



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on September 27, 2024

## Harris to Visit U.S.-Mexico Border to Blame Trump for the Border Crisis

Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris is scheduled to visit the U.S.-Mexico border in Douglas, Arizona, on Friday. Harris has made only a few trips to the border during her tenure as the Biden administration's "border czar." She continues to face strong criticism from Republicans, who argue that she has not effectively managed the border crisis. The visit is part of a broader effort to improve her record on border security and immigration reform. Harris aims to position herself as the most qualified candidate to address these complex issues.



AP Images

### Trump to Blame?

According to the [Daily Beast report](#) quoting a senior Harris campaign insider, Harris plans to send the following message:

The American people deserve a president who cares more about border security than playing political games.

The report continues,

Harris will turn the tables, and blame the ex-president for the immigration crisis at the southern border by spotlighting his leading role last spring in killing a bipartisan deal [[S.4361, Border Act of 2024](#)] to curb illegal border crossings.

Harris has repeatedly blamed former president Donald Trump for [undermining support](#) for the bill and thus preventing the resolution of the current border crisis, which arguably has been caused by the demolition of the numerous immigration policies put in place under the Trump administration.

### "Tough" Harris

Harris plans to draw a clear distinction between her approach and Trump's by highlighting his obstruction of bipartisan "immigration reform" efforts. She aims to present herself as the candidate offering a pragmatic solution to the ongoing challenges surrounding immigration.

According to the report,

[Harris will] tout her experience as a former prosecutor taking on drug and human smuggling cartels and announce that stopping the flow of lethal fentanyl across the border will be "a top priority," the senior campaign aide said. Harris will propose adding new fentanyl detection machines at U.S. entry points.



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Some reports indicate that Harris intends to highlight the administration's recent executive actions. She is expected to claim that these actions have led to significant "progress" in reducing migration.

Ahead of her visit, Harris' campaign has launched a new ad titled "Never Backed Down." The ad outlines her plan to "hire thousands more border agents, enforce the law and step up technology."

### **What's the Deal?**

The "bipartisan deal" Harris refers to as the key tool for addressing the border crisis is the Border Act of 2024 (S.4361). It was introduced by Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) in May 2024. The bill ostensibly seeks to address both border security and the rising problem of fentanyl trafficking. The bill increases emergency supplemental appropriations to bolster border security. It focuses on modernizing enforcement capabilities and enhancing the U.S. immigration system's efficiency. To speed up case processing, the bill calls for hiring more immigration judges and staff. It also dedicates additional resources to detecting and combating fentanyl smuggling at U.S. entry points.

Crucially, the bill grants emergency authority to manage border crossings when they hit specific thresholds. If daily crossings average 5,000 or more, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can take immediate action to manage border control under critical conditions.

The legislation also includes measures such as [construction of the border wall](#), expedited deportations and increased immigration detention.

### **Why It Failed**

Trump [urged](#) Republicans to reject the bill, and it ultimately failed in the Senate in May 2024 due to a lack of bipartisan support. Both Republicans and Democrats opposed the bill for different reasons. Many Republicans found the bill too lenient, particularly its provisions allowing asylum seekers to work and granting legal status to certain undocumented groups. They believed these measures would encourage illegal immigration. Additionally, critics argued that the bill prioritized funding for processing migrants and providing services over enforcing stronger border security.

On the Democratic side, progressives opposed the bill's focus on enforcement measures such as stricter asylum standards and increased immigration detention, which they viewed as too similar to Trump-era policies. They also criticized the bill for failing to address the root causes of migration, such as economic instability in Central America, and for lacking sufficient humanitarian provisions.

### **Harris' Record of Border Visits**

Harris' upcoming trip to Douglas will mark at least her third visit to the border. She made her first border trip in June 2021, visiting El Paso, Texas, where she met with local officials and toured border facilities. This visit came after months of pressure from Republicans, who accused her of ignoring the border crisis despite being tasked with overseeing the administration's border policy. Her trip was seen as a response to mounting criticism that she had not done enough to address the growing challenges at the southern border. At the time, Harris emphasized her role in addressing the root causes of migration rather than directly managing border enforcement.

Her second visit occurred in February 2023, when she traveled to San Diego, California, to meet with Border Patrol agents and discuss efforts to combat drug trafficking. Harris aimed to use the trip to yet again quell criticism from both Republicans and moderate Democrats. Both had argued at the time that the administration had not taken sufficient action to reduce illegal border crossings.

The third visit comes at a crucial time for Harris, who is aiming to reshape her image as a "tough" but



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fair leader on immigration ahead of the 2024 election.

### **Trump: Why Did She Not Fix It?**

In a last-minute appearance in New York City on Thursday, Trump launched a sharp attack on Harris ahead of her scheduled visit. Trump blamed “comrade Harris” for “destroying our country,” describing how “our country has never been under siege like this.”

According to [The Hill report](#), Trump’s comments framed Harris as the architect of the crisis that has brought “suffering, misery, and death” to the United States. For example, Trump argued Harris ordered an immediate stop to the completion of the border wall. He also blasted her for instituting policies that allowed asylum seekers to remain free while awaiting their immigration hearings rather than being detained. To conclude, Trump accused Harris of exacerbating the border crisis, saying, “She’s done the worst job, probably in the history of any border.”



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