

# [***Interview With Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B49-TGH1-JCS1-60KV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

NEIL CAVUTO, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: To Henry Cuellar right now, the Texas Democratic congressman who faults the governor for those tragic deaths of those three drowns -- drowning -- who drowned, I should say, a couple of weeks back there.

You heard maybe what Chip Roy, your colleague, was saying, sir, that that was unfair, the governor had nothing to do with it, there was no heads-up that U.S. officials had of this plight that supposedly came from Mexican officials. What do you say?

REP. HENRY CUELLAR (D-TX): Well, first of all, to my friend Chip Roy, I don`t know if he knows this, but we`re voting today, and he should be here with us, so we can talk about border security, instead of being in New Hampshire, with all due respect to my good friend Chip Roy.

But I would say this. Listen, the moment that the state kicked out Border Patrol, the men and women that have the authority under federal law to detain, to arrest people, provide assistance, and the moment they took out the scope trucks and the monitoring equipment, they took the eyes away.

And those scope trucks can see what`s happening on the Mexican side, on the river, and on the U.S. side. They took those eyes away. So, basically, the military took over. And you can ask any military commander, when you take control and command, you don`t make any excuses. You take control and command of that particular area.

I don`t blame the men and women in the military. I think it`s just the governor should be working with us. I want him to be as aggressive as he wants to be, but to coordinate and communicate with the federal government, instead of doing Lone Ranger ***politics***.

CAVUTO: All right, it might be Lone Ranger ***politics***, as you see it.

The fact of the matter is, there is, as you yourself have said, Congressman, a migrant surge, the likes of which we have never seen, and whether it applies to a patch of area that used to be under the feds` control and the governor wants under the state control, that`s the real core of this, right? And that`s what`s out of control.

And if they were doing such a great job handling this, he wouldn`t be having to do this in the first place.

CUELLAR: Well, listen, it`s basically -- it`s like during those -- remember when he talked about the buoys? The buoys were less than a quarter-of-a-mile-long for a river that`s 1,200 miles` long.

So it`s little things that he`s doing. He ought to be working with us, coordinating, communicating with us. I want the state and the local government and the federal government working together, so we can go ahead and address this issue.

CAVUTO: But they don`t. They can`t work together. Everything he does, he`s sued for.

If he wants his own sheriffs and deputies handling a lot of this migrant mess, he gets sued. I`m sure, in just a matter of time, he`s going to get sued over this. So he`s trying to do what he can because he`s at wit`s end. I`m not an apologist for the governor, but it seems like every measure he takes to try to get a control of this, he`s sued.

(CROSSTALK)

CUELLAR: I haven`t seen the coordination or the communication of working together. I want them to work together.

Look, do we need to get rid of the pull factor that the administration has? Yes, I agree with that. Do we need to get Mexico to do more? Of course they do. Do we need to tell the migrants not to make this very dangerous route, where people drown or die of thirst? Of course they need to take responsibility.

But, at the same time, if the state is going to take control and command, they can`t say, well, we`re in control and command, but we`re not going to take charge of anything else except the good things. So, again, I want them to work together.

CAVUTO: But there`s no good -- there are no good things here, right, Congressman? You talk about he`s taking matters into his own hands.

If things were working, he probably wouldn`t see the need to do that. And, of course, if it was promising that he could control the migrant surge at the border using just the federal officials assigned to deal with that, he probably has stuck with that, which is why he urged deputies and sheriffs and all to take this matter into their hands too, to deal with this and help with this.

(CROSSTALK)

CAVUTO: Now, that might have been a Hail Mary pass, you`re quite right. But when you`re stuck with a crisis, you`re oftentimes left with some very few options, and you consider stuff like that because you have got a crisis.

CUELLAR: Yes.

And I agree. It is a crisis, and we need to do more. But keep in mind that, for example, the Lone Ranger of ***politics*** -- and I wish we could work together. When he said he was going to stop the trucks and the trailers coming in to stop drugs and migrants, he stopped fewer drugs and migrants because they can`t even stop or open up the trailers.

So those are things that you ought to be working with CBP. We ought to be working together. I want to work with the governor. I want us to work together, because I think we can do a lot more. But this Lone Ranger ***politics*** doesn`t work.

CAVUTO: Something happened, though. Congressman, I don`t know. And you`re closer to this than I will ever be, so forgive me, and I will defer to your expertise.

But something seems to have happened between you and the governor, because you were in sync on a lot of things, and you`re not now. I`d like to think it`s just based on this issue, but I`m wondering.

CUELLAR: Yes, I want to work with the governor. I encourage the governor. I`d be happy to work with him. If he calls me, I`d be happy to work with him, the DPS commander.

But, again, I think we need to work together, instead of doing things separately, and --

CAVUTO: No, no, no offense, Congressman, you went a step further here. You`re essentially blaming him for these -- the three -- these women and these two kids` deaths.

That`s a step too far, aren`t you?

CUELLAR: No. No.

No, listen, control and command under Title 32 -- and, remember, the military is operating right now. They have two bosses. They have the governor under Title 32. And if the president calls them under Title 10, then the president becomes the boss.

(CROSSTALK)

CAVUTO: I know all of that. And I know the titles and the 10s and everything else.

(CROSSTALK)

CUELLAR: What I just want to say, work together. Work together. Work together.

(CROSSTALK)

CAVUTO: What you`re saying in the end is, it`s his fault. It`s his fault.

(CROSSTALK)

CAVUTO: No, no, no. No, no, no. No, you`re saying far more powerful, sir.

CUELLAR: Work together.

CAVUTO: You`re blaming him for these deaths. That`s very clear.

CUELLAR: No, it`s -- let`s be very clear about it.

When you take control and command -- you ask any military officer, when you take control and command you`re in charge of that area. You can`t say, I`m not in charge of the bad things, but I`m in charge of this. If you take control and command, military law will tell you that you take control and command.

You just can`t say, I`m not at fault for this. Control and command. If the state would have never done this, we would not even be talking about this. That`s the thing is. Excluding the Border Patrol from the right that they have or the authority they have to secure the border, stop people, deport, and do their job, that`s what I want to see.

CAVUTO: What you`re saying, though, is that this would not have happened without this policy, these three people would not be dead without this policy, that Guardsmen were informed, the Texas National Guard stationed there. Apparently, they were not.

And drowned migrants and migrants in distress was the result.

CUELLAR: Control and command.

CAVUTO: OK. Congressman, very good having you.

CUELLAR: Neil, good seeing you again.

CAVUTO: Congressman Henry Cuellar.

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