

Biden administration waives 26 federal laws to resume construction of Trump's border wall

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On Wednesday, the Biden administration announced that it would be waiving over two dozen federal laws in order to fast-track the construction of 20 miles of border wall in south Texas. The new construction will be paid for using congressional funding allocated in 2019 under the Trump administration.

Reneging on Biden's campaign promises to not build "another foot" of Trump's border wall, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas identified 10 areas along the Rio Grande River where the Department of Homeland Security "will take immediate action to construct barriers and roads."

"I hereby waive in their entirety," wrote Mayorkas, "with respect to the construction of roads and physical barriers (including ... installation and upkeep of physical barriers, roads, supporting elements, drainage, erosion controls, safety features, lighting, cameras, and sensors) in the project areas, all of the following statutes..."

Among the statutes listed by Mayorkas were the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Clean Air Act, National Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, Safe Drinking Water Act, Solid Waste Disposal Act as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Farmland Protection Policy Act and over a dozen more laws aimed at protecting the environment, waterways, Indigenous grave sites, endangered animals and other historical markers.

Mayorkas wrote that the Biden administration continuing to build Trump's border wall was an example of Biden fulfilling one of his first executive orders to not divert money from the military in order to prosecute the war on immigrants.

"This project is consistent with DHS's plan to fulfill the requirements of President Biden's Proclamation (Jan. 20, 2021) ... which ended the diversion of funds for border wall from military projects," wrote Mayorkas. He noted that construction will be funded by a "fiscal year 2019 appropriation through which Congress appropriated funds for the construction border barrier in the Rio Grande Valley."

Wednesday's announcement further exposes as lies the claims by the Democratic Party and their pseudo-left defenders that the Biden administration would enact a more "progressive" or "humane" immigration policy compared to the Republican Party. Both big business parties defend the nation-state system and the "right" of capital to move freely across borders and into "off-shore accounts" or "tax-havens" while denying human beings the same privilege.

In just the last month Biden has announced the deployment of 800 troops to the border, Democratic Mayor of Chicago Brandon Johnson has finalized plans to have private defense contractors build "winterized base camps" for migrants and New York City Mayor Eric Adams, has xenophobically attacked immigrants, warning "New Yorkers ... This issue will destroy New York City."

New York Representative and Democratic Socialists of America member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who earlier this year denounced left-wing and socialist criticism of the Biden administration's war on immigrants as "privileged," has yet to issue a statement to her over 13 million followers on Twitter/X regarding Biden's attack on migrants.

The waiving of federal laws for the purpose of strengthening the US-Mexico border was a regular

occurrence under the Trump administration, but it appears Wednesday's declaration by Mayorkas is the first time the Biden administration has done the same.

It is notable that the waivers were granted one day after California Republican Kevin McCarthy was ousted from the Speaker's office. In his floor comments demanding the removal of McCarthy, Arizona fascist and Trump co-conspirator Andy Biggs denounced McCarthy for not leveraging the Biden administration "to enforce the border laws."

"Until you leverage the budget and spending," Biggs growled, "you will not see enforcement by this administration."

Similarly, Florida Republican Matt Gaetz denounced McCarthy for coming to a "secret deal tying Ukraine" military funding "to the border."

A majority of the construction outlined by Biden's DHS will take place in Starr County, Texas, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge between the Falcon Dam, located near Roma, Texas, and along the Rio Grande River just west of McAllen, Texas. McAllen is across from Reynosa, Mexico, and about 55 miles (90 kilometers) west of Matamoros, Mexico.

A statement issued by Laiken Jordahl for the Center for Biological Diversity, denouncing the construction, noted that Starr County "is home to some of the most spectacular and biologically important habitat left in Texas and now bulldozers are preparing to rip right through it. This is a horrific step backwards for the borderlands."

"Every acre of habitat left in the Rio Grand Valley is irreplaceable," Jordahl added. "We can't afford to lose more of it to a useless, medieval wall... Biden's cynical decision to destroy a wildlife refuge and seal the beautiful Rio Grande behind a grotesque border wall must be stopped."

Wednesday's announcement comes as several top Biden administration officials are meeting with their Mexican counterparts in a "high-level security dialogue" in Mexico City. Mayorkas, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and US Attorney General Merrick Garland are currently there for a discussion on further attacks on immigrants by both governments.

Joining Blinken on the trip is Todd Robinson, the State Department's assistant secretary of the bureau of international narcotics and law enforcement affairs. In a

meeting with Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Tuesday, the *New York Times* reported Robinson pressed López Obrador to "deploy federal law enforcement and the military more aggressively" against alleged drug smugglers and manufacturers in Mexico.

The *Times* wrote that the Biden administration is "hopeful" that Mexican police and military forces will "step up enforcement near the country's southern border with Guatemala."



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