



Texas lawmaker offers ‘out of box’ plan

Texas state Rep. Eddie Morales, D-Eagle Pass, told *Border Report* on Tuesday that these [congressional] delegations have been parading up and down the South Texas border for three years and they “do absolutely nothing.” And he says that isn’t solving the border immigration problem, or Congress’ debate of border spending.

“We’ve had these delegations of congressmen come take pictures by their boat ramp or on the Border Patrol boats. And then they go back and do absolutely nothing. I mean, they should be having emergency committee meetings right now on passing effective immigration reform policies to address this issue,” Morales said.

He is offering what he calls an “**outside-the-box solution**,” whereby Texas would issue work visas to migrants and keep them in the state and track their whereabouts, and even work with Mexico to send groups of migrants to fill jobs needed here but ensure they do not go elsewhere without permission.

“We cannot continue doing the same thing and expecting different results,” he said.

Morales lives in Eagle Pass and is the city attorney. He says he doesn’t like seeing his hometown on all national newscasts cast in such a negative light.

To stop the surge, Morales is proposing the **Texas Secure Our Border Migrant Processing Plan**, in which the state would charge every migrant \$2,000 for a “migrant processing fee” and in return, they would be allowed to work within the state at jobs pending proof of an employment sponsor. They must have no criminal history and must come through Texas land ports, not illegally through the river.

He told *Border Report* that he is running the idea by other Democratic lawmakers and trying to get Republicans to buy in.

He sent a letter to Gov. Greg Abbott last week after the mayor of Eagle Pass issued an emergency declaration due to the migrant surge. He has asked Abbott to call a special legislative session on border security and to specifically take up his plan for a vote to lawmakers.

“So that Texas can step up in the absence of Congress’ failure,” he wrote.

He added that if a fee was imposed per migrant it could bring in millions of dollars for the State of Texas and would cut into human smuggling organizations’ revenue, which typically charge thousands of dollars per person who crosses the river.

“If we do it through the dry land ports then we will take this billion dollar industry — that we have ourselves created and perpetuated for the cartels and the human smugglers — and we will take that industry away. And we will charge that \$2,000 fee so that they can get a non-voting ID-card with certain conditions,” he said.

He says if approved then migrants would be processed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection at the ports of entry, and in a separate tent, the State of Texas would issue non-voting ID cards and given regulations they must follow while in the Lone Star State.

Find the full story online at <https://www.kxan.com/border-report/texas-lawmakers-offer-border-solutions-as-congress-debates-budget-including-border-security/>.