



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on May 8, 2019

## Border Crisis Causes Feds to Shut Down Checkpoints; Cartels Overrun New Mexico County

As the worsening border crisis required the overworked U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency to close inspection facilities on highways between the Mexican border and Alamogordo, New Mexico, so they could send more agents to El Paso to help stem the tide of illegal aliens crossing the border, it left Otero County (of which Alamogordo is the county seat) undefended.



With the CBP stations closed down, members of drug cartels and human traffickers from south of the border have infiltrated Otero County, creating a crisis so bad that county commissioners declared a state of emergency.

"It's a green light for the cartels when border checkpoints are down," Otero County Sheriff David Black told the *New York Post*.

Black said his deputies have had to shift their focus from traditional law-enforcement duties to apprehending drug smugglers. "I've had to redeploy my guys," Black told a *Post* reporter who visited in the Otero County Sheriff's Office. He told the reporter that his deputies seized \$60,000 worth of illicit drugs in April.

The *Post* also interviewed Kyle Williamson, the Drug Enforcement Agency's special agent in charge of the El Paso Division, responsible for all of New Mexico and west Texas.

"We've lost our second line of enforcement," said Williamson, who said the overwhelming crisis at the border with Mexico is allowing drug traffickers to more easily bring their illicit cargo north.

"Are cartels capitalizing on the confusion at the border? Yes, they are!" Williamson told the *Post*. "They are using it as a cover to move drugs, which are coming through legal ports of entry. If your drugs are coming through legal ports of entry, you need lines of defense."

Williamson said his team recently seized 44 pounds of fentanyl — "enough to wipe out all of New Mexico, Texas and the entire state of Chihuahua."

He told the reporter that most of the drugs are being trafficked by a gang known as Barrio Aztecas, the enforcement arm of the Juarez Cartel.

"They are an incredibly violent gang," he said, adding that they have between 2,000 and 2,200 members.

The reporter also quoted Couy Griffin, chairman of Otero County's Board of Commissioners.

"We have got to secure our border, period," Griffin told the *Post*.

Both Black and Griffin were critical of New Mexico's Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, who recently



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withdrew 118 National Guard troops from the southern border. Griffin, a Democrat, made the move largely as an act of defiance against President Trump, whose efforts to secure the border she described as a “charade of fear mongering.”

Griffin did not hesitate to criticize Grisham.

“Unfortunately, we have a governor who is so interested in politics that she has lost touch with the people of this county,” she told the newspaper. “We have a governor who continues to claim that there is no crisis at the border.”

An [article posted by The New American](#) May 7 noted that it had just been a very busy weekend for both Border Patrol agents and smugglers — who were caught moving both people and more than \$1 million in illegal drugs.



*Image: natasaadzic via iStock / Getty Images Plus*

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