



CHAIR JODEY ARRINGTON

# HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE

## Chairman Arrington Delivers Opening Remarks at Hearing on “*The Cost of the Border Crisis*”

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Chairman Jodey Arrington (R-TX) delivered his opening remarks at the [hearing](#), “*The Cost of the Border Crisis*”, highlighting the importance of border security and the fiscal implications of President Biden’s failed border policies.



Click [HERE](#) to watch Chairman Arrington’s opening remarks.

### **Opening Statement as Delivered:**

*“The American people are as familiar with this issue as any, with respect to the wide open borders in the United States and the humanitarian disaster that has ensued as a result. The greatest national security threat to the American people is posed by these open borders. The social cost has consistently been*



*well in front of the American people. But I don't think we've talked enough about the financial burden to taxpayers and the fiscal impact.*

*The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) has done a great job. Studies suggest this cost is upwards of **\$400 billion**, but their cost estimate is **\$150 billion**. The lion's share of that cost is borne by state and local governments. State and local governments can't borrow or print money like the federal government, so they have to balance their budgets by either absorbing this cost through raising taxes or they have to cut services to their citizens.*

*This **\$150 billion**, when you look at the **22 million people** that are estimated to be in this country illegally, comes out to about **\$9,000 tax dollars per illegal immigrant**. Roughly **\$9,000 per illegal immigrant** that taxpayers are fronting. That's more than we spend per Medicaid beneficiary. That's more than we spend on the most vulnerable American citizen for their health care. That's more than we spend for our heroes and our veterans in the way of military retirement benefits.*

*For everyone, this should be unacceptable. I believe that it is quite avoidable. But this is a real, significant, and unsustainable cost of the current border crisis.*

*In my home state of Texas alone, we've spent over **\$13 billion**, which is about **\$4,500 per illegal immigrant in Texas**. To give you a sample list of services we're providing for people who are here illegally, it's about **\$3 billion** extra for Headstart. At the state level, public education **costs \$70 billion** across the United States. States have a very difficult time prioritizing and investing in public education because of the cost of health care. And now the cost of illegal immigration.*

*If you look at criminal justice, it's about **\$12 billion** extra in criminal justice costs across the United States, which is tens of billions of dollars in uncompensated care at hospitals. We talk all the time as a committee about how health care costs are driving our deficits and national debt. Medicare alone is **\$1 trillion**, and that will double over the next 10 years. And we've got*



tremendous costs, not to even consider the crowding out of our citizens who need these spaces in hospitals and seats for our students in their schools. It is real, and we've quantified it. And I'm grateful for the work of FAIR.

At a time when we have record deficits, the highest level of indebtedness in our nation's history surpassing a time of war when we're in relative peace and prosperity. At a time when our fellow Americans are spending now about **\$1,300 more a month** because of the inflation tax, where we're looking at an economy teetering on recession, we've seen inflation uptick the last month; we saw the first quarter GDP, not even get half of its expectation. I'm concerned about it, but then you're going to add **\$150 billion** in unnecessary costs because of illegal immigration. Now, let me say something.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which talks about the benefits of immigration. And let me be clear we need legal immigration. Legal immigration is a hallmark of the American experiment. The new blood that is hungry for opportunity, freedom, and the American dream, there's nothing more American than that. **There's nothing more un-American than lawlessness and chaos and the lack of respect for the rule of law.**

That's what I'm trying to contrast here, **but here's what CBO does: they take into consideration some of the benefits of illegal immigration in terms of jobs filled, revenue as a result, and some taxes paid.** That **\$150 billion** is the net after we back out about **\$30 billion** in taxes. What I would like to submit to my colleagues is that CBO, in order to do their job by providing the full picture and accurate information for us as lawmakers to make the decisions and value judgments, is to have the ability to have the full net cost. **That \$150 billion is in no CBO analysis whatsoever.** But the benefits seem a little odd and biased to me. I will ensure that as long as I am Chairman, that full picture is represented so my Democrat colleagues, my Republican colleagues, and us as a committee can deal with the facts and make decisions accordingly.”

