



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives
Representative Joseph Chaplik (R-3)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007

Thursday, February 22, 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

House Republicans Vote to Protect State of Arizona from Democrats' Historic Open Border Crisis

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – All 31 Republican members of the Arizona House of Representatives today voted to approve [HB 2748](#), sponsored by Representative Joseph Chaplik, to combat the uncontrolled tide of illegal immigration into the United States via the Arizona border and to protect Arizonans. All Democrats united to protect the open border crisis that their policies create.

“The Biden administration’s abject refusal to uphold federal immigration laws is anti-American,” Representative Chaplik said. **“It is directly responsible for catapulting our southern border into a state of chaos and facilitating an invasion unprecedented in scale and severity. Democrats at every level are working overtime to keep America’s borders open and unsecure, and Americans should demand to know why.”**

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

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

- Cartels are cutting holes in border fencing and controlling cross-border activity.
- 169 immigrants on the terrorist watch list tried to cross the southern border in the past year.
- 24,000+ Chinese nationals were apprehended crossing into the U.S. from Mexico.
- Over 150,000 gang members from Central and South America.
- Over 7 million illegal crossings in the last 3 years, and more than 1 million in the last 4 months.

Key provisions of HB 2748 include:

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

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

HB 2748, modeled after [Texas SB 4](#), now advances the Senate for consideration.

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

###