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STOPPING THE INVASION ON OUR SOUTHERN BORDER *Solutions from a Soldier Who Served There*

Op-Ed by Frank LaRose | Full column [here](#)

On a dark night in south Texas, I encountered something I will never forget.

I was a young Army specialist who volunteered to deploy to the border with JTF6, a counter-narcotics joint task force. That night, we encountered a group who had crossed the border illegally who were carrying a young child. As the border patrol agents took care to search them, we discovered a gut-wrenching reality: wrapped up with the bundled child was a package of drugs, stuffed into the toddler's diaper where they thought we wouldn't look.

That experience guides my commitment to securing our border every single day. What is occurring on our border today is nothing short of an invasion and the consequences are staggering. Securing our southern border must be our top priority to stop drugs and criminals from pouring into Ohio that are killing our citizens but also to stop the humanitarian crisis occurring there too.

Unfortunately, too many weak politicians in Washington see it differently. In fact, a few months ago, Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown remarked in an interview that voters don't care about the issue.

Senator, you are dead wrong. The voters I encounter on a daily basis care very deeply and are very concerned about the threat posed by a completely open border. Especially the families who have lost a loved one to a fentanyl overdose.

The fact is, situations like the one I described at the border have skyrocketed under the watch of President Joe Biden and Senator Brown. They've worked to remove any semblance of a real border with Mexico. Having served at the border I know that a nation with no borders isn't a nation at all.

When you have more than ten thousand illegal immigrants crossing our border in a single day and record amounts of deadly fentanyl plaguing our communities killing Americans, that should signal a crisis for any reasonable person. But evidently not for the Biden Administration.

At first, I thought the administration was just incompetent and Sherrod Brown was just enabling their failed policies. Now I'm questioning whether Democrats in Washington are intentionally putting our nation at risk. Their decision to let thousands of illegal immigrants flood our cities with nothing more than a note to appear in court raises serious questions about whether they have any intention of defending our border at all.

But we know how to secure a border. We've been advising other nations how to do so for years as I did in Iraq when my team trained their border patrol. But it takes intentionality and courage.

It starts with physical barriers. Yes, building the wall. Democrats mocked and worked to undo President Trump's policies. But they were wrong. A secure border ensures we can track who is coming into our nation and that they are doing so legally. It's a tested and proven solution if implemented correctly. We also need to take advantage of the latest technologies. Surveillance methods have advanced tremendously since my border mission, and by equipping our border patrol, we can take proactive steps to interdict illegal migration before they set foot on our soil.

We should also designate the cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, which would allow us to use all of our resources to defeat them. From pumping

fentanyl into our communities, to abductions, to human trafficking, these cartels are a real threat, but one unseen and apparently unworthy of a response by Senator Brown.

Additionally, we need to send a message that breaking our laws will never be tolerated. We must reverse the Biden administration's amnesty first policies by deporting those who came illegally during the wave of illegal crossings over the last three years. There must be no amnesty for those who come illegally and a lifetime ban from ever gaining citizenship or government benefits. If your first act in this country is to break the law, you should not be rewarded with citizenship. Additionally, birthright citizenship should not be extended to those who enter our country illegally. It creates not only an incentive to break the law, but a tragic situation for families.

As lawmakers in Washington finally work to pass a budget, securing our border must be their focus. They should advance legislation like the FINISH IT Act that would equip states with the available resources needed to finish the wall, and they should hold the Biden administration accountable for their failures.

This is about national sovereignty, public safety and human dignity. Without a secure border, we don't really have a secure nation.

Frank LaRose is Ohio's Secretary of State and candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Read the full column featured in The Washington Examiner [here](#).

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