

United States Senate

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

This past Thursday and Friday, eighteen of my Senate colleagues and I visited the border and witnessed firsthand the staggering public health and humanitarian crisis caused by your policies. We understand the heartbreaking tragedy unfolding at the border because we were there. We saw it. But the American people are unable to see it because you remain intent on keeping the media from shining a light on your administration's failures.

On Friday, when we held a press conference on the banks of the Rio Grande to explain what we were seeing, journalists from across the country came to report. Yet not a single one of those cameras, and not a single one of those reporters, was allowed inside the Donna Facility that we toured earlier that day. They could not show the American people what it looks like when a tent city built to house 250 children under COVID restrictions instead houses 4,200. They could not show the American people cages after cages of little boys lying side-by-side, of little girls lying side-by-side, covered with reflective emergency blankets with virtually no space between them. They could not see the playpen of infants and toddlers brought here by human traffickers and then left alone. They could not see the row of children who, having just been crammed into the crowded cages, were now testing positive for COVID-19.

Similarly, none of these cameras or reporters could be with us on Thursday night, when we saw a makeshift processing center that border patrol agents referred to as "clandestine" underneath the Anzalduas bridge between Mexico and the United States. At midnight, we saw hundreds of individuals, many of them infants, who had just crossed the Rio Grande under the control of cartel-affiliated smugglers, sitting on the ground between plastic construction fencing. Idling nearby were buses ready to release these individuals into the interior without appropriate COVID screening or assurances that any of these individuals will appear at a later date for an immigration hearing.

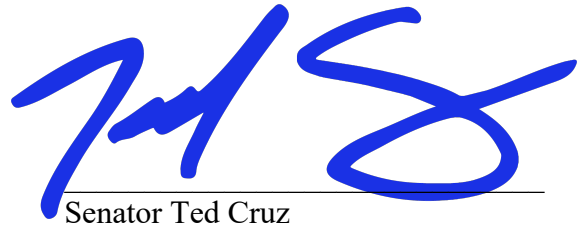
The reporters and the cameras could not see any of this because you, President Biden, prevented it. I sent you a letter last week urging you to allow us to bring media with us. Not only did you refuse, you actively worked to prevent the American public from seeing what we saw. When I took pictures to show the American people the conditions at the Donna facility (after blurring all faces to protect the privacy of the individuals held there), a political appointee sent by your administration jumped in front of my camera to try to stop me from doing my job. She threatened another senator that if he did not delete his pictures, the entire delegation would be kicked out and prevented from conducting our constitutional oversight role.

This is outrageous. The Trump administration allowed media into DHS facilities. So did the Obama administration, the Bush administration, and the Clinton administration. But you want to hide what is going on.

On Monday, I will tour the Kay Bailey Hutchinson (“KBH”) Convention Center in Dallas. This is a temporary detention facility designed to accommodate the overwhelming influx of unaccompanied children (“UAC”) coming across the border due to your policies. Already, this temporary facility is nearing its limit of 3,000 unaccompanied minors—an unsurprising fact considering that CBP was holding more than 5,000 UAC in its custody before it opened.

Although some in the press remain uninterested in this crisis, many others are now recognizing that a humanitarian crisis is a humanitarian crisis no matter who sits in the Oval Office and are beginning to cover this critically important story. I again urge you to stop denying reality, confront the consequences of your policies, and allow the media access to these facilities. The media should be able to come with me on my tour of the KBH center to show the American people what is happening in this country.

Sincerely,



Senator Ted Cruz