

JACK REED
RHODE ISLAND
COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES, RANKING MEMBER
BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS
INTELLIGENCE, EX. OFFICER

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3903

Washington, DC

728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3903
(202) 224-4642

Rhode Island

1000 Chapel View Boulevard, Suite 290
Cranston, RI 02920-3074
(401) 943-3100

One Exchange Terrace, Room 408
Providence, RI 02903-1744
(401) 528-5200

1 (800) 284-4200

TDD Relay Rhode Island
1 (800) 745-5555

<http://reed.senate.gov>

November 1, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

I support robust, effective border security. The best way to secure our border is by enacting comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform and effectively allocating our national security dollars. Your recent pronouncements regarding migrant caravans in southern Mexico mischaracterize the situation, are unlikely to achieve effective border security, and do not reflect the best attributes of our country.

To date, the Department of Defense has provided no indication to the Senate Armed Services Committee that the migrant caravan -- still about 1,000 miles and weeks away from reaching our southern border -- poses a direct national security threat to the United States. Your decision to rush thousands of our troops to the border at this time seems politically motivated and fails to implement reasonable and appropriate steps to address the true nature of the problem. This is not a military problem; it does not warrant a military solution.

Instead of redirecting U.S. troops from their current missions and deploying them to our southern border, you should first exhaust all diplomatic and humanitarian means.

I urge you to take the following steps:

First, you should immediately send an appropriate team of diplomatic and Homeland Security Department officials to southern Mexico to inform the migrants that they will not be permitted to simply enter the United States. These officials should also begin gathering appropriate information from those who have legitimate asylum claims. Every effort should be made to ensure that migrants understand the reality of U.S. laws and the fact that any attempt to illegally enter our country will result in them being detained by the roughly 16,000 federal agents patrolling our southwest border.

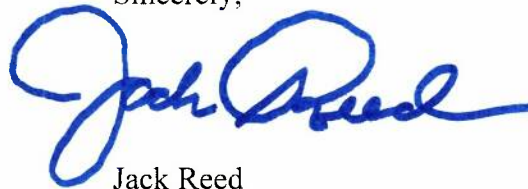
Second, you should provide the Mexican government and international refugee agencies with a commitment of support and assistance as they seek to provide food and temporary shelter for the migrants in southern Mexico.

Third, you should immediately offer to help enhance the ability of the Mexican government to process any asylum claims in accordance with international law. You should do the same with the Central American governments so those seeking asylum can apply in their home countries, rather than risk the arduous journey north. In fact, such a program already exists, and it should be significantly expanded.

Fourth, you should provide a full accounting of the financial costs of this deployment as well as the impacts it will have on any ongoing military missions.

In the absence of bipartisan consensus to fix our broken immigration system, these four steps would demonstrate leadership and strength rather than fear and weakness when it comes to protecting our border. I encourage you to take them swiftly rather than simply wait and risk a humanitarian crisis at our border.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jack" and last name "Reed" clearly distinguishable.

Jack Reed
United States Senator