

**HELPING MIGRANTS SEEKING ASYLUM
FROM BETO O'ROURKE
POWERED BY PEOPLE**

I write to you this afternoon from El Paso, where we face the urgent challenge of helping the thousands of migrants seeking asylum in our country while ensuring that our community does not buckle under the unprecedented stress.

As we approach May 11th, when Title 42 restrictions on migrants are lifted, we are seeing a strong increase in the number of migrants crossing into our country at El Paso. This has led to significant pressure on local humanitarian agencies (like shelter provider Annunciation House), to the point that there are now hundreds of migrants sleeping on the streets of El Paso. It's also strained law enforcement resources and has led the President to deploy troops to the border.

Social media and cable news seem consumed by the question of whose fault this is, which is understandable, even if unhelpful in the short term. It would be great if this led to a conversation about lessons learned (what's worked and what hasn't) and solutions that are necessary going forward. In fact, getting past purely reacting to each crisis and setting down long term strategy with the policy and resources to back it up, is the only way we're going to get out of this seemingly intractable problem. I've shared my thoughts on what those solutions could look like in previous emails <https://medium.com/@BetoORourke/immigration-extremism-in-texas-fc5ce37ea719> and will continue to do my best to push this country to meet the real underlying challenges that drive the levels of migration we are seeing.

But for now, today, it's important that we focus on the immediate need before us. Thousands of desperate people who have fled their home countries to seek asylum and refuge have just arrived in our country. We can meet this challenge with cruelty or we can meet it with kindness. How we respond defines our country to our kids, to our fellow citizens and to the rest of the watching world.

There are two main ways to help at this point.

The first is through people power. We need folks in West Texas and Southern New Mexico to sign up for shifts at the El Paso food bank, known as El Pasoans Fighting Hunger. There is unprecedented demand for preparing, delivering and distributing food. You can follow this link to sign up (I found it easiest to click on "View Calendar" at the bottom of the page to get a full list of available shifts): <https://elpasoansfightinghunger.org/volunteer>.

The second is by donating to the organizations that are providing shelter and support services to migrants on the ground in El Paso. The Paso del Norte Community Foundation has set up a fund to provide "food, shelter, healthcare and support services to thousands of migrants and refugees who find themselves on our front door seeking asylum, safety, and a

better life.” That fund will distribute money to the partner organizations based on greatest need with priority given to entities not getting FEMA funds. You can also give directly to those partner organizations through links that are provided on PDN’s donation page: <https://pdnfoundation.org/give-to-a-fund/community-response-fund>.

Lastly, as we each step up to meet the immediate needs at the border, let’s also keep the pressure up on the Biden administration and our representatives in Congress to do more to both help the most vulnerable and to relieve the strain felt by border communities. Rewriting our badly outdated immigration laws; helping asylum seekers with work permits and placement; removing the “transit ban” on those traveling to our country; making the Americas our primary foreign policy priority; and honoring our international obligations to refugees and asylum seekers are good places to start.

Thank you for helping those in need,

Beto

PAID FOR BY POWERED BY PEOPLE, POWEREDXPEOPLE.ORG, NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY
CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE’S COMMITTEE.
