters at Southwest border in FY2023 increased over 40 percent since FY2021.
- 169 migrants on the terrorist watch list tried to cross the southern border in the past year.
- 24,000 Chinese nationals were apprehended crossing into the U.S. from Mexico.

Representative Chaplik emphasized the urgency of the situation, stating, **“Under the Biden administration, the consistent refusal to enforce our nation's federal immigration laws has led to an unprecedented surge of illegal immigration across our southern border, constituting a historic invasion. Despite the legislature's repeated calls for action, President Biden and Congress has failed to address this crisis. This dereliction of duty has allowed open-border policies to prevail, undermining the rule of law.”**

Key provisions of HB 2748 include:

- Establishing a class 1 misdemeanor (or a class 6 felony for subsequent offenses) for individuals entering Arizona from a foreign country as aliens, except through legal ports of entry.
- Imposing a class 1 misdemeanor for aliens re-entering the U.S. through Arizona if they were previously deported, excluded, or left while a deportation or exclusion order was pending.

- Elevating the offense to a class 3 felony if the alien was removed due to multiple drug misdemeanors, federal inadmissibility, terrorism involvement, or removal following a nonviolent crime.
- Elevating the offense to a class 2 felony if the alien was removed after committing a felony.
- Providing for an order of return for aliens violating the law, with failure to comply constituting a class 2 felony.
- Granting immunity from civil liability for local and state government officials, employees, and contractors enforcing the law, with indemnification for civil actions under federal law.
- Mandating the Arizona Attorney General to pursue all available remedies to recover federal reimbursements for state costs incurred due to illegal immigration.

Chaplik continued, **“The consequences are dire: an uncontrolled border presents both security and humanitarian crises. The surge in violence, coupled with the rampant smuggling of illegal drugs, weapons, and human beings, poses an imminent threat to our communities, our state, and the safety of innocent Americans. It is imperative that we act swiftly to secure our borders and restore order, safeguarding the integrity of our nation and protecting our citizens. Just as the State of Texas is defending itself, this bill will allow the State of Arizona to defend itself at the border.”**

HB 2748, modeled after [Texas SB 4](#), received approval from the House Military and Public Safety Committee late Monday. Regrettably, Democratic members of the Committee unanimously opposed this much-needed, common-sense legislation. The bill now advances for consideration by the full House.

*Joseph Chaplik is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 3, which includes Scottsdale, Fountain Hills, and the Northeast Valley in Maricopa County. Follow him on X/Twitter at @JosephChaplik.*

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