

Republican governors sending National Guard troops to the Texas-Mexico border

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In back-to-back announcements on Wednesday, the Republican governors of Virginia, South Carolina, West Virginia and Iowa said they are sending National Guardsmen and other state law enforcement officers to the state of Texas to expand the militarization of the US border with Mexico.

The hundreds of additional National Guard troops being sent to the southern border will increase the number of US military personnel to well over 5,000 following the Biden administration's deployment of 1,500 active-duty Army and Marines in May, exceeding the 5,200 soldiers deployed there during the Trump presidency.

In a statement on Wednesday, Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin issued an executive order to send 100 National Guard troops and cited, without providing any evidence, the flow of illegal drugs and human trafficking that is "devastating Virginia families and communities."

Youngkin, who is considered a potential candidate for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, is following in the footsteps of former President Donald Trump, the current Republican frontrunner, who has persistently attempted to whip up hatred against immigrants on the basis of lies and provocations.

Youngkin even claimed that "the dangers posed by the fentanyl crisis" necessitated the militarization of the southern border, even though the US Drug Enforcement Administration has documented the fact that most fentanyl is brought into the US through legal ports of entry by US citizens, after production in China and Mexico.

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster also said on Wednesday he would send National Guard troops to Texas by July 1, although he did not say how many would be sent. In his statement, McMaster said, "The

safety and security of South Carolinians require that we stop the drug cartels, criminals and terrorists from entering our country to peddle their poison."

Republican Governor Jim Justice of West Virginia was next to announce that he approved up to 50 National Guard soldiers and airmen to deploy to Texas for up to 30 days in support of Operation Lone Star in Texas. Justice also referenced the "flood of fentanyl" and combatting "human trafficking" and that the troops would be joining Texas law enforcement "to detect, deter and interdict transnational criminal activity between points of entry."

Finally, Iowa Republican Governor Kim Reynolds announced that 100 National Guard troops and 30 Department of Public Safety employees would be deploying and will begin arriving in August and September for 30 days. Like all the other governors, Reynolds said in a press release, "The crisis we are experiencing is a direct result of a dereliction of duty by President Biden. The consequences of an open border can be felt across the country as fentanyl and the cartels threaten our communities."

This is the second time Reynolds has sent state personnel to Texas for border enforcement purposes. In July 2021, Reynolds sent 28 Iowa State Patrol troopers to work with Texas law enforcement as a part of Operation Lone Star in southwest Texas.

All four governors are responding to the hysterical request from Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott on May 16 seeking support for his Operation Lone Star and "to help combat the border crisis" that was projected to unfold after the expiration of the Title 42 border rules at midnight on May 11. Under the terms of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, states are permitted to provide assistance and share resources in response to a disaster or emergency.

In letters sent to all US governors, Abbott appealed for support for his effort “to defend our national sovereignty and territorial integrity” by calling on other US states to send “all available law enforcement personnel and resources to the Texas-Mexico border to serve alongside our thousands of Texas National Guard soldiers and Texas Department of Public Safety troopers.”

All four governors were in Austin, Texas, on May 22 for a “border security briefing” with Governor Abbott where details of the assistance plan were discussed.

That the campaign by Abbott and the others is part of a foul effort to deflect the deepening economic and social crises in their states onto immigrants is demonstrated by the fact that all the warnings about a “surge” of migrants at the US-Mexico border following the expiration of the Title 42 laws turned out to be false.

While both the far-right and fascist Republicans as well as the Biden administration and the Democrats have been focusing on the militarization of the border after May 11, the number of encounters with migrants in the region dropped by 50 percent within one week of the Title 42 expiration.

Title 42 public health border expulsion rules had been adopted by the Trump administration in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic to remove asylum seekers from the US without a hearing. These rules were also used with even more effect by the Biden administration until they were struck down as unconstitutional by a US federal court.

The wave of state government support for Abbott’s request on Wednesday follows the deployment of 1,100 National Guard soldiers and law enforcement officers by Republican Governor of Florida Ron DeSantis on May 16. Less than one week later, DeSantis launched his campaign for the Republican Party nomination for President in 2024.

DeSantis announced he was sending 800 soldiers, 200 Florida Department of Law Enforcement officers, 101 state troopers and 20 wildlife officers along with five planes, 17 drones, two command vehicles and 10 boats. He declared, “The impacts of Biden’s Border Crisis are felt by communities across the nation, and the federal government’s abdication of duty undermines the sovereignty of our country and the rule of law.”

DeSantis also sent support to the US southern border

in Texas and Arizona in 2021 following previous requests for assistance. Other Republican-led states that have announced troop deployments to Texas include Idaho, Mississippi, Tennessee and Nebraska.



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