

More than 10,000 migrants bused from US-Mexico border to East Coast

Trévon Austin
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As part of the state's barbaric and inhumane Operation Lone Star, the Texas government has bused nearly 9,000 migrants seeking asylum to New York City and Washington D.C. over the last several months. According to a statement from Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott's office, more than 7,400 immigrants have been bused to D.C. since April and 1,500 to New York City since August 5. Another 1,500 have been sent from Arizona, bringing the total to more than 10,000.

Abbott's press release claims the program is focused on stemming the alleged influx of drugs and criminals across the US-Mexico border, but his insistence that Biden's "open border" policies are responsible for increased migration to the US exposes the reactionary character of Abbott's politics and his loyal subservience to Trump's fascist agenda.

"The busing mission is providing much-needed relief to our overwhelmed border communities," the statement said. "Operation Lone Star continues to fill the dangerous gaps left by the Biden Administration's refusal to secure the border."

Both capitalist parties and the bourgeois press have proven themselves incapable, if not unwilling, of discussing the social impetus that continues to drive millions of working class migrants and their families to risk life and limb traveling through swamps, jungles and deserts in countries as foreign to them as the US: The plundering of Latin America at the behest of American imperialism for more than a century. Rather, immigrants are locked up in detention camps, denigrated and used as scapegoats for the crisis of the capitalist system.

Several prominent Republicans and far-right figures have called on Abbott and other border state governors to declare the surge of refugees as an "invasion"

requiring the imposition of emergency powers reserved for wartime—including Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick who likened the "invasion" at the Southern border to the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, ominously adding the state should "put hands on people."

For their part, the Democrats made their attitude towards the plight of immigrants clear when Vice President Kamala Harris told future migrants that they would be unwelcome, and "the United States will continue to enforce our laws and secure our borders."

Indeed, despite the absurd claim that Biden and the Democrats are pursuing an "open border" policy, the administration is still enforcing the illegal "Title 42" policy first enacted by Trump mandating the summary expulsion of asylum seekers under the pretext of public health concerns. Furthermore, the Democrats have only been able to respond to Republican criticisms from the right.

When Abbott first launched his political stunt and blamed Biden for the border crisis, the White House response was limited to a press release declaring the President was focused on "real policy solutions" to "actually secure our border."

Meanwhile, the thousands of migrants being shipped across the US have been effectively abandoned by federal and local authorities. Although New York City Mayor Eric Adams and D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, both Democrats, have declared their jurisdictions as "sanctuary" cities that would accept and care for refugees, local nonprofits and mutual aid organizations have been the only parties offering assistance.

Millions has been spent busing migrants to the East Coast. According to figures from the Texas Division of Emergency Management reported by CNN, Texas has spent more than \$12 million busing migrants to

Washington D.C. and New York City. As of August 9, Texas has paid \$12,707,720.92 to Wynne Transportation, the charter service that is taking migrants to the two cities.

Arizona, which began following Texas' example in May, has also spent millions transporting migrants out of state. According to Republican Governor Doug Ducey's office, 43 busloads of immigrants—primarily from Colombia, Peru and Venezuela—have departed from Arizona to the District of Columbia (D.C.) so far. In total, the governor claims his state spent approximately \$3.5 million shipping 1,574 immigrants to the capital.

State authorities have claimed those being shipped out are only being transported voluntarily. When Abbott began sending migrants to Washington earlier this year, his office said migrants were being transported only with their written permission and that “to board a bus or flight, a migrant must volunteer to be transported and show documentation from DHS.”

However, immigration rights advocates who have spoken with refugees abandoned at transport stations reported “shell-shocked” people recently released from immigration detention centers who spent very little time at a shelter before being put on a bus for the 36-hour journey.

Abel Nuñez, head of the Central American Resource Center, told NPR the migrants were given few options and were simply offered a ride East. For some, the trip would bring them closer to relatives so the drive was seen as a free ride.

However, Nuñez added, with only local volunteers and nonprofit staff greeting the buses of migrants and no government support, the migrants were confused and unsure what to do next after arriving in D.C. Additionally, it is not clear what other options have been offered to the migrants.

“We have to recognize that the immigrants coming in were primarily from Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba ... some folks from Central Africa ... so they had [final] destinations such as Miami, New Jersey, New York or Tennessee [in mind],” Nuñez said.

Most recently, the city of El Paso, Texas, hired a bus to send 35 Venezuelan migrants to New York City. The move by the Democratic-led city demonstrates the bipartisan hostility towards asylum seekers. In fact, the militarization of the border is the result of long-

standing bipartisan policies going as far back as Democratic President Bill Clinton and continued by each subsequent administration.

Moreover, the horrific realities migrants face at the border exposes the hypocritical and fraudulent claims of US imperialism to be fighting for democracy in its proxy war against Russia in Ukraine. Both capitalist parties are united in their attacks on the democratic rights of the poorest and most vulnerable sections of the population.



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