



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 20, 2024

Testimony: Former Border Chief Ordered to Not Discuss Terrorists at Border. Mother of Woman Murdered by Salvadoran Tells Her Story.

The former chief of the San Diego southwest border sector has accused the Biden-Harris administration of attempting to hide the magnitude of terror activity at the border.

Speaking before the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee on Wednesday, retired agent Aaron Heitke said administration higher-ups ordered him not to discuss the number of terror suspects apprehended by border agents.

Another witness was Patty Morin, the mother of Rachel Morin, the Harford County, Maryland, woman murdered by an illegal alien. The murderer: a Salvadoran murderer on the lam from the same charges in his own country.

Concern expressed by the Biden-Harris administration: Zero.

Heitke Statement

Noting that deportation is the only answer to illegal immigration, [Heitke said](#) the number of countries that would take back deportees steadily decreased:

For the first time in my 25 years and under five different administrations, whether through neglect or on purpose, I saw a large-scale lapse in our ability to return people to their country of origin.

As well, the administration dramatically cut detention space for illegals and private detention facilities were closed. “The fact that so many illegal aliens were being released into the United States spread worldwide very quickly,” Heitke said. Border-jumping illegals “increased exponentially,” he said, and his border “sectors were ordered to take in and process all the illegal aliens encountered on the border.”

The processing effort required almost all agents to be pulled from border duty. “Border Patrol zones across Texas, Arizona and California had no agent presence for weeks and months at a time,” [he continued](#):

Those who did not want to be caught could simply walk in. We have no idea who and what entered our country over this time. Throughout 2022 and 2023 I sent agents to Texas and Arizona to count gotaways. Those sectors could not even put enough agents in the field to



Homeland Security Committee



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see what they had missed.

But that purposely conceived chaos wasn't the worst of what the administration did.

In Heitke's San Diego sector, "we had an exponential increase in Significant Interest Aliens, [SIAs]" he said. "These are aliens with significant ties to terrorism."

Before Biden-Harris, the sector saw some 10-15 terrorist suspects per year, Heitke testified. But once word spread that Biden had opened the border, SIAs jumped: to 100 in 2022, more than 100 in 2023, and even more in 2024.

He added:

At the time, I was told I could not release any information on this increase in SIA's or mention any of the arrests. The administration was trying to convince the public that there was no threat at the border.

As for the drug trade, the San Diego sector is responsible for 80-90 percent of fentanyl and methamphetamine seizures annually. In his last year with the Border Patrol, the supply of fentanyl was so great that the price crashed. It went from \$10 per pill to 25 cents.

[Continued Heitke:](#)

To make matters worse, during 2022 and 2023 I had to shut down the San Diego traffic checkpoints, which are critical for drug interdiction, because resources had been diverted to the process and release mission. The large numbers also had and still have a negative impact on the San Diego community. I had to release illegal aliens by the hundreds each day into communities who couldn't support them. To quiet the problem two flights a week were provided from San Diego to Texas. These flights simply brought aliens that would have been released in San Diego over to Texas. Each flight cost approximately \$150,000. This was the administration's way of trying to quiet the border-wide crisis.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection [data show](#) that 736 terror suspects on the FBI's watchlist either tried to jump the borders or showed up at points of entry in fiscal 2023. In fiscal 2022, the number was 438.

So far this fiscal year, which ends in 10 days, the number is 469.

Morin Statement

Patricia Morin told members of the committee about her daughter, raped and murdered by MS-13 gang member [Victor Antonio Martinez Hernandez](#). Police allege he murdered mom-of-five Rachel Morin on the Ma & Pa Trail in Harford County, Maryland.

[Three-time deportee Hernandez](#) jumped the southwest border in February 2023 after fleeing murder charges in El Salvador. Then he violently assaulted a 9-year-old girl and her mother in California. DNA from that crime scene matched that found in clothing left in Maryland.

Police arrested him in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in a bar. [His trial begins](#) on October 23.

"President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris's open border policy is having a devastating



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impact across our great nation,” [Morin told the committee](#):

I live 1,800 miles from the southern border in a small town in northern Maryland. Yet a man who was wanted for murder in El Salvador made his way to my community ... and ambushed my daughter on a quaint walking trail in broad daylight.

Rachel grew up walking the trail, Morin said. The family thought it was safe. “It never occurred to us that a predator would target Rachel while she was jogging on that bright, sunny day in August 2023,” Morin said.

Morin described the devastation to her family, notably Rachel’s kids, one of whom is pregnant.

“We felt relieved when the suspect was finally caught,” she said:

But that relief quickly turned to horror and outrage when we learned that the suspect was an illegal immigrant. This man was wanted for killing a woman in his home country when he walked into ours.

What’s worse is that border patrol would have known that if they had followed the law and swabbed him for DNA the first three times he tried to get into this country. They just turned him around and allowed him to come back again and again until he finally got through the border. ...

The open border policy of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris caused my daughter’s death.

Sadly enough, Morin isn’t the only victim of that policy, as many American families well know.



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