

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on State Affairs
For HB 20

Compiled on: Thursday, April 13, 2023 2:16 AM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: April 12, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Mike Jackson
self - retired
Lufkin, TX

I support HB 20 in the strongest terms. The future of Texas is at stake!

Caroline Holifield
self, student and licensed veterinary technician
Manor, TX

I am AGAINST this bill. To allow unlicensed civilians to act as law enforcement (even having the authority to arrest people if "trained" and authorized by the governor) is inappropriate. This unit would give far right wing supporters an excuse for racially profiling minorities. Additionally, allowing a civilian without proper education and training to instigate an altercation will result in easily avoidable violence or other physical altercations. our licensed and trained law enforcement officers already struggle with handling these types of situations, why is the government entrusting the lay person? This is similar to how veterinary medicine is run in the state of Texas (and many others) - lay persons (un-licensed) are legally allowed to act (almost to a complete extent) as licensed practitioners. There may be a few "good eggs" that catch on well, but there will be far more people who don't actually know how to do the job correctly and, as in the case of veterinary medicine, deaths can and will result. Licensures and other certifications exist to allow regulation and proper training, as well as appropriate oversight and discipline of occupations. Just like licensed medical professionals train to understand the actions (and consequences) of anesthetic drugs to ensure your pet does not feel any pain during surgery and wakes up healthy afterwards, a licensed law enforcer trains to understand the law, and how to avoid the unnecessary use of deadly force in an escalated situation. Even if you do not care about the safety of those being attained, you should at least care about avoiding endangering the lives of civilians who would be put in such situations as a result of this unit. At the very least, can we at least keep law enforcement under the control of legal law enforcers??

Cynthia Saxiones-Garza
myself
Richardson, TX

Wouldn't it be better to stop all this vigilantism! Texas does not need people without any training in anything creating chaos. This is another bill of pure chaos. Let Law enforcement and Immigration do their work. Vigilantes do not know the immigration laws. They will end up being charged with the crimes they commit, including murder. What is wrong with the Texas Law Makers to actually write bills like this! Stop the Insanity!

Jim Steele
Self
Cedar Park, TX

I heartily support this bill. As a combat veteran I know first-hand what “imminent danger” is. We have had this condition far too long on our porous border. I recently read a statistic that noted the probability of person being murdered within the 48 states and the District of Columbia is 1 out of 179,000. No doubt this probability is much higher for border states and especially for Texas residents along and close to the border. It is the solemn duty of the Legislature, working the Governor, to protect the legal residents of this great State, independent of the federal government. I applaud the author of this bill. So, please move this bill forward without hesitation, as written.

Erika Lenk-Hatfield
Self
Heath, TX

I am FOR this bill.
How many more Texans must be threatened, extorted, and held hostage on their own properties?
How many more Texas communities must see their hospitals and schools overrun by non-citizens?
How many more Americans must die from Fentanyl poisoning?
How many more American dollars must flow to Mexican cartels and their Chinese money launderers?
How many more illegal immigrants must be raped, drowned, murdered and see their children sold into slavery?

Carl Scott, Mr.
Texas citizen
Bullard, TX

It is beyond ridiculous the political games that have been played out over the Texas Border. I support your efforts in resolving this issue.

Thank You

Susan Dantzler
Self
Harper, TX

I am speaking for HB 20. We must protect our border and Texans. This bill needs to favorability pass out of committee.

Gerri Barrick, Mrs
Self Quality improvement consultant
Belton, TX

Please support this bill. Our border crisis is wreaking the state, our safety, our country and the human suffering from the open borders due to trafficking, other criminal behavior and drugs must be stopped

Dale Fessenden
Self
Conroe, TX

Committee Members,
HB 20 is desperately needed YESTERDAY! Please, please, PLEASE don't delay. Pass HB 20 favorably from Committee ASAP.

Kamala Platt, Dr.
self, educator
San Antonio, TX

Having studied, taught and lived in the southern border region for many years, I consider South Texas a second home and am very aware of the threats against the area based on disinformation and racist representations.

I urge you to stop HB 20 in its tracks to protect South Texas from state-sanctioned vigilantes' activities against immigrants and especially all families of the region and passing through.

Dr. Dwayne Collins
President Van Zandt Co. Republican Club
Ben Wheeler, TX

I belong to the Texas Border Volunteers a group of veterans, former law enforcement officers and other citizens that work along the border reporting illegals to the Border Patrol. We have actively been doing this for over 16 years. We have worked with and alongside the Border Patrol, DPS and the National Guard and they respect and appreciate our work.

The border is out of control and if it is not corrected our state and nation will suffer the consequences. Washington does nothing since Trump has left to stem the tide of illegals crossing our border.

Rep. Matt Schaefer's bill more than any other will put muscle to law enforcement. I urge this bill's passage for the sake of our state and the nation.

Rosemary Teel
Retired
College Station, TX

Stop illegals. CLOSE SHUT THE TEXAS BORDER!

William Stewart
Self Retired
Flint, TX

This bill needs to be passed! I strongly urge you to get it passed!

William Stewart

William Stewart
Self Retired
Flint, TX

HB 20 needs to pass! I strongly urge you to make it happen!

William Stewart

Julie Anschutz, Mrs.
self/homemaker
Allen, TX

Please VOTE YES on HB 20 as it is a wonderful bill to keep illegals and many threats out of our country.

Rebekah Adams
Self
MCKINNEY, TX

Texas MUST protect her border. The Biden admin has failed America in it's fundamental responsibility to protect our citizens and our sovereignty. Consequently, Texas MUST do it. Drugs and crime are killing us. Illegal immigration must stop.

Glenn Wilde
Willacy Conservative Group
Lyford, TX

I live on the Southern border and I've seen and have friends who have been adversely affected by the illegal entry of foreigners. This must stop! Glenn

John Carter
Carter Farms
Kyle, TX

I support HB 20.

Vanessa Alvarado, Ms
Self, General Manager
San Antonio, TX

The federal government's dereliction of duty in securing the southern border has caused increase in crime, vandalism, homelessness, drug distribution and human trafficking. If the current administration will not protect our border, it is up to the state to defend its sovereignty from the current invasion.

Rachael Duke
self
San Antonio, TX

The state does not have the expertise, resources, or authority to fairly address complex matters of asylum claims without risk of discrimination and disregard for federal and international law.

Instead of duplicating and reimagining federal border enforcement efforts on their own, we urge our Texas legislators to create policy that supports and collaborates with the federal government on matters at the border.

David Sims
self
Huntsville, TX

This bill and what it can accomplish for Texans and other states is of utmost importance and must go to the floor for vote and passed.

The illegal aliens and criminal cartels are a dire threat to the safety and security of Texans. This bill being passed is a sound part of the solution to our border crisis.

jJEROME YOUNG, DR
SELF
THE WOODLANDS, TX

I AM TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL.

The Biden administration has abdicated its duty to protect our borders. NOW is the time to do it ourselves. The cartels are controlling the borders, our country is being flooded by deadly fentanyl. FDA approval of over-the-counter Nalaxone is NOT the answer. The scourge of human trafficking is a true humanitarian crisis. If we are to survive as a sovereign nation, we must CONTROL OUR BORDER.

HB20:

Sets up constitutional, independent action by Texas to take effective action by invoking Article I, Sec 3, Clause 3 reservation of self-defense power to the states when we are “in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay” or “unless actually invaded.”

Creates a Border Protection Unit that will report directly report to the governor.

Authorizes the Border Protection Unit to “deter and repel persons attempting to enter the State of Texas illegally at locations outside a port of entry,” to “return aliens to Mexico who have been observed actually crossing the Mexican border illegally, and were apprehended or detained in the immediate vicinity of the border,” and to “use force to repel, arrest, and detain known transnational cartel operatives in the border region.”

Creates beefed up border trespass offense in the Penal Code – makes it a third degree felony and subject to \$10K civil penalty each time a “person knowingly enters property of another without effective consent when knowingly entering the state of Texas from a neighboring jurisdiction.”

Creates another constitutional way for Texas to act independently by invoking constitutionally clear state authority to protect health.

Creates a standing Legislative Border Safety Oversight Committee

Please strongly support HB20.

Barb Stauffer
Self, retired
Garland, TX

I, as a Texas citizen, implore you to support HB20 which finally is taking actual action, not just rhetoric, to protect the citizens of Texas, your constituents. I have 3 points of concern: 1) Our state & national sovereignty are being destroyed 2) I feel I have less rights than the illegal invading my country & 3) I fear for safety of a son who works not far from Eagle Pass where he sees the illegals running through people's private property & who approached him for rides. For the first time, we have legislation to protect Texas citizens in HB20 = REPEL & DENY entry to illegal border crossers! We must end catch & release! PLEASE VOTE FOR HB20 by Matt Schaefer. Thank You!

Gene Robinson, Mr.

Texans whose ancestors built this state
Dallas, TX

Pass this bill and close the border now! Arrest anyone who has aided and abetted this treasonous invasion of a hostile foreign army, including and especially Abbott!!!

Reed Bilz, Ms
Self
Fort Worth, TX

I urge you to OPPOSE HB 20 because it is a dangerous and far-reaching bill that would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are “migrants”. These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. Please vote AGAINST this bill.

Christy Mesec, Mrs
Self
Dallas, TX

I am in favor of bill HB 20. We are all tired of the shenanigans at our open borders allowing millions of illegal immigrants to flow into our country ! Thank you

Joshua Bihun
self
San Antonio, TX

HB 20 represents a dramatic overreach of authority on the basis of provable falsehoods. The vast majority of fentanyl is smuggled into the United States by United States citizens, and current law enforcement actions at the state and federal level are proving effective in catching fentanyl before it can enter use. Opioid overprescription has been a crisis in the United States for many years now, and the Texas state legislature has never been particularly concerned with it before. The true intent of this bill is clear and unsubtle. HB 20 would militarize Texas law enforcement with no civil oversight or possible redress of grievances committed upon citizens, in gross violation of Article VI, Clause 2 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States. Police authority must answer to civil authority in a free society, or else this legislative session will introduce the very tyranny that our country and the state of Texas were both founded in opposition to. If allowed to pass, no right, Constitutional or otherwise - to assemble, to speak, to be secure in homes and property, to be tried fairly in court - will be safe in the face of a militarized state police with unqualified immunity and answerable only to the Governor. Were it a Democratic governor and congress proposing this bill, the Republicans in this legislature would be doing everything in their power to prevent it from passing, and they would be right to; with the current government, in the current climate of seeking to erase so much of the diversity of Texas from existence, it is certainly no less unconscionable.

Kathryn Temkow
Self
Whitehouse, TX

We must have operational control of our borders.

Robert Temkow
Self
Whitehouse, TX

Time to get tough on border security. We must have operational control of our border.

Samantha Smith
Retired
Van, TX

Please SUPPORT HB 20

Nancy Stevens, Mrs.
Self - teacher and school counselor
Fredericksburg, TX

I strongly support HB 20 to repel illegal Tx southern board crossers and to support organizing the border protection unit.

Hank Stevens, Mr.
Self - contractor
Fredericksburg, TX

I am very much in favor and support HB 20 as we want to reject illegal South Tx border crossers. We want safety and protection of that border by forming the Tx Border Protection Unit to watch over that area.

Itai Almor
Self
Austin, TX

My name is Itai Almor, and I live in Austin. I ask you to vote no on HB 20. I grew up in South Carolina in a largely hispanic area, and from childhood I saw what the overpolicing and criminalization of their community does to the people. Families are ripped apart, my school was damaged by the pain and fear our friends suffered. I saw the same thing play out when I attended university at Yale. ICE terrorized New Haven's people. The city did not benefit, did not get "safer", only more sad, more scared and hurt. The reasons folks come to the U.S. do not change when we treat them with worse and worse punishments upon their arrival, only our humanity is degraded as we degrade theirs. A real solution to the problems of unregulated immigration and crime would be investment in communities and social services. I work now as a social worker in a middle school in East Austin. I work directly with children whose lives are impacted by legislation like this more so than anyone, children with incarcerated parents, who struggle to focus because they're hungry and stressed - grandma's cleaning job this weekend fell through, or dad ran out of gas and we were stuck till 4AM... children who suffer because powerful grown ups enforce an order that keeps their families struggling for their every last ounce of dignity. They are the ones who'll be most wounded by a bill like this, and we as a society are only as good as we can take care of our children.

Anna Weeks
Self
Austin, TX

I am against this bill. It would encourage vigilantes groups, and foster more racism. It goes against the principles of our country, and needlessly criminalizes those searching for asylum.

Julianna Alff
Self/family
Houston, TX

Help us keep our country safe. We have a right to know who is living in our country and to document every person. Please stop this influx of unknowns and dangerous people poisoning our citizens w drugs and trafficking innocent victims!

James Ransdell
Self
Seguin, TX

Please we need to stop catch and release. Vote for HB 20
Thank you
James Ransdell

MaryAnne Aiken, Mrs.
Self
Flint, TX

This bill is very important for the people of our state.
We are being invaded. This Bill will help stop the invasion.
HB20 NEEDS TO MOVE FORWARD TO PROTECT TEXAS!

Richie Grant
Arklatex Assessment
Texarkana, TX

I strongly support this bill and in its strongest language.

Susan Scruggs, Precinct chair
Montgomery county Republican Party
The woodlands, TX

Please VOTE FOR this bill which will allow Texas to protect its borders from our illegal invasion. Our State is being destroyed because of all of the criminals entering illegally, health issues of illegals spreading to our people & safety of fellow Texans & their families because of these dangerous illegals. VOTE FOR HB20!

Rhesa Cook
NONE
Austin, TX

Yes, by all means PASS THIS BILL. YES, YES, YES. PASS IT!!

Shelly Smyth
Self
Tyler, TX

We definitely need a secure border, and if the Federal Government will not do their job, Texas needs to do it for them.

William Decker, Mr
Self -farmer
Canton, TX

Please pass this bill. Our border needs to be secured.

Michael Hurewitz
self -- Psychotherapist
Austin, TX

Please vote NO on HB 20. If HB20 is passed, the Border Protection Unit will be tasked with an unprecedented mandate to incarcerate en masse Black and Brown migrants, armed with the bill's new, exceptionally harsh felony trespass offense, potentially enforced by individuals with little or no law enforcement experience. More likely than not HB20 will bring collateral harm to the millions who call the Texas border home; the result of treating a humanitarian crisis like a war-time invasion. Texans across the border - from El Paso to Brownsville - continue to ask for investment in humanitarian infrastructure that would humanely allow migrants to move through bridges to be welcomed by State and federal officials with dignity. HB 20 is NOT what Texas needs.

Annie Crowder
Fredericksburg Tea Party
Fredericksburg, TX

I support HB20 and am asking that you support it too. Even in our quiet rural community we experience illegal visitors on our properties. Please support HB 20 to ensure the safety and welfare of the southern border region of this state of TX. Thank you.

Chris Milton

Self

Coppell, TX

I support this bill.

Lacy Laurent, Mrs.

Self

Nacogdoches, TX

I support this bill.

Sheryl Miller

Self - IT professional

College Station, TX

I support HB 20.

Cindy Fountain, Ms

TXUUJM, Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry

Cleburne, TX

I oppose this bill. It creates a border patrol force where civilians could be deputized with no law enforcement experience and granted full immunity (beyond qualified immunity). This bill would very likely lead to racial profiling and encroachment of due process rights and could expand to U.S. citizens and longtime. This bill is likely unconstitutional, and just like HB 7, our millions of dollars of our taxes will go to the courts instead of our communities and schools where they belong. Thank you.

William Aiken

Self

Flint, TX

Please pass this bill

Allison Craig

self, college professor

Fort Worth, TX

HB 20 is a dangerous and far-reaching bill that would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are "migrants". These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. HB20 will only bring more racially motivated violence in already unprotected border communities, and let's be clear it will not bring safety or protection to those seeking asylum on our border. This bill is a recipe for chaos and for violence against citizens and non-citizens alike.

Cindy Schorr, Mrs.

"Self" retired registered nurse

Tyler, TX

Please fix our Texas border crisis! I used to live in the lower Rio Grande Valley. It was such a peaceful and beautiful place, but not anymore!! The situation there now is a threat to our nation's security!!!

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." -Sir Edmond Burke

Ronald Smith
Self
Huntsville, TX

I support HB20. Texas must secure it's border!

Mark Anthony Vasquez
The Statewide Leadership Council
Weslaco, TX

My name is Mark Anthony Vasquez and I am a resident of the Rio Grande Valley sending testimony in opposition to HB 20. I reside in a home that is less than 6 miles from the U.S./Mexico border. I am in opposition because I am in opposition to what I see here. It is impossible to deny the absurdity. That such a bill should become law would demand that we as a people embrace a state-sponsored culture of exemption - where law enforcement in our border communities is subject to one order, while other communities fall under another.

That there are not culturally motivated factors which gave life to this motive is a very serious question which concerns us on the border. HB 20 is a dangerous border enforcement bill, designed to further criminalize and militarize border communities. This bill will only serve to embolden vigilantes, armed with a limited restraint and an equally limited experience in law enforcement to act in accordance with whatever fragile sense of place they may possess or whatever displaced racial motives may have driven them to act to begin with.

If the state of Texas is as concerned as are the residents of our border communities then we encourage our governing body to consider the root causes of the humanitarian crisis on the border. In so doing, it becomes glaringly apparent that to remedy a crisis with an over-saturation of law enforcement and militarization is an ill-conceived remedy to a symptom of a larger problem that is our broken immigration system. To invest time and effort as the state has to confront a mere symptom is futile - for the symptoms will continue to arise if one is to ignore the major ailment at hand.

Since its inception, neither the Texas Dept of Public Safety nor Gov. Abbott have provided proof that Operation Lone Star has helped the ongoing humanitarian crisis. HB 20 is just another attempt to exclude the border communities from the rule of law and indoctrinate an order of state-sponsored vigilantes to further the campaign to harass migrants and asylum seekers and to carry further the lie that such actions are necessary against our border communities.

I am in opposition to HB 20 because it is inhumane to treat entire regions of the state in such a way. We cannot as Texans allow for such bills to become law.

I live on the border and we are communities in need of serious distribution of funds to our infrastructure, to fields of education, health and human services, housing and urban development. We as a people can no longer afford to let such opportunities for growth pass us by - for our border communities are growing in population every day. To deny this growth and to instead prompt the notion that needed over everything else is a disregard for our traditional understanding of law and order for the purpose of validating a racist and prejudiced policy on our border communities is foolish and dangerous. We encourage the members of this committee to consider the harm and to vote against HB 20.

Marty Farrell
Self
Robinson, TX

These are ILLEGALS ! PERIOD ! They must assimilate in order for there to be equal justice under the Law. We The People have a US Constitution & State Constitution. All of these UNNECESSARY wasteful SAUL ALINSKY TACTICS must stop or there will be no United States of America ! You THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS must understand the CONSEQUENCES !

STOP THE INVASION NOW !

Jackie Nations
My Self
Van, TX

I strongly urge you to vote for HB 20. It is time for us to get up and support defending our Texas border.

DIANA CHAMBLESS

self

BULLARD, TX

STRONGLY SUPPORT...we need tough laws to protect our state and especially those Texans who own property near the border. Some have had ranches for generations and now they are unable to safely venture out onto their own property thanks to illegal aliens swarming the border. This bill is a strong bill that will help secure our border.

Tim Kane

retired

Tyler, TX

I strongly support HB 20 to give the Governor additional powers to protect the citizens of Texas from the flood of illegals invading our state. The Federal government has complete abrogated its constitutional duty to "protect each state from invasion." We must protect ourselves. Don't water this bill down--pass it as written.

Stacey Caster

Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry

Fort Worth, TX

HB 20 is a dangerous and far-reaching bill that would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are "migrants". These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. HB20 will only bring more racially motivated violence in already unprotected border communities, and let's be clear it will not bring safety or protection to those seeking asylum on our border. On top of the heightened policing, HB20 will also increase criminal penalties for asylees and refugees trying to enter through the Texas-Mexico border, this bill will only add to the chaos that Operation Lone Star has created.

Kenneth Kasper

Self

New Braunfels, TX

I support this bill. Please pass this out of committee

Ann Fitzgerald

Self

Scroggins, TX

Those who TRULY care about stopping illegals, and taking control from cartels, will support this bill. If you want to protect Texas citizens, support this bill.

Tom Nobis

The Republican Party of Texas and Self

Houston, TX

I am Tom Nobis and I am For HB20 by Representative Schaefer relating to measures to ensure the safety and welfare of the southern border region of this state. It is known that the border is not secure and if a country does not have a secure border it does not have a border at all. When the Federal Government will not act for the safety of its citizens, the State must act.

Jeff Mcclarty

Self

Fredericksburg, TX

We need protection

Stop human trafficking

Stop the drugs

Do your job using common sense folks

b bellino
self
fredericksburg, TX

Please protect our border to protect Texans and Americans, and especially to protect (by de-incentivizing their use) the children used, abused and trafficked into our country. The border is no longer "down there," but has clearly crept up into central Texas and beyond. This only continues because this state allows it, at the cost of the citizens, but perhaps for the gain of certain parties in power who feed off of chaos. Thank you for your consideration.

Karen Reeves
Self
Edom, TX

Those who care about protecting Texans, our borders, our Sovereignty and our way of life will support this bill. As far as I'm concerned, anyone who will not support protecting us from the incoming UN sent army of obstructors, are terrorists. I thank God for people with common sense and Texas sized guts to fight for Texas being protected. We need more people like State Rep. Matt Schaefer... so my support is with you!

Kim Sturman
Myself, GOP Precinct 1050 Chairman
Red Oak, TX

Thank you for this Bill. Yes! I support this Bill and all others including but not limited to HB 1491 Harrison, HB 82 Soiller and HB 1403, HB 7. Please please all you can to secure our border, end illegal entry, human and drug trafficking to protect our State and its citizens. Thank you.

Darcie Wilbanks
Self and Conservative Values Project
Houston, TX

I support this bill. Our citizens have been rendered powerless by a federal government that refuses to protect its citizens, yet requires those same citizens to follow the law and pay their taxes - on time, no less, or they will be penalized to the fullest degree possible. We deserve to be respected and protected so any and every measure Texas can implement to effect that protection is a necessity.

Linda Hanratty
self
Fort Worth, TX

I oppose HB 20, a dangerous and far-reaching bill, which would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are "migrants". These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. HB20 will only bring more racially motivated violence in already unprotected border communities, and let's be clear it will not bring safety or protection to those seeking asylum on our border. On top of the heightened policing, HB20 will also increase criminal penalties for asylum seekers and refugees trying to enter through the Texas-Mexico border, this bill will only add to the chaos that Operation Lone Star has created. These state-sanctioned vigilantes will likely carry assault weapons, thus endangering not only migrants, but also Texas residents, especially those only perceived as migrants.

David Breunig
Self Retired Teacher
Bullard, TX

HB20 is a huge step in the right direction. I wholeheartedly support it!

gordon schultz

self

Austin, TX

i am opposed to texas legislature spending ever more money on criminalizing immigrants and supporting policies with undeniably racist consequences. vigilante patrols made up of people without any training in ethics, anti-racism, or mandatory work of self-reflection and acknowledgement of their own biases will WITHOUT A DOUBT result in misuse and abuse of the powers and protections granted to them by HB 20, resulting in more unjust murders, detentions, and harassment of non-white people in our great state.

Sharonne Barton

business-retired

Chandler, TX, TX

Please continue this fight for justice.

Lee Jacobsen, Mr

Self

Tye, TX

I support this bill

Joyce walker

self

Ben Wheeler, TX

I strongly support passing of this bill. I am seeing the destruction of Texas and our nation by allowing people to walk across the border.

Maritza Wong, Mrs.

Self - Stay at home mom

Manvel, TX

I am vehemently opposed to this bill. Please do not insult Texans' intelligence by thinking you have anyone convinced that this bill is anything other than unconstitutional, state-sponsored, racist vigilantism. If you are confused as to what this bill will look like in action, you need only look to the example of Mike and Mark Sheppard, who shot two migrants, killing one and wounding the other, in October 2022 outside of El Paso. They hunted them like animals. But I know those in favor of this bill are not confused - you know exactly what kind of state you want to create, and facts and real solutions don't matter to you. Beyond the human lives this bill puts in danger, it represents a colossal waste of money and national embarrassment for our state. Please put this bill where it belongs - in the garbage - and actually make intelligent decisions about the border. Thank you.

Hal Cosentino

self, full-time student

Austin, TX

I am against HB 20. I do not believe we should create a Texas border patrol force where civilians could be deputized with NO law enforcement experience and granted full immunity (beyond qualified immunity). I also do NOT believe we should enhance trespassing charges and aim to challenge the US federal government's sole control over migration policy.

Rebecca Rex

Self VP RAM, LLC

Houston, TX

Support

Mark Moldrawski
Fredericksburg Tea Party
Fredericksburg, TX

I support HB 20.
No borders. No sovereign nation.

Malena Pennycook
self
Austin, TX

HB20: I am AGAINST HB 20. We should NOT create a Texas border patrol force where civilians could be deputized with no law enforcement experience and granted full immunity (beyond qualified immunity). Please do NOT enhance trespassing charges that aim to challenge the US federal government's sole control over migration policy.

Edward Kandler
self retired
Jarrell, TX

I support HB 20 because it secures the southern border of this state (Texas).

Ammon Blair
Self / Border Patrol Agent
Mission, TX

I am a Border Patrol Agent in the RGV Sector, my comments are my own and don't represent the Agency or DHS.

I am also a 22 year Army Veteran and my last assignment was an Infantry Officer in the Texas Army National Guard on the current Operation Lone Star mission.

I oppose this bill as it is currently written.

This bill continues to see Foreign Terrorist organizations (The Mexican cartels), their threat networks, and their nexus to adversarial state (China, Iran, Venezuela, etc.) and non-state (Hezbollah, MS-13, Islamic Violent Extremist Organizations, Street gangs, etc) actors as a law enforcement issue—as opposed to matters of national security.

For the bill to be truly effective, it must institutionalize what we have learned from our recent experiences countering FTOs, unconventional warfare and hybrid threats worldwide.

There are significant challenges in the ability of traditional Law Enforcement structures to synchronize objectives in a counter terrorism / Counter Hybrid threat environment. As it stands now, there is already a lack of unity of effort/command between Operation Lone Star (DPS & TMD), Operation Stone Garden entities and DHS (Customs & Border Patrol, ICE, HIS) at the Strategic, operational and tactical levels.

This suggests the need for a joint force mission command structure specifically designed to plan and execute Border Security campaigns and Counter terrorism/Hybrid threat operations on the border and throughout Texas.

The Border Protection Unit needs to consist of two Divisions, the Border division and the Interior Division. The Border Protection Unit will divide the State into 24 sectors, following the 24 regional councils of government jurisdictions.

Each sector needs to contain a Joint Operations Intelligence Center (JOIC)

The Border Security Operations Center (BSOC) in Austin serves as the central hub for information collected at the JOICs.

The Unit's Border Division primary responsibility:

a) Wide Area Security: Security across the 1,254 Texas/Mexico international border with all the coordinating lines of effort (State, County, Local) in order to protect forces, populations, infrastructure, and activities necessary to shape security environments, obtain 100 percent situational awareness and understanding of the entire border, consolidate gains, and set conditions for achieving Texas Homeland Security plans and goals.

The Unit's Interior Division primary responsibility:

a) Target (Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate – F3EAD) Investigate, disrupt, dismantle and defeat the Hybrid Threats emanating from the border (The Mexican cartels and their adversarial networks) that threaten and/or seek to exploit the laws of Texas.

The officers will need more powers and duties than State Peace Officers, otherwise the officers will not be able counter and defeat the national security threats at our border and in every region of Texas due to legal restrictions

Zaena Zamora

Self

McAllen, TX

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 20, which proposes the construction of more detention centers for migrants. We need to take a sober look at the reality on the border and listen to the residents who are leading humanitarian efforts.

Texans across the border, from El Paso to Brownsville, have been asking for investment in humanitarian infrastructure that would allow migrants to move through bridges with dignity and be welcomed by state and federal officials. Yet, the proposed HB 20 would only exacerbate the problem by building more cages for every problem the state faces.

It is time for the state and federal governments to meaningfully support Texans and Texas Non-Governmental entities that keep migrants fed, clothed, and in shelter spaces with dignity off ranch-land, and help them move to their family, friends, and support systems further north.

We need to invest in a humane approach that honors the dignity of migrants and provides them with the support they need to integrate into society. We can achieve this by supporting the efforts of local NGOs and calling on our State Capitol to prioritize investment in humanitarian infrastructure that respects the basic human rights of migrants.

I urge you to join me in opposing HB 20 and instead advocate for a humane and dignified approach towards migrants that upholds the values of compassion and justice that we all hold dear.

Sincerely,

Zaena Zamora

Ruth Pledger

Self retired attorney

Mason, TX

I am FOR HB 20. Protect our border from the current invasion . This is your calling for the safety health and welfare of our Texas citizens

Annette Bennett, Ms

Retired

Fredericksburg, TX

Support HB20. We must repel and deny entry of illegal aliens. They must not be allowed to enter. We must end catch and release.

James Allen, Rev.

North Texas Conference of the united Methodist Church & Texas Impact

Carrolton, TX

By historical precedent, we know the dangers of a border unit including deputized citizens who are immune from prosecution. This is a doorway to abuse of power and race-based violence. Treating immigrants even more like criminals refuses to embrace their sacred dignity. This also refuses to acknowledge that almost all drugs are being smuggled through legal crossings. There are much more humane gracious ways to address undocumented crossings and protect Texans.

Bonnie Seelig

Self Retired

Spicewood, TX

Support HB20

Rep. Schaefer's bill follows the US Constitution. It repels illegal crossers and builds a Border Protection Unit. It can end catch and release.

A country without protected borders is not a country. Citizens, not only in Texas, deserve protection.

R. Geismar, Mrs.

Self

Lantana, TX

I encourage you to do all you can to protect our borders and our state !!!! It is clear that our US President and US government are not concerned!! I will be praying for success in shutting this invasion down!!!

Hector Valle

Texas Border Coalition

Austin, TX

Oppose

Theresa Zelasko

Self

Austin, TX

I urge the Committee Members to vote AGAINST HB 20 because it is a dangerous and far reaching bill that would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are "migrants". These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. HB20 will only bring more racially motivated violence in already unprotected border communities, and let's be clear it will not bring safety or protection to those seeking asylum on our border. On top of the heightened policing, HB20 will also increase criminal penalties for asylees and refugees trying to enter through the Texas-Mexico border, this bill will only add to the chaos that Operation Lone Star has created.

Thank you.

Susan Stewart

self

Pflugerville, TX

Since the founding of Texas and most likely before that, there have been small vigilante groups who call for frontier justice or hanged people because they had black skin. A child of God was hanged for having the an unapproved skin color. HB 7 is just another effort in the long list of crimes against children of God and the decades long push to arm citizens to go after people they don't approve or like.

I would hope that our own sense of justice has evolved in the last 100+ years. A hallmark of America is our system of laws. The majority party in the Tx House is a law and order party, or claim to be. To call for the marshalling of a vigilante force is in direct conflict with a Texan's sense of right and wrong, crime and punishment, and who we are as a civilized society.

Vote against this bill. Defeat it in committee and shame on all of the legislators who think this is a bill Texans would be proud of. You claim to be Christians, yet your actions speak otherwise.

Mimi Lawrence

self, physicist

Austin, TX

HB20 invites untrained vigilantes to racially profile and terrorize both visitors and Texas residents. More than a stupid idea, this bill is a recipe for violence. It empowers individuals with no experience to roam the streets of Texas and arrest, detain, and persecute anyone they perceive as a "migrant." That person could be me. Don't turn Texas into a poor imitation of communist East Germany, please! AND, don't spend my tax dollars on this abomination. Don't spend my tax dollars on the law suits which will inevitably follow its enactment. As you all know, most drugs come into the U.S. not carried by desperate, hungry migrants but hidden in the vehicles and baggage of U.S. citizens as they lawfully enter this country at designated ports of entry. And inspecting my suitcase at the Laredo border bridge is the responsibility of U.S. Customs. It is not the privilege of some random wanna-be wild west Texas cowboy!

Do the morally right and financially smart thing - kill this bill in committee. Thanks, Mimi Lawrence

Cathy Elmore

self, Church, TMO

Houston, TX

I oppose HB20 would create a state border police unit with the power to deputize volunteer citizens dedicated to arresting and expelling migrants from Texas at the discretion of the governor. I oppose this bill on a number of levels. We have spent billions of dollars on "border related crime" beginning with 2005, with little or no hard evidence to prove that our tax dollars have gotten us anything. Our governor does not need an expansion of his already overly broad powers, which will enable him to pre-empt local law enforcement efforts and basically form his own band of volunteer vigilantes to do his bidding. This is more about politicians playing on people's fears of the other and of crime. Please oppose this bill and do not vote it out of committee. Thank you.

Orsolya Ficsor
self; Nonprofit Development
San Antonio, TX

I oppose HB 20 as it is both legally flawed and morally reprehensible.

The proposed Border Protection Unit is unconstitutional because the state government does not have the authority to set and enforce foreign policy, particularly when it comes to the enforcement of federal immigration law according to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

The proposed authority of the Border Protection Unit Chief is especially concerning in that the position would have sweeping appointment, hiring, and firing authority with little oversight outside the commission mentioned later in the bill. Furthermore, giving officers the power to arrest in any Texas county raises concerns of racial profiling and over-policing and can lead to suppression of reporting of crime as community members come to fear local law enforcement as a result of over-policing and strict enforcement of immigration laws. I believe it is a violation of human dignity to allow civilians with little or no understanding of federal immigration laws and little to no training in working with asylum seekers to police Texas communities with limited oversight. Giving the Border Protection Unit the power to “within the State of Texas...arrest, detain, and deter” immigrants in “any county” of the State who are suspected of illegally entering Texas would enable extremist individuals and groups to abuse and harass anyone based on personal prejudices.

The minimum law enforcement training and licensure requirements would not be sufficient for a unit like this to be entrusted with highly sensitive work, and this bill proposes almost no qualifications and certainly less than minimum law enforcement standards. Immunity for officers against criminal and civil liability would exempt an entire class of law enforcement from any consequences and enable the members of this unit to abuse Texans. The existing border operations have violated the rights of numerous people, as reflected in numerous formal complaints and lawsuits. This immunity will mean that our civil and constitutional rights will be denied without remedy.

Finally, the construction of the border wall would be an extremely expensive project that would only waste taxpayer money that could instead be allocated to more pressing matters such as investing in community infrastructure like public schools, mental health, access to healthcare, affordable housing, etc. that would address the root causes of crime long term. As an immigrant who grew up in immigrant communities, I have seen firsthand the value and countless contributions that immigrant communities bring to enrich society, and we should push for policies that make it easier and safer for people seeking a better life to thrive and prosper in America rather than live in fear and disarray that HB 20 would amplify.

Rhonda Darley
Self / retired
Edgewood, TX

Please, protect the the citizens of our great state. If nothing is done to stop the illegal aliens from coming in our health care will be bankrupt. Our schools will packed and unteachable. No jobs for our citizens. Lawlessness, more drugs do I have to go on?

Connie Curry, Founder
W Tx Conservative Leadership
Lubbock, TX

I am IN SUPPORT of HB20. Texans are depending on THIS legislative session to be the line in the sand, on the border issue. We need the strongest bill possible to be heard, voted in favor of and put into action, for the protection of the Texas border and the rights of Texans not to bear the financial burden, that we currently endure. I ask you to support HB 20!

Jennifer Mobbs

Self

Tyler, TX

Dear State Affairs Committee Members: I am urging you to support HB20/Schaefer. Texans and Texas are in IMMINENT Danger. Our Borders are NOT secure. The cartels are running drugs, human trafficking women and children. Land Owners property has become overrun-We are no longer safe. The Federal Government will not help us-we need to help ourselves. HB20 will create a full time Border Protection Unit, not a temporary National Guard situation. We need this now, not in the future. It is up to this Committee to pass this Bill through. Texans are counting on you. Please Support HB20. Thank You.

Don Mobbs

Self

Tyler, TX

I am asking the State Affairs Committee Members to SUPPORT HB20 by Schaefer. This Bill will save Texas. Our Borders are NOT Secure, the illegal immigration is at ALL TIME HIGH LEVELS. Texans are no longer safe especially at the Boarder where property has been destroyed, live stock lost and even worse women and children trafficked in the most horrible way. The Cartel are running the show and bringing illegal drugs into our State and Country that kill thousands each month. This has to stop. The Federal Government will not do anything, it is up to Texans to safe guard our State. In this HB20 is the Boarder Protection Unit, a permanent protection for Texas. The National Guard has done all they can do and that is a temporary fix that is just not working. We need a PERMANENT Solution and HB20 is that solution. I am asking the Committee to Support HB20 and move this Bill forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Mandy Kirkland

Self, Estate Sales

Tennessee Colony, TX

I am in support of HB 20 to secure our border and keep Texans safe. Illegal immigration is out of control and Texas MUST step up and take charge where the federal government has failed. I urge you to support this bill and vote it out of committee. Thank you for your time.

Kathryn Hall

N/A

San Marcos, TX

Against.

Sarah Medford

self/retired attorney

Jarrell, TX

I support HB 20. The formation of a Border Protection Unit is a reasonable response to the dereliction of duty by the federal government at our southern border. The Legislative Oversight Committee outlined in the bill (Lt. Gov. and Speaker as co-chairs, plus 4 Senators and 4 Reps) could also be used as a template for consideration of appropriate responses to other issues where Texas sovereignty and security are at stake under the federal system. This is a very important bill this session.

Tracy Bloom

Self

College Station, TX

Agree and praying to pass

Judy Dodson Crowder, Tax payer

Self

Gilmer, TX

I support the right of Texas to secure its boarder.

Rachael Shannon

self, artist

Austin, TX

I am strongly against HB 20 and any other establishment of inhumane and unjust policies that seek to criminalize immigrants based on their desire to seek asylum, and outsized responses to ideas of trespassing. I am against the formation of a Border Patrol Unit roaming our state with unchecked power to harass and profile people in our communities. There is absolutely no need or use for such tyrannical and sloppy governing based on stoking fear and with the impact of terrorizing communities based on the racist impulses of a few people embued with too much power.

Estefani Rios

Self, College Student

Leander, TX

I am submitting this public comment against House Bill 20. The proposal of the Bill would create a Border Protection Unit that would employ "law-abiding" citizens "without a felony conviction" to take part in enforcement. By granting the BPU and its vigilantes enforcement powers in any given county in Texas and immunity from civil and criminal laws, the bill paves the way for broad militarized immigration enforcement across all of Texas, not just along the border. Allowing the state to remove people without an appropriate medical review and cruelly mandate a \$10,000 fine and a 3rd-degree felony for all who enter the State through private property encourages abuse of authority to terrorize migrants and will affect more than incoming migrants. This section and the first section of the bill weaponize the state's law enforcement and public health powers against some of the most vulnerable people in our society who seek refuge from violence, terror, and poverty- with almost no real oversight or consideration for their human rights. Instead, Texas should listen to the residents of border communities who are actively raising funds and creating a humanitarian response for a dignified border. Those residents know that constructing a state-funded border wall, which this bill proposes, will never deter migrants. Border residents and Texas Non-Governmental entities are doing the real public safety work by keeping migrants fed, clothed, in shelter, and out of harm's way. Follow in their footsteps and think about the real implications this bill will have on Texans and migrants alike. Locking people in cages is not the solution.

Amanda Logan

self

Austin, TX

I support this bill and all bills to strengthen our border protection and increase criminal penalty for illegal immigrants entering the country and attempting to evade Texas laws. Texas needs to protect our citizens and our state sovereignty.

Barry Thistlethwaite

Self

Dallas, TX

It is far past time for Texas to stand up and defend the Texas border. Please pass this expansion of our ability to protect our state and citizens from the massive amount of criminal activity the current national administration is promoting across our southern border.

Denni Arjona, Co-founder
South Texans for Reproductive Justice
McAllen, TX

My name is Denni Arjona, my pronouns are they/them, I am a lifelong resident of the Rio Grande Valley and I have traveled 5 hours from the border to express my opposition to HB20 today on behalf of my organization, South Texans for Reproductive Justice.

HB20 is a racist policy that robs vulnerable people of their humanity and invites further racially motivated violence to border communities. Through my work with STRJ, past experiences as a public school case manager in rural communities and as a citizen with brown skin, I can tell you that further militarization sparks fear among us.

Our communities are littered with DPS troopers, border patrol agents and surveillance technology. This constant presence near schools, neighborhoods and basically anywhere makes people afraid to leave their homes, go to work, take their children to school or even seek medical care.

HB20 also sets a dangerous precedent for abuse of power by granting immunity from civil liability to those deputized to arrest anyone they suspect of being a migrant. If the fear exists with agents of the state, I have no doubt this will skyrocket with extremists who intend to rush to police the border.

Our work with STRJ also extends beyond South Texas. In December of 2022, STRJ partnered with Solidarity Engineering, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice and Yellowhammer Fund to provide children's gloves, hygienic items and toys to 400 children and hand warmers to 700 people at tent encampments in Reynosa, Mexico.

It wasn't until then that I fully understood the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis our border policies have cruelly exacerbated. Though we served 700 people at Camp Rio and Camp Senda De Vida II, I went home with a heavy heart knowing families were bracing themselves for the incoming freeze at the time with no shelter at all.

I had to remind myself that there is only so much a volunteer run organization can provide, but what blew me away was the realization that it is in fact numerous small grassroots organizations and community members rising to bring clean water, medical care and basic needs, while our government continues to enact policies that couldn't be further from humane.

Camp Rio is one of the largest camps in Reynosa and it only exists because one kind man opened his property up to people who had no other place to go - families who are still vulnerable to common kidnappings and cartel violence.

You have the power to make a difference. Doubling down on policies to deny people their right to seek asylum, turn neighbors against one another and increasing trespass penalties to felony charges, is a cruel measure to take against people who are desperate to seek safety. I urge you to vote NO on HB20 and work with our communities to establish meaningful solutions. Thank you.

Kelley Rumps
self retired
The Woodlands, TX

I support HB 20.

wilma Joy Putnam
self
Georgetown,, TX

I support HB 20 by Schaefer and urge you to do the same. The situation at our border has NEVER BEEN THIS BAD in our country's history.. We must end the "catch and release" policy of the current Administration.

Hannah Bellamah
Never again action
Austin, TX

I am here to ask you to vote no on HB7 and HB20. If passed these bills enable racial profiling within the police force. Additionally, migrants at the border are normal people who deserve the support of our communities. We are not currently in need of stricter border policies when adding better infrastructure to support migrants is much more effective. These bills only serve to bolster a system in which it is acceptable to separate children from their parents and imprison innocent people. It is for these reasons that I ask you to vote no on HB7 and HB20.

Nora Mata, Coordinator
Border Workers United
San Benito, TX

Our immigrants deserve to be treated with respect and by passing this law will make them feel more scare to do complaints and the government is accountability for there action against them I'm against this bill

Amanda Afifi
Self - school psychologist
Austin, TX

I oppose HB 20.

Kathy Ponce
Self
Maypearl, TX

I support this bill. Something has got to be done about our Southern Border. We are losing our state and our nation.

Toni Fabry
Self
Tyler, TX

I am writing to say that our Texas Birder is porous & Texas needs to take an active roll in protecting our State from illegal entries. Please vote in support of HB- 20 Authored by Representative Matt Schaffer

Leah Baldasare
Self
Austin, TX

I am commenting to express my position AGAINST HB 20. We do NOT need a border patrol unit to spend more time and take billions dollars from the state to criminalize and lock people up for trying to migrate into the United States for a better life. This bill, if actualized, could take billions of state dollars towards putting people in jail who could be supporting their families as they adjust to life in the US or could be working and contributing to our communities. Meanwhile, as a public school teacher, I am shocked that Texas is in the bottom half of states in terms of state fiscal effort towards education. We can't even afford curricula in our district or teachers for our special education students, or evaluators to help us identify children in need of special education services (which we are already in trouble with the federal government because not giving special education students an equal education is against federal law). We need to get our priorities straight in Texas and invest in our people, not worry about rounding up those who want to become Texans and live a dignified life in our beautiful state.

Eric Metraux
Self
Austin, TX

I am against this bill. A border patrol unit should not have immunities from any laws.

dianna biscan

self

Plano, TX

I strongly support HB 20. The ongoing crime and destruction to our border cities and criminal behavior is at an all time high. This is unacceptable to the American Citizens.....this nonsense needs to stop

Kassandra Gonzalez, Ms.

Texas Civil Rights Project

Austin, TX

Over the last few years, I have been working at the Texas Civil Rights Project to protect the rights of asylum seekers. I have worked with countless legal service providers and humanitarian organizations that have witnessed how programs like CBP One and Operation Lone Star have harmed asylum seekers and effectively denied them their right to seek refuge. I have also conducted intakes with asylum seekers that were detained or awaiting their chance to cross from dangerous parts of Mexico. These people are vulnerable, and they are also a value add to our communities. They are mothers and fathers trying to keep their children safe—often forced to make difficult, impossible choices. Asylum seekers arrive in the U.S. to legally access our immigration system, and so, our State should aim to welcome them with dignity, not further traumatize them with border militarization and bills like HB 20.

HB 20 would create a dangerous vigilante presence in Texas for asylum seekers.

HB 20 proposes establishing a Border Protection Unit, composed of deputized vigilante forces that would endanger asylum seekers and increase the risk of violence against them. HB 20 yet again creates a task force to target asylum seekers who are, mainly, vulnerable people of color. The creation of agencies to target people of color in Texas is nothing novel.

As OLS has been implemented over the last two years, TCRP has witnessed how militia groups and citizen vigilantes have operated—intimidating unarmed asylum seekers and making immigration decisions without any training or oversight. HB 20 specifically insulates these vigilantes from any sort of civil or criminal liability, essentially giving them broad, unchecked power and free reign.

Militia groups like Patriots for America patrol with firearms and spread false narratives of how “really bad people” are coming across. In fact, the concerning collaboration of militia groups and citizen vigilantes with local sheriffs along the border led TCRP to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice. One thing is clear: there is a propensity for violence and escalation when armed vigilantes, many of whom buy into anti-immigrant sentiment, are patrolling and apprehending people, sometimes unaccompanied children.

A deputized vigilante force is not who is needed for vulnerable, traumatized asylum seekers.

HB 20 codifies Title 42 and perpetuates anti-immigrant, racist sentiment.

In addition, TCRP has concerns about the harrowing impact of HB 20’s codification of Title 42. Texas seeks to rely on the guise of health concerns to perpetuate anti-immigrant sentiment and the xenophobic falsehood that migrants carry disease. On the contrary, evidence suggests immigrants are not the main threat to public health or COVID-19. Rather, Americans played a dangerous role in the spread of COVID-19 across the U.S.

Zachary Shell

Self (customer service worker)

Austin, TX

To the Committee -

My name is Zachary Shell and I've lived in Texas my entire life. I stand in staunch opposition to HB 20, which I believe is a massive and deadly expansion of state power that would not make Texas any safer but would put immigrants and Texan border communities at risk of facing police violence and racially motivated legal and physical harm with no way to seek repercussions.

I feel the increase in penalties for trespassing and border crossing that HB 20 represents would do nothing to deter migrants from entering the border - if people are fleeing from persecution, poverty, or other threats to their lives, they will often have no choice but to risk being prosecuted for illegal entry. The harsher punishments will only serve to ensure that our prisons are more overcrowded and will greatly increase the incidence of human rights abuses relating to detainment, deportation, and use of physical force and restraint against immigrants. Any policy this sweeping and hardline is designed to harm the common people, not prevent drugs from crossing the border, I cannot support the endangerment of people's safety and their individual liberties, regardless of their citizenship status.

The border protection unit created by HB 20 is also of significant concern to me: cultivating an army to station along the border would only create more violence and unrest, and given the alarming immunity from civil or criminal liability given to border officers under this act, it is clear this act intends to stoke said unrest and at least condone, if not outright encourage, the usage of serious violence against migrants. It also opens the door for civilians and private entities to act with legal impunity as border patrol agents, which would massively increase racial discrimination in the justice system and allow hate groups to target anyone they suspected - or said they suspected - of being illegal with violence authorized by the state. Various civil rights organizations such as the Human Rights Watch have decried the cruelty inherent in HB 20, and I do not want my state to be imposing policies with this much humanitarian opposition towards them. The Texas Civil Rights Project has referred to this bill as the "most dangerous" border measure they have ever seen. As a citizen of this country, I think approving a bill such as this one in the face of such widespread concern would be reckless and negligent and I unequivocally cannot support it.

HB 20 prioritizes responding to a complex and difficult situation with intimidation, violent force, and judicial punishments stretched far beyond their reasonable limits. I humbly ask the committee and all representatives on it to please prevent this bill and the inhumane, racially biased abuses of power and force it would enable from passing into Texas law.

Thank you,
Zachary Shell

Sharon Edwards

SELF

AUSTIN, TX

Please vote yes for this bill. It would help to repel and move illegal persons from our state under a declaration of invasion or imminent danger, and make trespassing on private property from Mexico a felony. Our Legislature must do something to stop the current invasion and endangerment of our citizen's lives.

Kathryn Kizer

Self

Austin, TX

We don't need vigilantes patrolling the border. My husband works in border security. I know what's going on down there. They're using drones and AI and all sorts of technology to find bundles of drugs. We already have plenty of people patrolling the border.

Marco Mancillas

RAICES

San Antonio, TX

HB20 has become a concern for our organization, clientele and supporters. RAICES is committed to protecting the rights of all people, including those living and traveling through the state of Texas. HB 20 is a frightening piece of legislation we've seen in Texas yet. HB20 would create a Border Protection Unit. The bill allows recruit civilians including vigilante groups, who would have unchecked power of racial profiling arrest and detain people they suspect of being in the U.S. without legal status with no due process and complete immunity. Also, HB20 would immunize those commissioned or deputized by the Border Protection Unit from civil or criminal liability. We need to protect our borders from our state, community and people. This is not the right way about going about it. We know that cruelty is the point with inhumane measures. And this is yet another gross violation of Federal and International law, codifying racial violence into state law in the name of deterrence by threatening families, Texans, and our collective values.

Don Kubica

Self retired

Lubbock, TX

Vote for this bill!

Adriana Quiroga, Policy Strategist

RAICES

Austin, TX

I represent RAICES, an immigration legal services and social services organization that serves migrants in Texas. HB20 is the opposite of a solution. If implemented HB20's Border Protection Unit would have unchecked power to racially profile, arrest and detain migrants. A particularly concerning aspect is that protective measures for children are not explicitly outlined in this bill. According to the Flores settlement and federal law children cannot be jailed with adults in adult detention centers. This means that this bill could cause another family separation crisis. We know, as a legal service provider, that what we need at the border is a humanitarian response where migrants have access to legal representation to help them navigate this incredibly complicated immigration system. We also need to focus on reducing the barriers to seeking asylum and due process for migrants coming to the US seeking safety so that these cases can be processed quickly and humanely. This bill is an overreach of state power and will lead to the tormenting and targeting of border communities.

Wayne Jankowski

Citizens of Texas

Waxahachie, TX

It's time to build a wall and beef up our security. Our borders patrol agents are overworked and understaffed. Millions of illegal immigrants are breaking the law every day crossing into our border illegally. They rushed the border. Meanwhile, cartel members are sneaking across the bad characters, we do not even know who these people are, where they came from or their backgrounds. Why are there thousands of Chinese nationalist young boys and men coming into this country from China? The last I checked China is a communist country and you can't just travel and leave the country without government approval. Where are they getting the funds to travel to South America to make their way up through our southern border and into America? Why are they coming to America? I am sure it is not in our country's best interest

We need to focus on taking care of our own people protecting our country. That is the job of the federal government to protect American citizens and our country. You have all failed America and you need to do something about this. Quit selling out to China and selling our own land to foreign countries what is wrong with you people? Do the right thing and secure our borders .

Rebecca Teiwes

Self Educator

Edinburg, TX

I am commenting on HB 20 to say that I 100% stand opposed to this Bill. I live in Edinburg at the southern border region of TX and the people who need protection from ongoing criminal activity are the people who are the migrants and asylum seekers trying to cross the border legally but who are not allowed to thanks to Bills like HB 20. Please do not waste my taxpayer dollars putting innocent people in prison and making a mockery of the justice system. Please treat people with dignity and respect. Creating a criminal offense and civil penalty for actions that are taken by desperate and needy people goes contrary to our values as a country. I live in an area that is full of folks whose parents and grandparents crossed the southern border in search of a better life and it is diabolical and evil to turn around and punish people for trying to survive in the same way that our own ancestors did. Shame on TX for even considering this Bill.

Jacqueline Portillo

Self; fundraising manager

Austin, TX

As a citizen that grew up in a border town, HB20 is an unnecessary attack on already vulnerable populations. Not only is it clearly anti-immigrant but it's also racist putting Brown people and residents along the border at risk. The narrative that immigrants and asylum seekers are a threat and a danger is a false narrative created to spread hate and allow racism to flourish. Rather than addressing real issues facing your residents across the entire state, you have focused on a population of hateful Texans that share your beliefs. Texans need access to housing, healthcare, education, living wages - HB20 and HB7 are smoke and mirrors to distract people from the real unanswered problems in our state. I am staunchly opposed to this bill and any legislation that mirrors the language and purpose of this bill. It is extreme and expensive and you continue to hide behind the narrative that you created and push false information to share in your racist attacks. Treat Texans as an educated population and share facts with us. And the fact is this is racist and nothing else. You'd gain far more respect if you called it what it is: hate. I'm not saying I'd actually respect you but at least you would be openly admitting to who you are and what you and your legislation represents. Thank you.

Catherine Viens, Mrs.

Self

College Station, TX

I SUPPORT HB 20. Better late than never.

Teress Weirich

Self

Fredericksburg, TX

Support. Article 1, 10

Invocation: the languages tap dances around Article IV of the Constitution. Please be more intentional. The legislature should you declare imminent danger and immediately authorize the Governor to invoke Article 1, Section 10, Clause 3 of the Constitution. Article 4: public Health Emergency. De emphasize Covid 19. It should be noted that there are numerous infectious diseases from illegal immigrants including TB, leprosy, polio, smallpox etc. recent task force meetings with the DHS and several state agencies have been focused on an ERP for an anticipated Ebola outbreak. Other health issues are the \$20 billion a year for overdose deaths in Texas (ref Texas Hospital Association). Please refrain from tying any action to potentially unconstitutional Federal mandates such as vaccine or mask mandates. Neither citizens or immigrants should be subjected to an unconstitutional violation of their health choices Re vaccines.

Catgy Edminster

Self

Maypearl, TX

Please pass this!!!

Stacy Mayfield
Self Retired
Midlothian, TX
I support HB20

dianna biskan
self
Plano, TX
I strongly support HB 20

Please promptly pass this bill out of committee and send it to Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote.

Ray Mathis
Self - Retired
Bullard, TX

Under the U.S. Constitution, each State has the right to defend itself, provide for the safety of its citizens from threats. HB20 is the best step yet in securing our borders from foreign invaders.

G Brent Edminster
Self
Maypearl, TX

Please pass this Bill and protect the American Citizens without the continual financial burden we taxpayers have to continue to fund.

William Fitch
Retired
Kerrville, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote!

Anthony Ford
Self Retired morning Drive Anchor
Arlington, TX

I urge all representing Texans, to support HB20! Texas and our nation is in peril! Please, please, support HB 20, our farms and ranches are being over run! We are being overwhelmed! Hospitals, Schools, services! HELP!

Joline Tate
Self
Garland, TX

I strongly urge you to pass the important immigration bill out of committee, then promote getting it on Calendars and passed on the floor of the House. Texans have had enough of the federal government allowing the illegal invasion of our State with all the drug and human trafficking and overall lawlessness. Take a strong stand for the People of Texas.

Marian Knowlton, Mrs
Self
Poteet, TX

I support this bill and urge you to pass it into the calendars committee asap. Thank you!

Mika Ryan
Self and Husband
Southlake, TX

My husband and I are registered voters and we strongly support HB 20!

Laura Ryan
Self
Tyler, TX

Declare an invasion and protect the people by passing HB20 by Schaefer. Thank you Rep. Schaefer for caring about Texas and Texans

Terry Putnam
Self
Georgetown, TX

I fully support this bill and urge it's passage by the committee and full House.

Tress Ames
Self accountant
Flint, TX

Stop the invasion. Dont swim or boat out to them in the water to pull them onto our soil. Keep them on the other side of the line. Hold the line.

MaryAnne Aiken
Self
Flint, TX

HB20 is so Very important. Please vote for this bill. We need to save Texas from this invasion!!

Allan Cain
Self
Carthage, TX

Texas is desperately needing legislation to protect her citizens, property and health.

Richard Ryan
Self
Tyler, TX

Please declare an invasion of Texas (United States) and classify cartels as terrorist organizations.

Thank you and good luck.

David Kemp
self
Plano, TX

Please promptly pass this bill out of committee and send it to Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote
I strongly support HB 20
Thank You

Johanna Bratton
Self retired
Corpus Christi, TX
I support HB 20

Janet Baber
Self
Whitehouse, TX

Texas needs to secure our southern border and HB 20 will get the job done right. Severability clauses repeatedly defined in the bill are strong and extremely important to withstand judiciary interference. When this bill becomes law, it will stand the test of Constitutionality and be effective in what Texas needs - a secure border. Now is the time for HB20.

Arthur Cameron, Mr.
Self/Retired
Tyler, TX

I support HB 20 and urge you to approve the bill to protect the people of Texas.

Melinda Penniman
Self, Precinct Chair
Georgetown, TX

We are not a nation unless we have boarders, language and culture. Please help protect our boarder. Support HB20.

William Hussey
Retired
Sherman, TX
FOR HB20

Nancy Eddy, Mrs
Citizen
Katy, TX

Please act now to protect our border and pass HB20 that it may move on to the calendar committee. The solution is in your hands!

Hailee Harris
Myself
Austin, TX

As a Texas citizen, I urge you to support this bill and protect Texas!

William Metteauer
Self - Marketing Director
Tyler, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote!

Heather Harris

Self

Pearland, TX

I support this bill and believe it will greatly aid in the protection of our border, allowing us to hold our Governor more accountable in his responsibility to do so. This bill's language grants the Border Protection Unit clearer responsibility and authority, finally clearly defining authority to repel entry between legal ports of entry to the US. . Jurisdiction is clearly put forth in HB20.

Dale Huls

Self Retired

De Kalb, TX

I support HB 20 (and any subsequent bill substitution by Rep Schaefer).

I have recently spent 3 months in the Border Patrol Rio Grande Central Processing Center (aka Ursula) in McAllen, TX as a Federal Volunteer. It is apparent that the Federal Government has re-established "Ellis Island" type facilities to facilitate the current "wave" migration occurring in the United States. Texas needs to have the legislative tools needed to mitigate and reject this open border policy that has been unilaterally imposed by the current Democratic Administration in violation of US immigration law. I support passage of HB 20.

Lynn Morris

Self

Austin, TX

Support this bill We can't afford open borders

Barbara Harless

self

Murphy, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote.
Thank you.

Alice Kimes, mrs

My self

Spring, TX

pass this bill and protect the citizens of Texas as well as our nation

Kenneth Jones

Self; Small Business Owner

Flint, TX

As a life-long Texan – and millennial small-business owner – Mr. Schaefer's HB 20 has my full-throated support. Particularly; the conciseness, enforcement, and transparency in this instrument [HB 20] gives me great hope. It seems like I've been hearing folks in government talk about this since 2005 [border issues and immigration] here in my beloved Texas. I've "grown up" with this issue. Every member of the Texas House must support HB 20 by Matt Schaefer. God bless Texas, and God bless America. —
4/12/2023

JoAnn McCracken

Myself/ retired

Houston, TX

I strongly support this bill. Please pass it out of committee. Send it on to calendars. Thank you.

Sheryl Hazelwood

Self

Tyler, TX

I'm strongly in FAVOR of this bill and would appreciate your help in moving this bill out of committee so our representatives may vote on it. As a second generation Texan, I support closing the border to those who may be bringing diseases or drugs or slaves across our border! ACT NOW!!!

Curt Locklear

St. Anthony de Padua

The Woodlands, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote! Our state people deserve to be saved from the ravages of drug pushers and sex traffic workers. Please.

Denise Linn

Self

Keller, TX

For God's sake, stop the invasion at the southern border before we lose our country!! We are under an attack to destroy us by destroying our safety, identity, social systems, voting integrity (how many illegals will be voting in future elections?), and worst of all, our values. Americans love their country, family, and God—all of these values are at perilous risk because of the southern invasion. Please act and vote for this bill!

Mark Russell

Self

Houston, TX

I am writing to register my support for HB 20. I support HB 20 because it will strengthen Texas border security protocols.

Thank you.

Ava Romberg

Self

Austin, TX

I do not think this bill should be passed. It is unnecessarily harsh.

Naomi Narvaiz, SREC SD25

Republican Party of Texas

New Braunfels, TX

Please pass this bill out of committee. Texans have been victims of the lawlessness that is a result of a failure to enforce federal laws by the federal government. Texas has a long history of being a great State and should continue to be the example to the rest of the Country. Vote AYE and protect Texans.

Rebekah Herrera, Mrs

Self

Henderson, TX

We need border security in Texas NOW! Please support this bill!

Linda Rath, Dr.

Self. Retired.

Tyler, TX

I fully support Representative Schaefer's bill: HB 20 re: TX Border Security. This is a much-needed bill to protect Texans from the flood of illegals, drug cartels, human traffickers that have invaded our state and our nation. Please get this passed out of committee and on to the calendars committee for a floor vote as soon as possible. God bless you for the work you are doing for Texans and Texas.

Q Carbonero

self, event coordinator

Plano, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote!

Ann Fitzgerald

Self

Scroggins, TX

Please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote!

Charles Seale

Self Wrightcitywsc Manager

Troup, TX

II support this bill!

Stephen Bailey

SRBailey Farm

EDGEWOOD, TX

If the federal government fails to do its duty and protect our border with Mexico, then the US Constitution allows Texas to act on its own to stop the invasion. We have no control, no review of the people entering this state from Mexico. Nearly all of them will become dependents on the state welfare system. Some of them will undermine the values of this country or worse. Our financial and physical welfare depends on our ability to control our border from foreign invasions.

Deborah Calvin

Self

Plano, TX

I support HB 20. We MUST better secure our border.

Sherry Eller

Self

Temple, TX

I support HB 20 and ask the committee to please pass this favorably out of committee to the full house.

Jan Love

Self Realtor

Tyler, TX

We need this bill to pass!

Jessica Rains

Self

Austin, TX

Vote NO on HB20. This unnecessary and aggressive vigilantism has no place in Texas.

Joe Moench

Myself

Mount Enterprise, TX

I Thank the Good Lord for you having Finally getting totally serious about our border: and the second amendment say “ A well regulated militia being NECESSARY to the security of a free state.... Spread the word of Tactical Civics TM .. a full spectrum, legal, lawful, peaceful solution by the Boss “We The People “ Thank you very much

Deborah Bailey

Self

Bronte, TX

I'm asking you to support HB 20. We are in need of a strong border and this bill will put the state on the right path.

Christine Allen

Self

Austin, TX

Hi my name is Christine Allen and I live in Austin. I strongly oppose HB20 because this bill will further harm border communities and asylum seekers. We as Texans cannot allow vigilantes to be deputized under this bill and to roam our streets causing more chaos and violence towards communities of color. We as Texans deserve that our representatives invest in real solutions like [power grid/ healthcare/ school safety] instead of wasting our taxpayer money in prosecuting and jailing migrants.

Dale Fessenden

self, retired

Conroe, TX

Dear State Affairs Committee Members,

Texans desperately need you to pass HB 20 from committee favorably. This bill needs to be one of the first to reach Gov Abbott's desk for his signature, which is assured.

It is URGENT that we do everything possible to stop the invasion! The fentanyl, the drain on our resources, the criminal elements coming across the border, the drain on our economy -- ALL MUST BE STOPPED!

The safety of every Texan is imperiled with every delay in HB 20's passage.

Thomas Korkmas

Self

Belton, TX

This well thought out bill is overdue for Texas and we need it passed and over to Calendar Committee for a vote!

Richard Tedder

self

Lindale, TX

Stop illegal immigration.

Patsy Boatright
Self/retired
Maryneal, TX

I support HB 20. Please vote yes and get it to the calendars committee stat

Jim Elmore, Member
St. Thomas Social Justice Committee
Houston, TX

I oppose HB20 would create a state border police unit with the power to deputize volunteer citizens dedicated to arresting and expelling migrants from Texas at the discretion of the governor. I oppose this bill on a number of levels. We have spent billions of dollars on "border related crime" beginning with 2005, with little or no hard evidence to prove that our tax dollars have gotten us anything. Our governor does not need an expansion of his already overly broad powers, which will enable him to pre-empt local law enforcement efforts and basically form his own band of volunteer vigilantes to do his bidding. This is more about politicians playing on people's fears of the other and of crime. Please oppose this bill and do not vote it out of committee. Thank you.

Rena and David French
Self(retired teacher and investment broker)
Bullard, TX

We are 100% behind HB 20 and securing our border. We are watching which legislators supports it and which don't. It's time ... way past time...for this bill.

Debra Carter
Bastrop County Conservatives
Cedar Creek, TX

Please help protect the citizens of this State! Our children depend on you to make our border secure. Thank you for all you do in our precious State Capitol.

Rachel Maguire, Tax Payer, Born Texan
My Family
Brenham, TX

OUT OF COMM. AND SEND TO CALENDARS!!!
WHY DO WE PLAY THIS GAME???

Sandi Lucas
Self
Refugio, TX

Please pass this bill. I STRONGLY support. Texas must act to repel this invasion. Article 1 section 10 clause three grants authority to states to protect its citizens when the federal government fails to act.

Texas must lead. There is no one else. The cavalry is not coming.

Deana Johnston
self
Dallas, TX

Please pass HB 20! Whatever we can do to protect our borders must be done ASAP.

Oswald Nira
Self-Educator
San Antonio, TX

I have been an educator and member of formation teams for over 40 years in South and Central Texas. Currently I am a member of a San Antonio faith community, Mission Concepción. My education and formation experiences with migrant and 1st generation young adults and families compel me to oppose HB 7 and HB 20. I strongly urge you to oppose these bills and not advance them out of the House State Affairs committee.

Migrant and 1st generation individuals and families tell harrowing tales of danger, loss and violence from border experiences. HB 20 will only accelerate these experiences and further harm our communities and asylum seekers. HB 20 will empower vigilantes to roam border community streets—and likely any street in Texas cities and towns—causing more chaos and violence towards vulnerable migrants. Moreover, HB 7 will increase the problems of Operation Lone Star, where immigrants and US citizens are stripped of their due process rights through high bond amounts, longer wait times for defense appointments, and inhumane jail conditions.

Rather than spend monies to fund HB 20 and HB 7, Texans would be better served to develop the Texas state-wide power grid, school safety structures and stronger mental health care services. As a faith formation educator, measures that strengthen relationships between communities, rather than empower confrontation, vigilantism and violence, are more consistent with the pioneering spirit of Texas (“Friends”). Rather than deputize Texas citizens to harass and persecute migrants, empower social services and faith communities to hear the voices of migrants and begin the process of integrating them into our society for our mutual benefit, as so many migrants have experienced throughout the history of Texas. Insist that members of the US Congress develop an immigration policy that respects the dignity of all individuals and families—both migrants and Texas residents—and humanely and productively mutually benefits all members.

Angela Kelley Petersen-Kelley, Ms.
Self Retired.
Palestine, TX

Good evening, to you House State Affairs Comm. Your decision regarding HB 20 impacts all Texans , not only your own House district constituents. Please vote favorably on HB 20. It has the strong severability clause so it will withstand judiciary interference. HB 20 clearly defines who are the law enforcement who will uphold the law , so there will be no question of jurisdiction . It’s transparency and cost/ benefit reporting are strong, so it will be in no way assisted “catch and release”. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and support of HB 20.

Debra Carter
Bastrop County Conservatives
Cedar Creek, TX

Yes secure our State of Texas

Sarah Cruz

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

San Antonio, TX

My name is Sarah Cruz, and I am here on behalf of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. Thank you to the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony. The National Network (NNIRR) is a center for human rights education and advocacy, working to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of status.

I am here on behalf of the Network to oppose HB 20. This bill would massively expand the border militarization and immigration enforcement complex currently carried out by both the federal and state governments, compound the injustices that Black, Brown, immigrant, and border communities have experienced historically, and are a complete disregard for the real human needs and human rights of communities across Texas.

The proposal of a new Border Protection unit would deputize regular citizens and direct law enforcement officers to participate in state immigration enforcement operations; and would disproportionately harm Black and Brown Texans who are often the target of racial bias embedded in immigration enforcement. After the launch of Operation Lone Star, DPS data from 2021 showed that “racial profiling is a significant contributor to disparities in DPS traffic stops between Latino and white drivers.”

HB 20 also proposes that Unit officers would also be granted “immunity from criminal and civil liability.” This raises critical concerns about oversight and accountability, and creates an environment permissible for grave human rights and civil rights violations. Let us remind you, the border is not a zone for constitutional exception. Since 2010, there have been over 265 fatal encounters between citizens and border residents with U.S. CBP agents. Similarly, since the start of OLS, vehicle pursuits involving DPS troopers carrying out its operations have been linked to 30 deaths and 71 injuries.

Moreover, these punitive measures contradict U.S. asylum law, and will undoubtedly stem the crisis of deaths and disappearances in the borderlands, which are frequently the result of hardened immigration and border policies. Official CBP data count 8618 migrant deaths through 2021. Community organizations and forensic teams estimate this number to be three times larger. How many people have to die in the borderlands for you to realize that deterrence policies are not the solution? There has to be a focus on working with the federal government to create rights-centered pathways for safe, regular, and orderly migration.

The billions of taxpayer dollars used to target, criminalize, and incarcerate our communities would be better spent to address their real needs. Human rights should not be optional or contingent upon race, class, ethnicity, or immigration status. We urge you to stop the increase of border militarization and enforcement, save lives, and use funds and the implementation of policies to empower Texas communities, not harm them.

Richard Kelley, Dr

Self Retired Scientist

Palestine, TX

State Affairs Committee, please pass HB 20 out of your committee to the calendars committee to be scheduled for a floor vote! Among its other benefits, for the first time this bill has the language that defines the authority to repel and deny entry between legal ports of entry.

Your decision impacts all Texans , not only your own house district constituents. For that, I thank you you for your thoughtful consideration to move this bill(HB 20) to the Calendars committee to be scheduled for a floor vote, promptly.

Robert Martinez

Self Software Engineer

Austin, TX

I'm against HB 20 as it can lead to the unnecessary loss of life and liberty for all those involved. Additionally we already have a federal agency that handles border security. Creating a secondary agency is a waste of money and resources.

Tracy Shannon
Self
KINGWOOD, TX

I support this bill. Thank you.

Estefanía Ponce Dominguez
Self
Austin, TX

I am commenting against HB 20 because I believe this bill would further fuel the hateful rhetoric that already exists in the state of Texas against immigrant communities and migrants. More often than not, people immigrating to the U.S. are doing so because they have exhausted all other options in their home country and/or are forced to migrate in order to find safety and refuge. I believe we are using immigrant communities as the scapegoat for the opioid crisis in our country when in reality migrants crossing the border and seeking a better life in the U.S. are not the root of the problem. I say this coming from an immigrant family myself and knowing all the layers behind why my own family decided to leave their home behind and come to the states. I ask that the members of this committee please stand against HB 20 as it will only further violence against human beings simply trying to survive like the rest of us. We say that we embrace different cultures, we live in a state where our own children are learning Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, etc., we capitalize on different cultural foods, and all the more things that I am not mentioning right now in this comment. We live and work in the buildings that were built by immigrants/migrants, we've learned from my community, we are your neighbors, your grocery store workers, your babysitters, professionals, etc. and yet this bill is a slap in the face to all of this. It's a poorly written, demoralizing, and dehumanizing proposal putting our border and immigrant communities in Texas in danger.

Christopher Russo
Texans for Strong Borders
El Lago, TX

My name is Chris Russo, and I am president and founder of Texans for Strong Borders, a nonprofit organization focused on advancing border securities and immigration policies in the best interests of Texans. I am strongly in favor of HB 20.

Article I, Section 10, Clause 3 would represent a paradigm shift in our state's efforts to secure our border. The provisions outlined in statute in this bill will shift state resources from a catch-and-release posture with respect to law enforcement to actually intercepting and turning away illegal crossings as they occur. The Governor has this power right now, but this bill creates a structure and means by which these powers could be carried out.

Texas is currently under an unprecedented invasion, organized and carried out by narcoterrorist cartels, to the tune of up to 10 million people in just two years of the Biden administration, including unknown gotaways. We have no chance but to use all of the constitutional and statutory tools at our disposal to combat this.

HB 20 would facilitate a declaration of invasion and/or imminent danger under Article I, Section 10, Clause 3. Our organization suggested several changes in the language of the original draft of the bill, and the current committee substitute substantially addresses these concerns. What we have in front of us is the best option the state of Texas has to secure its border in light of the dereliction of duty of the federal government.

I ask that you please expeditiously pass HB 20 out of committee and recommend it for swift passage.

Lola Hurt, Mrs

Self

Addison, TX

The authority and specific charges to the BPU are clear and stronger than we've ever had in a border security bill. For the first time, we have bill language defining authority to repel (deny entry) between legal ports of entry. Removal for those seen crossing illegally (outside a legal port of entry) or found in the vicinity of same is specified as a part of the "repel" authority.

3) Transparency and cost/benefit reporting requirements are strong and essential. Many legislators (and taxpayers) have long questioned the cost/benefit of previous "securing border" efforts, which with no authority to "repel," amounted to assisted catch and release.

Sarah Wilpitz, Mrs.

self

Dallas, TX

I strongly support HB 20. Thank you!

Alexandra Schilling

Self - Mom and Candidate for school board

Garwood, TX

I support

Ruth York, (1) VP; (2) Interim Chair

(1) Tea Party Patriots of Eastland County; (2) Texas Family Defense Committee; (3) self (Direct sales)

CISCO, TX

We SUPPORT HB 20. Texans (and our neighbors in other states) are in constant danger because the Texas border is not secure. The danger from criminals, drugs and human trafficking continues to rise at alarming rates. This bill contains important language defining authority to repel entry between legal ports of entry. Removal for those seen crossing illegally, outside a legal port of entry, or found in the vicinity of same, is specified as a part of the "repel" authority.

HB 20 specifically references Art. 1 Sec. 10 of the US Constitution as authority for Texas to declare its reservation of power to act independently to protect Texans.

Please vote YES on HB 20.

Daniel Miller

Self

Austin, TX

I strongly oppose HB20 because this bill will further harm border communities and asylum seekers. We as Texans cannot allow vigilantes to be deputized under this bill and to roam our streets causing more chaos and violence towards communities of color. We as Texans deserve that our representatives invest in real solutions like funding education, improving infrastructure, increasing access to healthcare, instead of wasting our taxpayer money in prosecuting and jailing migrants. Shame on you.

Alan Dicker

Self, border resident

El Paso, TX

A few years ago, a man came to El Paso and massacred people in a Walmart in the name of stopping an "invasion" at the border. He was delusional about the realities of migration at the border, just like this bill's supporters. This bill would give people with the same motives as the El Paso shooter legal cover for vigilante violence. It will not make border communities like mine safer--it will make them less safe. And it will not improve humanitarian conditions at the border--it will exacerbate the humanitarian crisis created by xenophobic, exclusionary polices at the border. I urge all Texas legislators to oppose HB 20.

Janna Canard
Texas UU Justice Ministry
Fort Worth, TX

I oppose HB 20. It is a dangerous and far-reaching bill that would allow vigilantes to roam the streets of Texas to arrest, detain and persecute whomever they perceive are "migrants." These vigilantes will be deputized, have broad discretion and face no accountability for their actions. HB20 will only bring more racially motivated violence in already unprotected border communities and, let's be clear, it will not bring safety or protection to those seeking asylum on our border. On top of the heightened policing, HB20 will also increase criminal penalties for asylees and refugees trying to enter through the Texas-Mexico border, this bill will only add to the chaos that Operation Lone Star has created. I urge you to do the right thing and vote against this legislation.

Amanda Garcia
Self/Warehouse worker
El Paso, TX

Hello my name is Amanda and I'm a born and raised Texan from El Paso. I am **STRONGLY** opposed to HB20, living on the border I've experienced migration and law enforcement's reaction to migrants first hand. Officials struggle to maintain their civility in these situations and yet the state wants to give a blank check to any random individual the right to act as a LEOs? To say that entrusting civilians to detain those that they may perceive to be "migrants" is a tragedy waiting to happen is a massive understatement. Not only that but as a person of color and a woman, this bill only adds to the unsafe environment many feminine individuals and people of color face daily. Especially on the border. If passed you're asking ALL of us to be forced to comply with persons we don't know who aren't even explicitly LEOs, you're asking us to submit to a dangerous situations, to allow fear mongering to slash even more of our constitutional rights. All in the name of fixing the crisis at the border, enough with the persecuting of asylum seekers. I implore you to vote NO on HB20. Focus on the electric grid instead!

Kimberly Winkelmayr, Ms.
Self voting Texan
Houston, TX

I respectfully ask this Committee to oppose HB 20. It would amount to a dangerous and extreme effort to expand Texas' border policing program including the creation of a state-sponsored vigilante border protection unit and the codification and expansion of a border policing, court, and jailing system that has to date resulted in injuries, deaths,[1] racial discrimination, [2] abusive detention conditions, [3] and a chilling effect on freedoms of association and expression. That's not the Texas I want to be known for.

JoAnn Fleming, Executive Director
Grassroots America - We the People PAC
Flint, TX

Grassroots America - We the People PAC, a statewide organization instituted in 2009, strongly supports CSHB 20 by Rep. Matt Schaefer and numerous co-authors.

Texans deserve protection! The ongoing lack of security along our southern border represents an existential crisis for the national security, health, public safety, community well-being, and civic peace of the people of Texas. Legislation is needed to equip the governor with support to take actions necessary to defend Texas and her citizens from the ongoing threat emanating from the dereliction of federal duty.

In view of the more than 2.4 million illegal alien apprehensions in FY2022 as well as the estimated 1 million plus so-called “got aways,” it is clear that states cannot rely on federal authorities to uphold existing statutory law or their respective Article IV constitutional guarantee to defend the states from invasion.

The state of Texas has no recourse but to utilize its inherent right to self-defense to secure its territorial integrity and protect its citizens from the ongoing destruction, crime, lawlessness, and chaos perpetuated by an open and unsecured border, pursuant to art. 4 sec. 7 of the Texas Constitution and art. I sec. 10 cl 3 of the US Constitution. The Legislature has the moral duty and obligation to exert this rightful power.

Strengths of HB 20:

- 1) Governor hires the Border Protection Unit Chief who reports directly to the Governor.
- 2) Authority and specific charges to the BPU are clear and stronger than we've ever seen in a border security bill. Finally, we have defined authority to repel (deny entry) between legal ports of entry. Removal for those seen crossing illegally (outside a legal port of entry) or found in the vicinity of same is specified as a part of the “repel” authority.
- 3) Transparency and cost/benefit reporting requirements are strong and essential.
- 4) Carefully identifies those considered to be law enforcement and expected to uphold this law. Such a comprehensive listing is key to enforcement as it leaves no question as to jurisdiction.
- 5) Bill language related to Health and Safety in terms of disease spread is important because this establishes another constitutional way for TX to act independently; individual states have primary health and safety power under the US Constitution and judicial precedent supports this power.
- 6) Severability clauses repeated throughout the bill are extremely important to withstand judiciary interference. A judge will be unable to halt the entire effort due to the bill’s severability provisions that keep remaining portions of the law in force should a court declare one or more of the law’s provisions unconstitutional, void, or unenforceable.
- 7) Clearly invokes Art. 1 Sec. 10 as the US Constitution’s authority for TX to declare its reservation of power to act independently to protect Texans, bypassing US v Arizona (federal preemption of immigration enforcement).

Please quickly pass CSHB 20 out of committee.

Eve Molnar
Self
Austin, TX

This is a dangerous and unnecessary bill. The state of Texas should cooperate with the federal government on matters of border security.

Ambereen Siddiqui
self nonprofit
Richmond, TX

This bill is racist and terrible. VOTE NO.

Terry Howlett
Self and retired USAF
Tyler, TX

Please pass HB 20 out of Cmte ASAP and send it on to the Calendars Cmte for a floor vote. Finally, Texas takes Constitutional authority with clear and strong charges to the BPU to repel and deny entry between legal ports of entry. They will remove those those seen crossing illegally or found in the vicinity of same is specified in HB 20 as a part of “repel” authority.

Your decision to pass HR 20 our of Committee and send it on to the Calendars Committee for vote IMPACTS ALL TEXANS, not only your constituents.

Thank you, Terry

Shannon Rose
Self
Austin, TX

I am submitting my written comment to speak out in extreme opposition with legal reasoning against the proposed HB20 in Texas, which would allow the governor to create an untrained task force to detain and harass anyone suspected of illegal immigration with no proof and civil and criminal immunity.

This bill is a clear violation of basic human rights and the Constitution of the United States. The Fourth Amendment protects every individual from unreasonable searches and seizures. This means that law enforcement officials cannot detain or harass anyone without probable cause or a warrant issued by a judge. The proposed HB20 would allow an untrained task force, including civilians and legal residents, to detain and harass people suspected of being illegal immigrants without any proof or due process.

Furthermore, the proposed bill would violate the principle of equal protection under the law, enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment. This principle guarantees that every person is entitled to equal protection under the law and prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. The proposed HB20 would give the task force broad powers to detain and harass people suspected of illegal immigration, which could lead to discriminatory practices against certain groups of people based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin.

In addition, the proposed bill would undermine the fundamental principles of the criminal justice system. The presumption of innocence is a cornerstone of our legal system, and every person is innocent until proven guilty. However, the proposed HB20 would allow the task force to detain and harass people suspected of illegal immigration without any proof or due process, effectively reversing the presumption of innocence.

Finally, the proposed bill would violate the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution, which establishes that federal law takes precedence over state law. Immigration enforcement is primarily the responsibility of the federal government, and the proposed HB20 would allow state officials to engage in immigration enforcement without federal authorization, which is a clear violation of federal law.

In conclusion, the proposed HB20 would violate basic human rights, the Constitution, and the principles of our legal system. It would also undermine the authority of the federal government and jeopardize the safety and well-being of many individuals and families in Texas. It is imperative that this bill is not passed and that lawmakers instead focus on developing fair and just immigration policies that respect the rights and dignity of all people.

Jennifer Kratky
Self, homemaker
Magnolia, TX

I am FOR this Bill. I've never felt so abandoned by my government, both federal and state, as when I see videos of thousands of illegals pouring into Texas each day. People are coming from around the whole world, because they know YOU are just letting them all in. I have personally met moms in my county whose children have died from fentanyl, and spoken to a judge who explained how it's coming across the border and being pressed into pills. I am not against immigration but we MUST restore order and security to our state. We have the constitutional right to protect ourselves from invasion, when the federal government cannot or will not. Vote FOR HB20.

Karen Marsalis, Mrs

Self

Carthage, TX

Protect our border

Thomas Bartel

Self

Plano, TX

I am in strong support of HB20. Please vote it out of committee for a floor vote!

Margie Cleere

Self

Whitehouse, TX

Please secure our border and stop criminals from entering our homes, state and country.

Ashley Vasquez

Self

Alamo, TX

Good Evening Representative Schaefer and committee members, my name is Ashley Vasquez, and I am part of the community at our Southern border in the city of Alamo, Texas just miles from the border. I am making this public statement and testimony today in opposition to the bill HB20 because it is unconstitutional and is a federal issue not a state issue. We demand that our President should be the one taking care of the welfare of the communities in the border when related to port of entries as well as the increase in quantity in our nationwide recognized federal agencies protecting our borders to this day. This bill among many others mentioned in todays hearing are bringing forward even more so the division we have in this country and state with its racist and extremist stance on what is actually going on across but most importantly in our border cities. How is it possible for untrained civilians to be exercising unlawful practice of the law without the proper training of knowing your rights. Or even if they were trained how likely are they to even follow these practices and implement basic human rights. The consequences of this will harm our immigrant communities statewide allowing even more so racial profiling and unethical abuse of power and authority. As our Texas legislature and state government body you should be prioritizing the needs of the people of your state. Such as a good drainage system because even with light rain our streets get flooded. Safety for our children in our schools vulnerable to gun violence due to the lenience in our state laws. As well as more funding in education so the children can achieve their professional careers. Public lighting because our streets are in darkness. A sewerage system because many of our colonias and neighborhoods don't even have these needs. We need more funds for healthcare because medication and in dire hospital needs we are unable to cover the high costs often times because of our low wages. We don't need more policing let alone even less likely a vigilante group. We need more infrastructure. We need you to prioritize the true needs of our communities at the border not racism and discrimination. I humbly ask you to take these needs into consideration when considering the changes but even more so the position your people of the state want you to take.

Willism Marsalis, Mr

Self

Carthage, TX

Ensure the safety and protection of the southern border especially from criminal activity and illegal crossings.

Kellie Vrba

Self

Georgetown, TX

It is vital that we protect Americans. The failed border has enabled the felons, gang activity and drugs to gain easy access to our country and the Americans. We will continue to see smuggling, drug related deaths, and gang activity spiral out of control until something is done. You owe it to your constituents to protect us, which will aid in protecting America.

Bob Bonner

Self

Lindale, TX

Please support HB 20. It is ultimately the single most important task of the government to protect the citizens of this State. The clear disregard for our laws and the enforcement of existing statues makes it necessary to raise the bar and in so doing attempt to maintain sovereignty and culture. Thanks

Elizabeth Theiss

Grassroots America We The People

Houston, TX

Please support this bill and ensure approval as swiftly as possible.

Marcia Peters, Ms.

Self

Houston, TX

Please support HB 20 and protect our borders. This is critical to our sovereignty and our safety.

Thank you.

Ellen (Ellie) Klipp

self - retired school teacher/now writer

Cedar Park, TX

Please pass this bill out of committee. We need to protect the workers of this state, the families and children. We cannot fix the problems of everyone, especially those who "crash" our border illegally or overstay a visa. Let's try to take good care of our legal residents. Thank you.

David Sims

self - retired

Huntsville, TX

I strongly support this bill and urge you to please promptly pass HB 20 out of committee and send it to the Calendars Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote!

Joseph Murphy

Self

Fredericksburg, TX

I believe that it is an excellent bill that will address many of the problems we have on the border. I would like to strongly encourage the committee to pass HB 20 on to the Calanders Committee so that this vital bill can be acted upon and not run out of time.

Leslie Wylie

Self

Yantis, TX

Please pass this bill so Texas can close the border since the federal government won't enforce the laws of this country, which is criminal and some should be held accountable.

Silvia Reveles-Scheller, Ms

Self

Austin, TX

HB20, aka Greg Abbott's White-Supremacist, Unconstitutional bill casually creates a sloppily thrown together psuedo military and court system costing billions to Texas citizens. Abbott's refusal to accept the new demographics of the state have him waging a senseless war against Texas citizens, especially people of color. It is a desperate measure to garner attention to supporters. This bill is dangerous to every child, woman and man in Texas

Danny/Marilyn Harris

Self retired

Sanger, TX

We strongly support this bill with teeth in it. We must control our border! It is an invasion and it must stop. Thank you!

Linzy Foster

Self

Austin, TX

I strongly oppose this bill in its entirety. This will cause harm to brown and black members of our community through racial profiling. I personally know citizens of this country who have been racially profiled and harrassed because of the color of their skin and cops assuming they are here illegally. This is wrong. Texans deserve better! This is also not how I want my tax dollars spent.

Mark Burow

Self

Bryan, TX

Strong measures like this have come of age.

Our Federal Government is purposefully neglecting its duty to prevent an invasion by a foreign horde. They then spend our taxes to subsidize the maintenance of the illegals within our borders. This needs to stop.

Stephen LeMaster, Mr.

Serviam Insurance Agency LLC

Katy, TX

Support of HB 20 regarding the safety and well being of the citizens of Texas.

Aimee Gonzalez

Self

Austin, TX

This bill is unconstitutional. There shouldn't be state funds to create an unnecessary police force funded by the state with the money that should be going to other matters affecting the state such as education.

Marlon Duran, Organizer

The Kingdom of Heaven

McAllen, TX

Do not let this bill leave committee! It is a racist Fascist bill that will cost the lives of People of Color. It is a HUGE and completely unnecessary WAIST of money! I live in McAllen and our Texas border communities are some of the safest in the Nation! We should be welcoming Immigrants and Asylum Seekers. Jesus was VERY clear that how you treat the least of these is how you treat HIM!!!! And the people seeking a new life in our nation are exactly the kind of people He was refering to! You MUST vote this bill down! Kill it! Or the Lord Jesus Christ will throw you where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, when He returns!!! Please heed my warning!!!

aylin perez
self
el paso, TX

this does NOT promote border safety. allowing civilians to act on their own racist and xenophobic agendas is allowing the state to cause threat and direct harm to the lives of humans. this is to promote more gun violence more femicides. VOTE NO to HB20.

Denisce Palacios
Self
Brownsville, TX

I am opposed to both HB 20 & HB 7. People have migrated for years and will continue to migrate to the United States. Instead of preparing dangerous people to harass and hunt people who they believe to have “illegally” entered. We should not arm heavily prejudiced people with the unmitigated authority to harm our community members. The legislature should not overreach its authority through the passage of this bill. A border protection unit is not necessary and would not make Texans safer.

Ashley Washington
Self
Irving, TX

I am a Texas voter and I'm against HB 20. Texas needs to listen to the incredible border residents who are raising funds and building the humanitarian response for a dignified border. Locking people in cages is not the solution. Texans across the border continue to ask for investment in humanitarian infrastructure to a) benefit the region and b) allow migrants to be welcomed by state and federal officials with dignity. Border residents know that no military-style operation has ever or will ever stop migration. Texas Non-Governmental (NGO) entities are doing real public safety work by keeping migrants fed, clothed, sheltered, out of harm's way, and on their way to reunite with their families, friends, and support systems further north.

Mike Jackson
self - retired
Lufkin, TX

I support this bill. We are being invaded. If we are to retain our cultural identity, stop the human trafficking and illegal drugs coming across our border, we must do everything to stop this invasion now.

Jacqueline Pena
Self
Shamrock, TX

Please get this bill passed to ensure the safety of Texas citizens especially along the border, but in the rest of the state as well. We know without doubt by now that the Feds aren't going to do the right thing. It is up to us.
Thank you

Samuel Hall
United Patriots for America
McKinney, TX

Hello

My name is Samuel Hall. I am the Founder & President of Patriots for America Militia. Myself & other PFA members, as well as PFA affiliates have been operating on the Texas Southern border in 4 different Counties since early October of 2021. Our aim was & is to help and assist law enforcement & National Guard in what has become known as the worst humanitarian crisis in modern history in the United States. We have sacrificed our time away from our families, as well as our personal incomes to help protect the border from this massive invasion as well as help law enforcement identify unaccompanied minors & children being trafficked by the Mexican cartels for the purpose of sex trafficking, organ harvesting & other evil and nefarious purposes.

Multiple PFA members have been injured while operating on the Southern border, including myself which required surgery and 13 weeks of recovery. Unlike some organizations that share the name "militia", PFA Militia is a conservative, Christ centered organization. We do not allow nor do we tolerate hate, bigotry or racism within our organization. We have been criticized for giving water, food and medical care to immigrant families and children who have crossed over and awaiting to be processed by Border Patrol. We have held young women and prayed with them as they tearfully wept telling their stories of how badly & often they were brutally raped by coyotes & cartel members before crossing over the border. We had people die in our arms that we unfortunately could not save. Allow me to be crystal clear, we are Christians before we are Republicans. We will not see a child or human being in need, regardless of what race or ethnicity they are, and turn our backs because we do not believe Christ would turn His back either.

This all being said, we would not have such a massive immigration crisis on our Southern border if we indeed had leaders in office who worked to protect our sovereign border and passed legislation such as HB 20 supporting such action. It is not only the crippling economic impact it is having on our own citizens, especially those who live on or close to the Southern border such as Ranchers. It is the scourge of Pentynyl that is flowing freely through our highly porous border that is plaguing our State and our entire Country and causing staggering numbers of fatal over-doses. It is the "Got-away's" who do not want to turn themselves in and be processed, who come into this State and into this Country with purposes of committing violent acts and crime on our own citizens. Law enforcement is asked to protect our border, however, in 15 rotations in 12 months we did not witness hardly any support from those who swore an oath to protect this State and uphold our laws to those on the front lines in this fight. HB 20 should be common sense legislation, however to some it seems it is not. I wonder why that is?
www.patriotsforamericamilitia.com Thank you for your valued time, sir and ma'am.

James Sheeren
Self retired
Fulshear, TX

Please pass this bill to protect Texas

Roger Wheelock
self
McKinney, TX

I FULLY support this bill. WE NEED TO STOP THE INVASION!!

Eric Mata
Texas Organizing Project
Dallas, TX

As a concerned citizen, I strongly oppose TX HB20. The bill violates the Supremacy Clause of the US Constitution and would lead to the unconstitutional racial profiling of brown communities. It is disappointing to see that instead of investing in humanitarian infrastructure and legal support for migrants, lawmakers are proposing measures that would only cause harm and division.

The Border Protection Unit proposed under the bill would have unchecked power to stop, detain, and question anyone they suspect has entered the country illegally. This could lead to wrongful detentions and violations of civil rights.

Furthermore, the bill's supporters have openly acknowledged that it is unconstitutional, yet they are willing to waste taxpayer money on a legal battle they will likely lose. This is irresponsible and a waste of resources that could be better used to address the needs of border communities.

Instead of pursuing harmful and unconstitutional measures, Texas should work towards comprehensive immigration reform that provides a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and invests in infrastructure and support for legal entry points. We should prioritize the safety and well-being of all communities, including those at the border.

Carrie Baker
Self
Lubbock, TX

I support this bill as we desperately need to protect the border. This continuing invasion needs to stop. Thank you.

Kim Roland
Self / Retired / Ranching
Lockhart, TX

I SUPPORT this bill and appreciate Rep. Schaefer's efforts to restore law & order in Texas.

Lisa Covington
Self
San Antonio, TX

SUPPORT 100%

Janice Ohrt, Ms
Self employed ranching
Victoria, TX

Passing this bill out of committee to a floor vote is essential for public safety of Texans and humanely necessary for those who are being used and abused in this trafficking of women children and men. Texas is being invaded. Texas must be able to protect its citizens regardless of Federal government agendas. We need laws in Texas that stops government agencies in Texas from enforcing Federal orders that contradict Texas Laws. We must make the laws!!! Support HB 20, 7, and 65. Thank you. I appreciate your service to protect Texas.

Sharon Tryon, Mrs

Self

Waxahachie, TX

I support this bill.

Thank you

Sharon Tryon

Carla Palacios

Self, Communications coordinator for Texas civil rights project

El Paso, TX

This is shameful legislation. We cannot enable vigilantes to harass, endanger, and potentially kill migrants or Texans perceived as migrants in our border communities. I cannot believe this is where my tax money is going! Why do I even work in this state if y'all don't even prioritize basic human rights; instead you want to add billions to this bill that would literally kill MY PEOPLE! Legislation like this are making Texas a shameful state, enabling a shameful government with a blatantly racist and disgusting agenda that HB 20 imposes.

John Bolgiano

Self - Retired

Llano, TX

Support.

It is too clear the federal system has failed to secure the Texas border with Mexico. It is past time for Texas to take the steps needed to protect our citizens.

Melody Allen

self - Logistics Manager

Waxahachie, TX

I am in support of this bill. Securing our border is a top issue to me personally, as I have friends living in border counties that are put in danger each and every day due to illegal crossing and criminal trespassing on their property.

My friends must be armed everywhere they go, especially while working out on their ranches and farms. Because they experience multiple break-ins at their homes, they also must be armed, even moving about from room to room in their homes.

Texas should not have to live this way, and we must do something to stop the infiltration of illegal immigrants in to our Texas counties and communities. That's why I appreciate that our legislators recognize this and have filed legislation such as HB20 and other bills to proceed in efforts of securing our border.

Mary Smith

Self/retired

Arlington, TX

I am in support of this bill on border security. Although there are many border bills, this appears to be the strongest. Am in agreement to creating a civil penalty.

Fran Rhodes
True Texas Project & self
Fort Worth, TX

True Texas Project strongly supports this bill. It is high time something concrete was done about the southern border. It is not longer an immigration issue, it is a state and national security issue. Please pass the bill quickly out of committee and send to the floor or a vote. The people of Texas deserve protection against invasion.

Sylvia Coulson
Self
Waxahachie, TX

I strongly support this bill. We must take action to secure our border and protect the victims from the cartels who now control our southern border.

LeeAnne Rogers
Self - Education Consultant
Arlington, TX

This bill constitutes racial profiling. I do not support citizens (especially since anyone can legally carry a concealed firearm) being able to stop someone solely based on their perception to be a threat. This is akin to Hitler and the Nazis. I ask that we make Texas a friendly and welcoming State and remember that unless you are an actual Native American, someone immigrated here to give you a better life. The border is not the problem, it's the difficulty to immigrate here legally, especially when escaping countries that lack basic human rights and the freedoms we have in America. Please note NO!

Meredith Gardner
self, non-profit contractor
Round Rock, TX

Current rates of crossing at the border do not qualify as an "invasion" and the state risks stepping out of the bounds of the U.S. Constitution with the efforts outlined in this bill. The state has an obligation to honor international treaties and agreements and is not equipped to fairly address matters of complex asylum claims without risk of discrimination and disregard of federal and international law. I am extremely concerned by the bill's provision to create a "Border Protection Unit," which could include existing law enforcement officers and "law-abiding citizens" to "arrest, detain, and deter individuals crossing the border illegally, including with the use of non-deadly force." Even more worrisome is that these individuals acting under the unit's authority would be granted immunity from criminal and civil liability for their actions.

I have been to two cities on the Texas border as part of a volunteer trip and experienced no "invasion." Instead, I found that what is really needed at the border is better collaboration between the state and NGOs/non-profit organizations trying to assist immigrants in an orderly fashion as we await Congress to take action.

Linda Ricks
Self
Midlothian, TX

This is a very important bill for the safety and well-being of Texans. Please vote "yes" on this bill to help provide border security. Thank you.

Brenda Cash

Republican Women of Yoakum Area

Shiner, TX

On April 10,2021, the 21. counties of SD 18 met and wrote a Petition to ask for Redress of Grievances from Governor Abbott according to Article I, Section 27 of the Texas Bill which called for the Governor to convene a joint session of the Legislature to declare a State of Emergency and Disaster to repel an invasion. This request was finally addressed 2 yrs later, but action has not been sufficient to stop the flow. We now call on the legislature to pass this legislation SCR 23 and HB 20 to address the crisis. We ask that you pass these Bills.

Stephanie Taylor

Self

Austin, TX

This is a huge waste of public safety resources. I am 4th generation Texan and native of Brownsville, on the US-Mexico border. This bill is not only dangerous, it is illegal and will certainly be challenged in court. Please stop trying to frame this as a public safety issue. This is a political stunt and one that Texas cannot financially afford. Fund our schools, not Gregg Abbott's political aspirations.