



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on November 12, 2022

Report: Progressive Border Chief Chris Magnus Being Forced Out of Job

Tension and internal struggles appear to be playing out within the Biden administration.

Chris Magnus, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), has reportedly been asked to resign or be fired. The *Los Angeles Times* interviewed Magnus and was the first outlet to [break the story](#), revealing that the call to step down came from Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

The pressure to leave comes as the last fiscal year, which came to a close in September, was marked by a record two million encounters by CBP with migrants at the border.



AP Images
Chris Magnus

This has reportedly led to Mayorkas losing confidence in Magnus. If the CBP commissioner does not resign, Mayorkas will recommend to Biden that he be fired, the *Times* reported. Magnus said Mayorkas gave him that ultimatum personally during a Wednesday meeting, and it was reiterated by John Tien, the second in command at the Department of Homeland Security, the next day.

According to Magnus, he should expect to be fired within the next few days.

"I expressed to him that I felt there was no justification for me to resign when I still cared deeply about the work I was doing and felt that that work was focused on the things I was hired to do in the first place," Magnus told the newspaper of his meeting with Tien.

Part of the problem allegedly lies in Magnus' decision not to keep giving a "retention bonus" to Raul Ortiz, head of Border Patrol.

The *Times* reported:

Magnus said he made the move because Ortiz did not favor reforms related to Border Patrol, including Magnus' cultural changes.

On Tuesday, Magnus had gone to a meeting of Border Patrol chiefs in El Paso after Mayorkas had ordered him not to, Magnus said.

"After me making extensive attempts to reach [Mayorkas] and discuss the matter, I went to the meeting so I could engage with the chiefs on various issues and concerns," Magnus said.

"I also met with Chief Ortiz to see how we might best work together moving forward."

Officials within the administration did not paint Magnus in favorable terms. One said he has often been "missing in action," and has not been as outspoken on immigration as other officials despite his job title. Another official claimed Magnus has often not attended border policy meetings and did not have a say



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in major border policies when it came time to make decisions.

For his part, Magnus said he did not receive an invitation to attend border policy meetings at first, but attended almost all meetings once he was invited later.

“When it comes to the border, I was never comfortable saying the border was secure, but I was part of an effort with many other people to make it as secure as possible with a focus on people and technology,” he told the outlet.

Prior to being confirmed to his current post in December, Magnus had a reputation as a leftist police chief in three different cities: Tucson, Arizona; Fargo, North Dakota; and Richmond, California.

An advocate of sanctuary cities, he famously rejected federal money to work on border security with the agency he’s now in charge of, and held back from cooperating with Border Patrol leaders.

As CBP commissioner, he tried to make the agency more progressive, hiring more women officers and putting out stricter rules for chasing migrants getting away in automobiles. He even clamped down on social media usage by officers after the criticism about offensive humor within the ranks related to dead migrants.

Magnus also publicly criticized the Trump administration’s Title 42, which allows border agents to rapidly turn back migrants, and the actions of Republican governors who have transported illegal migrants to Democrat-run cities.

Republicans have honed in on the disorder at the border as one of their top critiques of the Biden White House. This has reportedly led Mayorkas to want to preserve his own image on the issue.

The *Times* wrote that “John Sandweg, a former top Homeland Security Department official during the Obama administration, said that Mayorkas probably wants someone to be a buffer between him and the political fallout he’s facing.”

“You have the raging issues at the border, and it is not going to get any better. The secretary does not want to be the face of this,” Sandweg said of the DHS secretary.



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