



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on June 17, 2021

## Texas Gov. Abbott Launches Border Wall Construction with \$250M in Down Payment

Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott on Wednesday formally [announced](#) that Texas will build its own border wall. Abbott accused the Biden administration of abandoning its responsibility to protect the southern U.S. border: "Today we are announcing that Texas will build a border wall in our state to help secure our border," Abbott said at a press conference.

The governor promised a \$250 million down payment to begin the project, allowing the state to hire a project manager and get the task underway. He said the construction on the wall would be built on a combination of state land and donations of private land, and be partly funded by donations.



AP Images

The *Dallas Morning News* later [reported](#) that the down payment will come from the state's Department of Criminal Justice.

On Tuesday, in a podcast [interview](#) on a conservative talk show discussing politics called "*Ruthless*," Abbott said the state would solicit donations to help build the wall.

"For everybody in the United States, really everybody in the entire world who wants to help Texas build the border wall, there will be a place there where they can contribute to Texas building the border wall," he said.

Abbott reiterated the idea on Wednesday and said donations could be made on a [website](#) for the border wall or by sending a check in the mail. He ensured the public that donations would go to a fund that would be overseen by the state and governor's office.

The land on which the wall will be erected will be identified by the program manager and contractors and include land already owned by the state or private citizens who can "volunteer" that land for the wall.

The combination of state and privately donated land is expected to yield "hundreds of miles" to build the wall. It is noted that state agencies have begun talking to property owners about putting up fencing on their private land.

In addition, the federal government must return the Texan land to private citizens, which was obtained by the U.S. government in order to build a border wall, Abbott insisted.

"In response to the federal government's neglect of all of the people who live along the border, the people who are facing the consequences of the spread of drugs like fentanyl, Texas is stepping up and doing more than any other state ever has done to respond to these challenges along the border," Abbott said. "Texas taxpayers are having to step up so we as a state can protect our citizens."



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The same day, Abbott sent [a letter](#) to President Biden demanding the return of border property seized by the federal government.

“The federal government used condemnation powers to take property from Texans for the purpose of building a border wall,” the governor stated. “Once you took office, however, your Administration made clear the federal government will not move forward with building the border wall at this time.”

It was [reported](#) in April that the Biden administration continues to seize private land near the U.S.-Mexico border to be used to continue building a wall, despite Biden [pausing](#) the construction of the wall on his first day in office.

One day after Abbott’s [announcement](#) to proceed with the construction of the wall, the White House renewed its [call](#) to end construction of the border wall, calling on Congress to cancel funds it previously appropriated to border barriers and redirect them toward other border management efforts. The White House also [said](#) the Trump administration paid up to \$46 million per mile for some segments of newly built parts of the wall, even though federal lawmakers have [estimated](#) that it cost the Trump administration about \$27 million per mile in some parts of Texas.

Customs and Border Protection [said](#) there were 452 miles of new barriers completed by the end of 2020. Of them, 131 miles were built in the Texas counties of El Paso and Hudspeth, and 17 miles in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr counties.

Even though Abbott may face legal [challenges](#) to his mission, the border must be secured, as the surge in migration continues. There were more than [180,000](#) migrants encountered in May alone, with the summer months still ahead. The Biden administration has blamed the spike on “root causes” such as violence, poverty, and climate change in Central America, while downplaying the role the relaxing of restrictions and law enforcement has had on the surge.

Former President Donald Trump [announced](#) on June 15 that he would tour Texas’ southern border with governor Abbott on June 30.

“The Biden Administration inherited from me the strongest, safest, and most secure border in U.S history and in mere weeks they turned it into the single worst border crisis in U.S history. It’s an unmitigated disaster zone,” Trump said in a statement.



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