

January 20, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write with concern over the Department of Homeland Security's announcement to create a new *Climate Change Professionals Program*. Unfortunately, instead of focusing on the crisis at the southern border, you are prioritizing the creation of woke partisan government programs.

In a press release, you said, "The Climate Change Professionals Program will be instrumental in helping the Department adapt to our changing climate by providing hands-on experience and guidance to young professionals interested in climate adaptation and resilience. This program will develop the next generation of climate experts, improve climate literacy throughout the Department, and help us execute our Climate Action Plan to remain mission-resilient while reducing our own impacts on the environment."¹

Meanwhile, the southern border is experiencing a surge in drug trafficking and illegal border crossings. For example, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) announced this month that southern Texas had experienced a 1,066% increase in fentanyl seizures in the past year.² Agents at eight ports seized 87,652 pounds of narcotics, including 588 pounds of fentanyl. The surge in fentanyl has been so dramatic that the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) issued its first public safety report in nearly six years. The report shows that four out of every ten pills containing fentanyl carry a lethal dose.³

There is also a surge in illegal border crossing. According to CBP, there have been 1,734,686 encounters with migrants for FY 2021.⁴ This is the worst border crisis in

¹ *Department of Homeland Security Announces Climate Change Professionals Program*, DHS (Jan. 12, 2022)

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2022/01/12/department-homeland-security-announces-climate-change-professionals-program>.

² Alaa Elassar, *Border agents reported a 1,066% increase in fentanyl seized in south Texas last year*, CNN (Jan. 8, 2022) <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/08/us/fentanyl-seized-south-texas-border-2021/index.html>.

³ Drug Enforcement Administration, *DEA Reveals Criminal Drug Networks Are Flooding the U.S. with Deadly Fentanyl*, (Dec. 16, 2021), <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2021/12/16/dea-reveals-criminal-drug-networks-are-flooding-us-deadly-fentanyl>.

⁴ U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *Southwest Land Border Encounters*, (Oct. 14, 2021), <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>.

American history, yet it seems that the message is not making it through. Despite a court order to enforce the Remain in Mexico Policy, there are reports that only 40 migrants per day were being returned to Mexico—compared to the approximately 5,000 illegal border crossing each day.⁵

It is well past time to start prioritizing the border crisis. The American people are relying on you to do so. Prioritize the border, stop creating woke climate programs, and enforce the law.

So that Congress can consider remedial legislation, please provide the following information by February 15, 2022:

1. What is the Department's statutory authority for the *Climate Change Professionals Program*?
2. How does creating the *Climate Change Professionals Program* fit into the mission and timeliness of the current priorities of the Department of Homeland Security?
3. How would creating the *Climate Change Professionals Program* help diminish the crises at the southern border?
4. How would creating the *Climate Change Professionals Program* help stop the flow of fentanyl over the southern border?
5. How much funding, staffing and government resources will be used to create the *Climate Change Professionals Program*?
6. How much funding and staffing throughout the Department of Homeland Security are currently working on issues dealing with climate change?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, trailing flourish.

Josh Hawley
United States Senator

⁵ Jennie Taer, *Biden Border Officials Barely implementing Remain in Mexico Policy After Months Fighting It*, Daily Caller (Jan. 12, 2022), <https://dailycaller.com/2022/01/12/biden-border-officials-barely-implementing-remain-in-mexico-policy-after-months-fighting-it/>.