



SCR 23

Testimony Before the Texas Senate Committee on Border Security

Chairman Birdwell, Members of the Committee:

My name is Carine Martinez, and I am campaign director for Secure & Sovereign Texas at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute based in Austin, Texas. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR 23.

In the past three years, the federal government has relinquished its constitutional responsibility to provide a secure border not just for Texans but for all Americans. Thankfully, the state of Texas stepped in like no other state did, trying the best it could, within constitutional bounds, to bring some order to our southern border. This resolution is another demonstration of Texas' commitment to protect its citizens by both holding the federal government accountable and stepping in.

The Foundation's research shows in several ways that this resolution should pass:

1. The Mexican drug cartels qualify to be designated as [foreign terrorist organizations](#)—they both exercise incredible violence against civilians and are politically motivated, in that there is evidence they intervened in favor of state actors.
2. The situation we are facing fits the definition of an [invasion under Article I, Section 10, of the U.S. Constitution](#)—Mexican drug cartels have met both criteria of entry and enmity.
3. The [collusion between Mexican government officials and Mexican elites and organized crime](#) is unlikely to lead to a reliable border security partnership between Texas or the U.S. and Mexico.

As a result, we must urge Congress to act now. Here are a few examples of how the cartels are currently attacking our way of life and sovereignty:

- It is estimated that [drug cartels control between 35% and 40% of the Mexican territory](#)—and they do control the border with Texas.
- Border Patrol agents are [increasingly assaulted](#) while trying to do their job. Since October 2022, [208 Border Patrol agents](#) have been assaulted according to Customs and Border Patrol.
- DPS has seized more than 360 million [lethal doses of fentanyl](#) since the beginning of Operation Lone Star in 2021.
- Texas border communities are living with the daily reality of dangerous [high-speed car chases](#) in normally peaceful small towns, as well as the [littering](#) and [destruction](#) of their property.
- Cartels are [recruiting American teenagers on social media](#) to drive migrants throughout the country, facilitating human trafficking and putting our youth in danger.

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- Cartels are not only smuggling and trafficking migrants, they often [violently assault or rape them](#), and blackmail their families, while using them as a diversion to overwhelm Border Patrol.
- Violence has been increasing in Mexico, with cartels fighting for territory. According to Mexico's daily *El Universal* and as reported by the Mexican Secretaría de Gobernación, the number of [foreigners killed in Mexico increased](#) by more than 132% during the administration of current president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, compared to the administration of Enrique Peña Nieto, with 1,347 homicides of foreigners between 2019 and 2021. Mexico also saw at least [13 journalists killed in 2022](#).

Congress is starting to notice. Several bills and resolutions have been introduced that would target the cartels:

- Sen. Roger Marshall introduced [S.698](#), the Drug Cartel Terrorist Designation Act.
- Rep. Chip Roy introduced [H.R.1564](#), To direct the Secretary of State to submit to Congress a report on the designation of the Gulf Cartel, the Cartel Del Noreste, the Cartel de Sinaloa, and the Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion as foreign terrorist organizations, and for other purposes.
- Rep. Mary Miller introduced [H.Res. 216](#), Calling for the designation of Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations.
- Sen. Graham has also [expressed the desire](#) to designate Mexican drug cartels as terrorist organizations.
- Other initiatives include Rep. Crenshaw's [H.J.Res.18](#), AUMF CARTEL Influence Resolution and Rep. Tony Gonzales' [H.R.163](#), the Security First Act.

SCR 23 would help bring support to those in Congress who have decided to take a step in the right direction to defend American sovereignty, American interests, and American citizens.

For all these reasons, we support SCR 23.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

