



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Border Security Opposing SB 1403

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Chairman Birdwell and Members of the Senate Committee on Border Security, I, Luis Figueroa, Chief of Legislative Affairs, on behalf of Every Texan (formerly CPPP) oppose SB 1403.

Every Texan opposes SB 1403 relating to an interstate compact on border security and immigration enforcement for equity, safety, and accountability concerns. Senate Bill 1403 proposes an interstate compact for the purpose of border enforcement of federal immigration laws on the Texas-Mexico border.

SB 1403 is Unnecessary and Excessive

The annual budget of the U.S. Border Patrol, the primary federal law enforcement agency charged with "border management and control," increased from \$400 million in the fiscal year 1994 to \$3.8 billion in the fiscal year 2017. During this period, the number of Border Patrol agents stationed along the U.S.- Mexico border [grew by nearly 450 percent](#), from 3,747 to over 16,605 agents. Since 2013, budgets passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by the Governor have each included at least \$500 million dedicated to an increasingly militarized state presence in border and border-adjacent communities. The most recent allocation of the state's General Revenue known as "Operation Lone Star" is an indefinite mobilization of thousands of State Guard and DPS troopers. If continued, this effort will cost Texas taxpayers no less than another \$4 billion in the 2024-2025 budget. These border security operations implementing a DPS deterrent force have been heavily criticized for lack of accountability, metrics of success, and harassment of local residents. Bringing additional troops and law enforcement from other states would only exacerbate these concerns.

SB 1403 Lacks Safeguards to Ensure Safety and Oversight

SB 1254 provides no safeguards for training and even nixes the Congressional approval required in previous iterations of this legislation which likely violates Article I, Section 10 of the United States Constitution that provides that "No State shall, without the Consent of Congress... enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State or with a foreign power." More to the point, immigration law is extremely complex, much like tax law, and should not be enforced without extensive training. Federal law already provides for local enforcement of immigration laws through 287(g) agreements that essentially deputize and train offices in federal law enforcement. This bill makes no such requirements and does not provide for any Texas Legislative or Federal oversight of accountability or training. SB 1403 does not provide for any safeguards on which states would be responsible for the travel, housing, and overtime costs of non-Texas law enforcement officers, which comprises the majority of the state's current costs for DPS border security operations and will lead to more wasteful spending.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to oppose SB 1403.