



Obama Asks for \$3.7 Billion to Respond to Border Surge

On July 8, President Obama sent a letter to Speaker of the House John Boehner requesting emergency supplemental appropriations in the amount of \$3.7 billion to “comprehensively address” the “urgent humanitarian situation” on “on both sides of the Southwest border.”



The request was made in response to the many well-documented reports of an overwhelming surge of illegal immigrants crossing our Southern border, including (according to administration estimates) 52,000 unaccompanied children, mostly from Central America, who have been apprehended at the border since October.

Because underage illegal aliens, especially those who come from countries that do not border the United States, cannot be easily deported, they are transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement to be housed in shelters, including many on military bases. Conditions in these shelters are reportedly extremely poor, which is why the crisis has often been referred to as a “humanitarian” crisis, rather than a national security crisis. But it is unquestionably both.

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In an analysis of the presidential appropriations request, Dan Cadman of the Center for Immigrations Studies had this to say:

While administration leaders publicly claim they are working to effectively stem the tide of arrivals and ensure their speedy removal, everything about the budget request suggests this is more about resettlement, prolonging removal proceedings into infinity, and then quietly letting the tens of thousands of most recent arrivals recede into the woodwork of society to join the more than 840,000 aliens who are already fugitives from immigration courts around the country.

As we noted in our article on July 8, even a recently released Department of Homeland Security report acknowledged that the government’s failure to deport those who have entered the United States illegally is among the “pull factors” prompting more people to follow suit. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) stated last March, “Less than 0.2% of the approximately 12 million illegal immigrants and visa overstays in the U.S. were placed into removal proceedings who did not have serious criminal convictions on their record.”

As for Obama’s \$3.7 billion request, almost half (\$1.8 billion) is “to provide the appropriate care for unaccompanied children, consistent with Federal law, while maintaining services for refugees.”

One would think that it would be less expensive to spend some of those funds to charter planes to fly the “unaccompanied children” (some of whom have been found to be members of the notorious MS-13 gang) back to Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala and let their own governments house them.



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on July 10, 2014

In comparison, how much of the president's request is targeted specifically for border enforcement? The report from acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, Brian Deese, accompanying the request provides these figures:

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

\$879 million for the detention, prosecution, and removal of apprehended undocumented families; \$116 million for transportation costs associated with the surge in apprehensions of unaccompanied children; and

\$109 million for expanded domestic and international immigration and customs investigatory and other enforcement efforts.

DHS Customs and Border Protection

\$364 million for operational costs associated with responding to the surge in the apprehensions of unaccompanied children and families;

\$29 million for expansion of the Border Enforcement Security Task Force program; and

\$39 million to increase air surveillance capabilities to improve detection and interdiction of illegal activity in the Rio Grande Valley region.

The report does not specify how Homeland Security will "respond" to the surge. Will the money be spent to build more and more facilities to house the unaccompanied children and families until they are released into the general population? Of will it be used to deport them back to their countries of origin?

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) immediately put the president's budget request under scrutiny, saying that only five percent of the requesting funding would provide for "boots on the ground" along our Southern border.

"This is an HHS and social services bill that is entitled border security to make it appear as if it's responding to the problem," Cruz said in an interview with National Review Online.

Cruz, who has been an outspoken critic of the Obama administration's failure to secure our borders, continued:

This supplemental bill is an admission by the president that he has no intention of solving this problem, and, indeed, that he anticipates it continuing indefinitely, because he is simply asking for money to deal with those kids who are coming after they've been brutalized, rather than taking the necessary steps to prevent them from coming here in the first place, to prevent them from being victimized.



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