

# [***Texas Warned To Quit Blocking Federal Agents; Lindsey Graham Demands Joe Biden Stop Abusing Parole System; Presidential Candidates Talk Immigration; Judge Threatens To Boot Donald Trump From Courtroom; Supreme Court Could Reel In Federal Regulations; Rep. Hillary Scholten (D-MI), Is Being Interviewed About Her Concerned On How Democrats Talk About Immigration; Rep. Maria Salazar-Woerner (R-FL), Is Being Interviewed About The Importance And How The Bipartisan Dignity Act Tracked Differently Than What's Happening On The Border; Captured Vessel Used As Houthi Recruitment Tool; Representatives Maria Salazar (R-FL) and Hillary Scholten (D-MI) Interviewed On Their Bipartisan House Immigration Bill; Some Unions Not Yet Announced Presidential Endorsements; Congressional Leaders Visit White House To Discuss Aid To Ukraine And Immigration Reform; JP Morgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon Criticizes Democrats For Characterizing Republicans Uniformly As MAGA Supporters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B4D-YDP1-JCS1-6001-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fox News FOX SPECIAL REPORT WITH BRET BAIER 6:00 PM EST

January 17, 2024 Wednesday

Copyright 2024 Fox News Network LLC All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Domestic

**Length:** 7418 words

**Byline:** Bret Baier, Jacqui Heinrich, Matt Finn, Eric Shawn, Bryan Llenas, Shannon Bream, Griff Jenkins, Mark Meredith, Guy Benson, Marc Thiessen

**Guests:** Hillary Scholten, Maria Salazar, Amy Walter

**Body**

HAROLD FORD JR., FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: And Greg will get into this more tonight.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL LEGAL ANALYST: Jesse?

JESSE WATTERS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Do you like gossip?

PIRRO: Yes.

WATTERS: Do you like learning about dysfunctional people's personal lives? And what makes people tick? Well, buy my book, get it together, preorder it.

PIRRO: That's it for us, have a great night.

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Hi, Judge, it's one time, could you play the sexy music coming to the 6:00?

PIRRO: I would love it.

BAIER: Possibly. All right. OK. Thank you.

Good evening. I'm Bret Baier. We begin tonight at the southern border.

As President Biden and Texas Governor Greg Abbott have a modern rhetorical variation of the old west shootout. The Biden administration has given avid until today to reopen a stretch of federal property, which the state has taken over in order to deal with the border crisis.

And one specific allegation is getting a lot of attention. Correspondent Matt Finn is live along the border in Eagle Pass, Texas tonight. Good evening, Matt.

MATT FINN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret. At the center of this federal dispute is actually this razor wire behind me. Texas says it is deterring migrants and it is fighting to prevent the federal government from removing it.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

FINN (voice over): The Biden administration warning Texas today is the deadline to allow federal Border Patrol back into this 2.5 mile stretch of city owned border property. Texas put up razor wire around Shelby Park last week and kicked out Biden's border agents.

The Texas attorney general tells Fox News the state won't back down.

KEN PAXTON, TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL: The federal government doesn't have any right to come on to public lands and take them over. This is not a dictatorship.

FINN (voice over): There was also controversy about the drowning deaths of a migrant mother and her two children near Shelby Park last Friday. Democratic Congressman Henry Cuellar alleges Texas is to blame for the drownings, claiming Texas blocked U.S. Border Patrol from assisting in the river rescue.

The Texas military department calls Cuellar's allegation, "wholly inaccurate", explaining Mexico handled the drownings.

In the latest DOJ filing, Biden's own administration confirms Border Patrol showed up to the river after the drowning, writing, Mexican officials also informed Border Patrol that three migrants, one woman and two children had drowned.

Despite the unconfirmed allegation, DHS and the White House released statements insinuating Texas is to blame. The White House statement reading in part, on Friday night, a woman and two children drowned in your Eagle Pass and Texas officials blocked U.S. Border Patrol from attempting to provide emergency assistance.

Texas says the White House should correct the record. But today, the White House double down.

JACQUI HEINRICH, FOX NEWS CHANNEL WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: White House statement says that Texas officials blocked U.S. Border Patrol from attempting to provide emergency assistance.

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: There were other migrants in the water as well.

HEINRICH: Then, why wasn't that included in the statement if that's what you were referring to?

JEAN-PIERRE: Our statement does -- is very much consistent with DOJ filing.

FINN (voice over): On immigration, another point of clarification on this claim from the 2024 Biden Harris campaign.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Donald Trump put immigrants in cages, he separated families.

FINN (voice over): Former President Trump did separate children from their parents but that policy began under the Obama administration. And it turns out the highest number ever of children in custody happened under President Biden, 20,000 children in April 2021.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

FINN (on camera): Bret, it is the end of the business day here along the border and it appears that Texas has not complied with the federal order to reopen this park. We'll keep you updated, Bret.

BAIER: Matt Finn live in Eagle Pass, Texas. Matt, thanks.

President Biden hosted congressional leaders at the White House a short time ago, both parties from both chambers trying to make progress on the national security package, the supplemental that has been held up over big differences over border and immigration policies.

White House correspondent Jacqui Heinrich has the latest tonight live from the North Lawn. Good evening, Jacqui.

HEINRICH: Good evening, Bret. Both Democrats and Republicans who came out of that meeting with the president described it as productive. Chuck Schumer going so far as to put the chances of a deal over 50 percent now, but it seems there are two big obstacles remaining over timing of votes and parole authority.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

HEINRICH (voice over): President Biden convening some of his national security team to impress upon congressional leaders that the U.S. must resume aid or Ukraine will be kneecapped on the battlefield.

JOHN KIRBY, PRESS SECRETARY, PENTAGON: If we just pack it in and can't get the funding and decide that's it, we're not going to provide anything more for Ukraine. You can certainly see where there may be other nations who might feel like they want to follow suit.

HEINRICH (voice over): But that's not likely to move the needle for Republicans in both chambers who won't agree to Ukraine funding without substantive border policy reforms.

SEM. LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-SC): And if you want to deal Mr. President, stop abusing parole, this is a red line for all of us.

REP. MIKE JOHNSON (R-LA): We understand the necessity about Ukraine funding and we want to say that the status quo is unacceptable.

HEINRICH (voice over): The White House describes border negotiations with Senate Republicans as heading in the right direction. But there appears to be a hang up.

SEN. CHUCK SCHUMER (D-NY): The president himself said over and over again, that he is willing to make -- to move forward on border.

And so, we said we have to do both. There were a couple of people in the room who said let's do border first.

HEINRICH (voice over): The Republican message to the administration.

GRAHAM: If this parole authority means that much to you to let Western Europe crumble, so be it.

HEINRICH (voice over): Even while telling Republican colleagues not to hold out for a better border deal.

GRAHAM: To those who think that if President Trump wins, which I hope he does, that we can get a better deal. You won't. You got to get 60 votes in the United States Senate.

HEINRICH (voice over): The White House meantime has no kind words for the House GOP.

JEAN-PIERRE: House Republicans get in the way. They want it to literally eliminate 2,000 Border Patrol agents in this particular act that they touted that they voted for back in May.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HEINRICH (on camera): That claim is not true. The bill the White House is referring to made no specific cuts. In fact, House Republicans passed other bills that would have hired even more agents but officials here are not backing down from that claim. Even though the Washington Post fact checkers gave them three Pinocchios for it, Bret.

BAIER: All right, Jacqui, thank you.

Federal prosecutors say a brown leather pouch used by Hunter Biden to store a gun had cocaine residue on it. Yesterday, prosecutors asked a judge to reject efforts by the president's son to dismiss gun charges. They say the strength of the evidence against the younger Biden is, "overwhelming".

The southern border crisis may turn out to be a big or maybe the biggest issue in next week's New Hampshire primary. Republican caucus goers in Iowa said it was their number one concern. Correspondent Bryan Llenas is in Rochester, New Hampshire tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

NIKKI HALEY (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: We need to deal with the border once and for all.

BRYAN LLENAS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT (voice over): Illegal Immigration top of mind for candidates campaigning in New Hampshire. Former President Donald Trump and former GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy now campaigning together hit on the key issue not far from the state's northern border with Canada.

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We need strong borders.

VIVEK RAMASWAMY (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: As the kid of legal immigrants to this country, that means your first act of entering this country cannot break the law.

LLENAS (voice over): Fox News voter analysis shows immigration as the most important issue for Iowa caucus goers, New Hampshire voters we spoke to feel the same.

JOHN STRATHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTER: I think Trump is on the right path. I don't think he got it finished obviously,.

LLENAS (voice over): New Hampshire saw nearly 400 fentanyl poisonings in 2022, a record high.

Nearby big cities struggling with busloads of migrants appear to have an impact on voters too.

TOM MOULTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTER: Look at our big cities. Look at what's going on Chicago, New York. My family lives in New York, they say the whole city is being overrun. It's awful.

NATHAN PAGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTER: Every border state.

LLENAS (voice over): Independent voter Nathan Page (PH) says he's most likely supporting Florida Governor Ron DeSantis in next week's primary, he remembers when DeSantis flew dozens of migrants from Texas to Massachusetts Martha's Vineyard.

PAGE: I loved it, the way he shipped a plane load of migrants to Martha's Vineyard. They want to be a free state and welcome everybody. Here you go.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

LLENAS (on camera): After the latest poll has him dead last which is five percent support in New Hampshire, DeSantis is now moving his campaign staff to South Carolina, Haley's home state, believing that a loss in her state will force Haley to drop out, making this a two person race.

But in a new interview with Fox News, DeSantis is pushing back against this narrative that he's skipping New Hampshire, saying, he'll be back in New Hampshire after a quick visit to South Carolina this weekend late Sunday or Monday. Bret.

BAIER: Bryan Llenas in Rochester. Bryan, thanks. More on immigration with our Common Ground segment in a bit.

Breaking tonight, the judge in the defamation trial of former President Donald Trump threatens to kick him out of the courtroom. As you might expect that did not sit well with the Republican front runner.

Senior Correspondent Eric Shawn is outside the federal court in Manhattan tonight with the latest. Good evening, Eric.

ERIC SHAWN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret. If you continue to act this way, said the judge. I will kick you out of the courtroom, that happened today in the federal courthouse behind me.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SHAWN (voice over): During court today, the accuser of Donald Trump, writer E. Jean Carroll was testifying about the hate messages and death threat she received after accusing Trump in 2019 of raping her in a department store dressing room back in 1996.

Trump sitting at the defense table could be heard responding, saying not true. It's a witch hunt, and it's really a con job.

One of Carroll's attorneys complained to the Judge Lewis Kaplan about that. And then the judge directly looked at Mr. Trump and admonished him saying, "Mr. Trump has a right to be present here, that right can be forfeited if he is disruptive. Mr. Trump, I hope I don't have to consider excluding you from the trial."

Trump responded, I would love it. The judge then replied, I understand you're probably very eager for me to do that because you just can't control yourself in this circumstance apparently.

But the jury will eventually determine the amount of damage Trump could pay Miss Carroll. She wants $10 million. The previous trial jury in May found Trump liable for sexually assaulting and defaming her. After the court, the former president lashed out at Judge Kaplan.

TRUMP: And that's a nasty man. He's a nasty judge. He's a Trump hating guy. And it's obvious to everybody in the court. It's a disgrace.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SHAWN (on camera): Mr. Trump's lawyer Alina Habba at one point demanded a mistrial, that after Miss Carroll admitted that she did delete death threats that were found on her e-mails. You can't do that during a court session. That is for legal purposes.

But Judge Kaplan denied that, Ms. Habba's cross examination on Miss Carroll will continue tomorrow morning, Bret.

BAIER: Eric Shawn outside the courthouse. Eric, thanks.

A judge in Maine has delayed a decision on former President Trump's ballot status. The judge wants to allow time for the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on a similar case in Colorado.

The main Secretary of State removed the Republican front runner from the presidential primary ballot, but then asked the judge to pause proceedings to allow the High Court to decide.

Breaking tonight, about the High Court U.S. Supreme Court justices are weighing arguments they heard today that could affect how the government regulates businesses. It has to do with rules requiring those businesses to pay huge fees to cover the regulators.

Fox News Chief Legal Correspondent anchor of "FOX NEWS SUNDAY", Shannon Bream is outside the High Court tonight. Good evening, Shannon.

SHANNON BREAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CHIEF LEGAL CORRESPONDENT: Hello, Bret. Well, this trickles down into our everyday lives because from your iPhone to the shampoo that you use, Americans daily lives are impacted by thousands of federal regulations.

Today, the Supreme Court wrestled with the question of who gets to decide just how much impact all of that has on your life.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MEGHAN LAPP, SEAFREEZE LTD FISHERIES LIAISON: If we were suing another citizen, we'd have a fair hearing. But if we're suing the government, the government wins. And that's very frustrating.

BREAM (voice over): Well, today's companion cases dealt with fishermen fighting back against a regulation that could force them to pay for federal monitors to ride along on their vessels, the impact could be much broader. There are more than 170,000 pages of federal regulations that touch on nearly every facet of daily life in the U.S. So, who gets to decide what they actually mean?

According to a 1984 Supreme Court decision, federal agencies get plenty of leeway known as Chevron Deference. But that could be about to change. And several justices on the left of the bench say they worry about what will happen if that's the case.

KETANJI BROWN JACKSON, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, U.S. SUPREME COURT: My concern is that if we take away something like Chevron, the court will then suddenly become a policymaker by majority rule or not making policy determinations.

BREAM (voice over): Justice Kagan was among those who questioned why Americans wouldn't want agencies staffed by experts to make the final call on relevant regulations rather than federal judges who may have no specific expertise in a given field.

But many of the conservative justices expressed concern. It's simply giving federal agencies staffed by unelected bureaucrats so much authority essentially undercuts the role of the judiciary.

NEIL GORSUCH, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, U.S. SUPREME COURT: Is the judge persuaded at the end of the day with proper deference given to a coequal branch of government or does the judge abdicate that responsibility and say automatically, whatever the agency says wins?

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BREAM (on camera): The justices will take their first secret vote behind closed doors on this case Friday, but it could be months before we know their ultimate decision.

In the meantime, Bret, they'll be gearing up to hear that case you mentioned earlier about whether states can kick the former president off their presidential primary ballots, Bret.

BAIER: Shannon Bream outside the U.S. Supreme Court. Shannon, thanks.

Stocks were down today as bond yields spiked, the Dow lost 94, the S&P 500 fell 27, the NASDAQ was off 89.

Up next President Biden reverses course on his decision regarding a terrorist designation for Iran backed Houthi rebels.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: Israel defense forces say they have taken out a top Hamas official in charge of investigating suspects of espionage against the terrorist group. The IDF says Bilal Nofal was killed in an airstrike in coordination with its Shin Bet intelligence agency.

Aid, meantime, destined for Israeli hostages and Palestinian residents in the Gaza Strip has been delivered. That development comes following a deal brokered by Qatar and France.

We have an update tonight on breaking news from last night about the Biden administration re-designating Iran-backed Houthi rebels as terrorists.

Correspondent Griff Jenkins is at the Pentagon to tell us what all this means.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Months after attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea began, the Iran-backed Houthi rebels still hold the cargo ship seized in November.

Use now as a recruitment tool.

The Biden administration today, re-designating the Houthis as specially designated global terrorists, a lesser designation than they held under the Trump administration.

REAR ADM. JOHN KIRBY (RET.), COORDINATOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: The previous designation was FTO, Foreign Terrorist Organization, which doesn't have quite the measure of flexibility in terms of humanitarian assistance.

Both designations hold terrorists accountable. But unlike the FTO, the new designation like civil liability for victims and has no immigration restrictions.

MATTHEW MILLER, SPOKESMAN, UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT: I don't think you should expect that any Houthi operative who applies for a visa to travel into the United States is going to see that visa approved anytime. In the near future to say the least.

JENKINS (on camera): The Houthis have long been a thorn in the side of Yemen's neighbor to the north. Fox was on the ground six years ago, when Saudi Arabia positioned artillery along the Yemeni border to protect against incoming missile attacks.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): Houthi, they are attacking the civilian people, they are attacking the school, hospital.

JENKINS (on camera): But since Houthi attacks have escalated in the Red Sea, the Kingdom has remained mostly silent, a sign suggesting Saudi Arabia may be exercising caution over progress made towards regional stabilization.

MOHAMMED BIN SALMAN AL SAUD, CROWN PRINCE OF SAUDI ARABIA: To have a stable region, you need the economical development in the whole region. You don't need to see your problems in Yemen.

JENKINS (on camera): Overshadowing the Red Sea crisis, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin remains absent from the Pentagon.

MAJ. GEN. PATRICK RYDER, PENTAGON PRESS SECRETARY: And the Secretary continues to recuperate at home. He does have planned physical therapy.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

JENKINS (on camera): And just moments ago, Bret, Fox confirms another U.S. owned vessel was hit off the coast of Yemen, making it the second such American shift to be hit in the past 48 hours as CENTCOM statement. Said there were no injuries and only minor damage, and the ship remained seaworthy. Bret.

BAIER: Griff Jenkins, live at the Pentagon, Griff, thanks.

Up next, our common ground segments, both sides of the aisle on the border crisis, possible solutions. First, "BEYOND OUR BORDERS" tonight.

The Princess of Wales is hospitalized after undergoing plan to abdominal surgery. Kensington Palace says Kate will remain at the private London clinic for up to two weeks.

Also tonight, Buckingham Palace has revealed King Charles III will undergo a corrective procedure next week for an enlarged prostate.

Russia fires two missiles at Kharkiv during the night. Officials in Ukraine say those missiles hit apartment buildings and a medical center. 17 people were reportedly injured.

And this is a live look at Chiba, Japan. One of the big stories there tonight, the U.S., South Korea, and Japan conduct, perhaps, their biggest ever combined naval exercises, said to be a show of strength against nuclear armed North Korea.

Senior Deputy diplomats from the allies were to meet in Seoul to discuss the worsening standoff with Pyongyang.

Just some of the other stories, "BEYOND OUR BORDERS" tonight. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: You have to concede that immigration is a vulnerability for the Biden campaign. Can't you concede that?

QUENTIN FULKS, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER FOR BIDEN'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN: Look, what we concede is that President Biden is working on this issue, and that Republicans in the House are playing political games and doing Donald Trump's bidding so that no real results get done.

SEN. JOE MANCHIN (D-WV): They are living in La La Land. It's a disaster. And they know it's a disaster.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Principal Deputy of the Biden campaign and Democratic Senator Joe Manchin from West Virginia.

In tonight's "COMMON GROUND" segment, here to discuss bipartisan efforts on immigration reform, Michigan Democratic Congresswoman Hilary Scholten, and Florida Republican, Congresswoman Maria Salazar. Thank you both for being here.

REP. HILLARY SCHOLTEN (D-MI): Thanks to you.

REP. MARIA SALAZAR-WOERNER (R-FL): Thanks for having us, Bret.

BAIER: Congresswoman Scholten, I want to talk to you first. I want to talk about your bipartisan effort on this Dignity Act and what exactly that is. You both have sponsored that -- co-sponsored that.

But I want to first talk about the issue. You know, the Senate leaders, House leaders are talking at the White House trying to find some common ground on this supplemental.

But talking about it has been tough for the Biden campaign, as we just saw. Are you concerned about Democrats, particularly, on the issue of immigration, how they talk about it?

SCHOLTEN: All right. You know what, I really am. I think Democrats need to own the facts that immigration is at a crisis level in this country. It's an economic crisis, it's a humanitarian crisis. It is a national security emergency. And we need to address it as such. The only way to do that is a bipartisan path forward.

BAIER: You all are both working on this bipartisan Dignity Act. $25 billion to secure the border, end catch and release expedite asylum, processing criminal background checks restitution, mandatory E-Verify for employment, year-round H2A farm/ranch worker visas.

Congresswoman Salazar, why is this important and how does it tracked differently than what's happening up there?

SALAZAR: It's very important because it's the only bill in Congress that is bipartisan, and not only that, it accomplishes exactly what the country needs, to seal the border, secure the border. And once that is done, once that border is secured, then we look back and we give some type of dignity to those people who have been here for more than five years, who are contributing with the economy. Like my colleague said, this is -- dignity is not an immigration reform law. This is a national security, this is an economic bill. Because you know that the business sector is saying we need hands. Those hands are here. We just need to legalize them. I'm not talking about citizenship. I'm talking about dignity. Not amnesty. Dignity.

SCHOLTEN: This bill has the only bipartisan support. I just want to underscore that. there have been a number of resolutions, a number of bills put forward. This is the only bipartisan bill in Congress right now.

BAIER: Right. So that's important to distinguish. Congressman Salazar this is different from H.R.2, which did pass the House.

SALAZAR: It is not. Dignity has the same provisions as H.R.2. H.R.2 is basically secure the border and end catch and release. And we are ending catch and release with something called humanitarian centers.

SCHOLTEN: I have worked on immigration issues as an attorney for close to two decades now. I was an attorney at the United States Department of Justice enforcing our nation's immigration laws at the highest law enforcement agency, the Department of Justice. I have seen what works. And I see what doesn't. We have to address some of these root causes. Interior enforcement, what is causing this flow.

SALAZAR: Humanitarian campuses are five campuses along the border. If you are coming in, like millions right now claiming asylum, we're going to put you in there in a humanitarian fashion for 60 days. And in 60 days we're going to tell you whether you really have the claims for asylum and we are going to give you the asylum, or you have to go back home. No one is going to get lost in the country.

SCHOLTEN: Expedited processing is an essential component of due process. For now, individuals wait years to hear about their cases.

SALAZAR: And they are lost in the country. No one can find them. They don't go back to their country.

BAIER: Congresswoman Scholten, the Biden administration did change some things done by executive order, the remain in Mexico policy, the catch and release policy. Those are changes that didn't require Congress to weigh in. The Biden administration did them on their own. So I guess my question to you is how many Democrats are signing on to this Dignity Act? And why is it so hard to get Democrats to realize the difference in the two administrations, the last two, dealing with this issue?

SCHOLTEN: We need realize we are never, Republican or Democrat, going to get every single thing that we want. That's what compromise is all about. And that's why we've come together to say, hey, we recognize this isn't a perfect bill, but it is a really good bill that solves the crux of the issues that is facing our country when it comes to this immigration --

BAIER: And Congresswoman Salazar, let me just ask. There are people on the Republican side that want all of it, and they are not going 80 percent or 70 percent like your Dignity Act has bipartisan support. They would like H.R.2 passed as it is. So what do you tell them?

SALAZAR: Well, that at some point they would have to face reality because, as Hillary was saying, you cannot -- is the art of the possible. That's ***politics***. That's why we are showing this great bipartisanship between both of us and another 30 sponsors. We have to solve the problem. We're not going to be able to get everything. We have to solve the problem and catch and release and give some type of dignity or some answers to those people who are illegal because we need those hands.

And my party and her party need to come to the realization. And we're just here waiting for them, both parties, to understand and say, OK, guys, you've got the solution. It's just a waiting game, unfortunately. But in the meantime, you have millions of more illegals coming in, and you know as a Hispanic representing the largest minority in the country, what is happening at the border is the worst thing that could happen to us. We don't want those people --

BAIER: And we should point out, by the way, last word here. Congresswoman Scholten, we should point out you are from a border state, too. There's 189,000 encounters at the northern border.

SCHOLTEN: Exactly right.

BAIER: And 6,100 people from 76 different countries. It doesn't match the southern border, 10,000 a week, but it's still coming in.

SCHOLTEN: Yes, it is. Michigan is a border state. But I think also as a Midwest state, one of the things that I like to point out is, this is an issue that is impacting every state, every city across the country, because the broken immigration system is impacting families. It's impacting businesses. It's impacting our local law enforcement who are bearing the burden of enforcing our federal immigration laws because Congress hasn't done its job. We are trying to solve that.

SALAZAR: But we have. But we have done it.

SCHOLTEN: We're trying to solve that. We've come together, and we have a solution. What this is is a strong step forward. I think it's really important for people to remember, we haven't had a comprehensive fix to our immigration system in decades.

SALAZAR: In 37 years since Ronald Reagan, a Republican.

SCHOLTEN: Think about how much we gave in exchange, right?

SALAZAR: So it's the time to act.

BAIER: I can see how you are both passionate about it, and we appreciate your time on "Common Ground." And hopefully more of your colleagues will come join us and talk about what they are doing.

SALAZAR: Thank you for the opportunity.

SCHOLTEN: Thanks.

BAIER: You bet.

You can see all of the "Common Ground" segments on my podcast "Common Ground." Find that and the "All-Star Panel" podcast under the Bret Baier podcasts at FOXNewspodcast.com, Spotify, or wherever you download podcasts. You can also see the whole extended discussion on the FOX News YouTube page.

Up next, why President Biden's re-election campaign is having trouble with one of his usually reliable support groups. And later, the panel on the border crisis, the latest developments, and the presidential race.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: California Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom says he will not sign a proposed ban on tackle football for kids under 12 years old. Yesterday we told you the bill has been approved by a legislative committee and would be considered by the state assembly. Advocates say the ban would protect kids from the risks of brain injury. Opponents say the ban would cut off kids from a source of activity and exercise.

Stopping or standing is now prohibited on pedestrian bridges above the Las Vegas Strip. Clark County commissioners voted unanimously this month to approve the measure banning people from stopping, standing, or engaging in activity that causes another person to stop on the strip pedestrian bridges. Violators of the ordinance could face as much as six months in jail or a $1,000 fine.

President Biden may be having difficulty with one of his core constituencies tonight. The president, who has characterized himself as the greatest friend organized labor has ever had, is now seeing support from that block wavering. Correspondent Mark Meredith tells us why tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEO TAPE)

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I will be the pro -- most pro-union president in American history, and I make no apologies for it.

(APPLAUSE)

MARK MEREDITH, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: President Biden says he is as pro- union as they come. But some of America's largest labor groups have yet to back his reelection bid, including United Auto Workers.

SHAWN FAIN, UNITED AUTO WORKERS PRESIDENT: Our endorsements are going to be earned. We have been very clear about that.

BIDEN: Unions built the middle class.

(APPLAUSE)

MEREDITH: Last fall the president made history joining a picket line with UAW workers on strike. The move has yet to pay off politically, though. So far, the union has not endorsed his campaign. Neither has the International Association of Firefighters, one of Biden's earliest backers in 2019.

LARRY SABATO, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA CENTER FOR ***POLITICS***: It's late for some, though, usually, springtime is when some of these unions endorse. That's what they did for Obama in 2012 when he was seeking reelection.

MEREDITH: Tonight, the Biden campaign insists there's no drama. A campaign spokesperson telling FOX, quote, "President Biden knows that the middle class built America and that unions built the middle class." The Teamsters union, which backed Biden last cycle and boasts 1.3 million members, says it's still weighing its endorsement option. The head of the group recently meeting with former President Trump, sparking speculation the group could make a switch this fall.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We want to negotiate with the candidate that's going to do the best on behalf of our members, and that's what we are doing.

MEREDITH: The union says it plans to host a roundtable with Trump sometime soon, allowing more of its members to hear from the GOP frontrunner. But the group has yet to say when it may offer an official endorsement in the race.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

MEREDITH (on camera): President Biden has received some union endorsements already, including from the American Federation of Teachers and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. But Bret, it appears some of these powerful organized labor groups still sitting on the sidelines, at least for the time being. Bret?

BAIER: All right, Mark, thank you.

Up next, the panel with the border crisis and the presidential race and how that intersects.

First, here's what some of our FOX affiliates around the country are covering tonight. FOX 5 in New York as a judge denies Daniel Penny's request to dismiss the charges against him in the chokehold death of a man aboard a subway car. You will remember the Marine veteran pleaded not guilty to second degree manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide.

FOX 32 in Chicago as a woman convicted of helping kill her mother and stuffing the body in a suitcase during a luxury vacation is sentenced to 26 years in prison. Heather Mack pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to kill her mother with her then boyfriend.

And this is a live look at Virginia Beach from FOX 43. One of the big stories there tonight, the USS Gerald Ford returns to Norfolk after more than eight months in the Mediterranean. Its deployment was extended by more than two months because of the war between Israel and Hamas. Welcome home.

That's tonight's live look outside the beltway from SPECIAL REPORT. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: Making sure that we take care of our border is not too complicated. It's not. It's not if people come together in good faith as they have been doing in the Senate. We want a bipartisan agreement because the president understands that's how we are going to fix the problem.

BRANDON JUDD, NATIONAL BORDER PATROL COUNCIL: He doesn't need to push Republicans. He has the authority right now to do everything that he needs to do to secure our border. He refuses to do it.

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT: We had the safest border in history three years ago, and now we have the worst border probably in the history of the world.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: It's a big issue. Congressional leaders at the White House today. The A.P. writes it this way. They are headed to the "White House at a pivotal time for Ukraine aid and U.S. border deal to sit down with Speaker Mike Johnson. Senate leaders, including the chairman of influential national security committees, could make or break the political tradeoff that has been simmering for weeks as lawmakers have failed so far to reach a compromise over Biden's broader aid package." Here's how they saw the meeting.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. MIKE JOHNSON, (R-LA) HOUSE SPEAKER: We had a productive meeting, I think, House and Senate leaders. We have talked about the necessary elements to solve this problem -- a restoration of the remain in Mexico policy. It is the end of catch and release. It is reform to the broken asylum and parole systems.

SEN. CHUCK SCHUMER, (D-NY) SENATE MAJORITY LEADER: There was Democratic and Republican agreement that was essential we help Ukraine. The only way we will do border and Ukraine, or even either of them, is bipartisan.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: OK, so let's bring in our panel, Guy Benson, political editor at Townhall.com, host of "The Guy Benson Show" on FOX News Radio, Amy Walter, publisher and editor in chief of the "Cook Political Report," and "Washington Post" columnist Marc Thiessen. OK, Guy, what did you read between the tea leaves there in those soundbites?

GUY BENSON, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: It seems like they are still pretty far apart. They can say constructive and productive and it will be bipartisan. But I think on the Republican side, they need to figure out what they can actually sell to their own members. That has been a problem for Republican speakers. It's unclear what is going to come out of the Senate. A lot of House conservatives are very, I think, skeptical of that. And ultimately this is an administration that simply isn't really serious at all about border security. So this is very much a wait and see in my book.

BAIER: It's a big deal for Republican voters, Amy. We saw in the Iowa caucuses this week that it was their number one concern as you looked at our voter analysis afterwards, immigration was. And we are getting similar results from polls coming outs of New Hampshire ahead of next Tuesday's New Hampshire primary.

AMY WALTER, NATIONAL EDITOR, "COOK POLITICAL REPORT": Yes. Bret, it's not just among Republican voters. We are seeing this resonate among a pretty broad cross section of the electorate. And I think we are going to get our first test on how this issue is playing out, at least at the congressional level in terms of an actual election that is a special election on Long Island in mid-February. This is a seat that Biden carried in 2020, but this is the George Santos seat, of course, so a seat that a Republican won, and then he was ousted from Congress.

But here's the first opportunity to see how this issue is playing on the campaign trail. Republican candidate there and Republicans who are advertising, they are spending a lot of time on this issue. Democrats hoping that they can use the MAGA label against the Republican opponent and the fact that the Democrat has a longstanding relationship with that district and actually challenged the governor in a primary. So hoping to insulate himself on this issue. But it's going to play out beyond just a primary.

BAIER: Marc, the MAGA attack, and obviously they are going to use that a lot, not only on the congressional races but, also, obviously, from the White House race in the Biden campaign. When you look at immigration and just comparing and contrasting the two administrations, if you look at border encounters, for example, under President Trump, roughly 2.4 million over his time. And you look at President Biden to date, 6.899 million. If you look at the A.P. poll of the president's handing of the U.S.- Mexico border, it now stands at 18 percent approval to 63 percent approval. And this is how the campaign is talking about this issue. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

QUENTIN FULKS, BIDEN PRINCIPAL DEPUTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER: Donald Trump had four years to do something on the border, and he did nothing. And then right now what we have, in fact, Donald Trump put immigrants in cages.

BAIER: Hold on. Wait a second. You are not saying that the situation on immigration on the border is better under the Biden administration than it is under the Trump administration? Is that what you are saying?

FULKS: Bret, what I'm saying to you is that President Biden took office, sent a comprehensive immigration reform package to Congress. They have refused to pass it or do anything on it.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: So we did that fact-check tonight, Marc, with the Obama administration starting the cages, there were fewer kids under the Trump administration than are in custody now under the Biden administration. All kinds of fact-checks there.

MARC THIESSEN, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: A lot of fact-checking going on. And look, here's the thing that people don't forget, is that Biden didn't just reverse Donald Trump's immigration policies and border policy. He reversed Barack Obama's border policies. Barack Obama was the first person to do family separations. Barack Obama was criticized on the left as being the deporter-in-chief because he deported 3 million illegal migrants who were coming into this country. Biden has completely shut down deportations. They're at record lows.

So he has all the same laws on the books right now that Donald Trump and Barack Obama had. It's a crisis of choice. He is choosing not to enforce the law. He is choosing to parole people into the country by the millions. He is choosing to not deport people the way his former partner did. And so, Greg Abbott, the reason why this is resonating now is because Greg Abbott did something, which is he nationalized the issue. He sent these migrants to Chicago and to Democratic strongholds and said we are not just going to suffer this whole thing in Texas. This is a national crisis and it's going to be a national problem. And now you have a lot of Democrats who are quietly cheering on the Republicans. They won't say it, but they want Biden to do something about the -- about this problem because it's hurting them in their districts and it's hurting them in 2024.

BAIER: And clearly the president, Guy, is trying to figure out some way to negotiate here with congressional leaders. But the White House pushing back on that story about the Border Patrol and not saving the mother and the two kids in the river is really quite something.

BENSON: Yes. They are doubling down on a lie. It's really quite extraordinary, although it shouldn't be surprising. We saw the White House totally uninterested in the Border Patrol and when they do almost all of the time. The president can't be bothered to go down there. The border czar, vice president almost never goes down there, I think once. But all of a sudden, they got excited, what was that, two years ago over the whipping scandal which was a complete smear of the Border Patrol agents. Here we have three tragic deaths of illegal migrants in the river, and the White House suddenly decided they were concerned and heartsick over deaths at the border when they have ignored thousands of them on Biden's watch because they felt there was political utility in attacking the state of Texas and attacking Governor Abbott in the process.

But even according to their own legal documents, the story that they cooked up to blame Abbott cynically was also factually wrong. They have been fact- checked on it. And they're, I guess, sticking by it for political reasons, but it's yet another awful look from this team.

BAIER: Amy, on the political broad scope here, before 2022, I thought immigration was going to rise to a higher issue set before that election. I did not think that threat to democracy was really going to push well for Democrats. I was wrong, and it did make a difference. And the MAGA extremists and the threat to democracy did affect some races. But it was interesting to hear Jamie Dimon on CNBC today about that push right now. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JAMIE DIMON, JPMORGAN CHASE CEO: I wish the Democrats would think a little more carefully when they talk about MAGA. And they're basically scapegoating them, that you are like him.

Just take a step back, be honest. He was kind of right about NATO, kind of right about immigration. He grew the economy quite well.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China virus.

DIMON: Tax reform worked. He was right about some of China. I think this negative talk about MAGA is going to hurt Biden's election campaign.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Is Jamie Dimon auditioning for V.P. or something?

(LAUGHTER)

WALTER: He's wanting to be commerce secretary or something like that.

No, and I do think that this bad voters, the reality is they are focusing on the issues that are impacting them right at this moment. Right at this moment immigration is a serious issue. And we don't know what the issue will be come November, where this issue will be or others. But there is no doubt that there is a segment of the electorate that pays attention to ***politics*** only as we get closer to the election. Those who are in their camps, they are going to be fired up about MAGA, anti-MAGA, there is nothing you can do about that, whatever the issues are. It's that slice of the electorate that needs to hear that whoever the candidate is, is talking to them about their issues.

BAIER: All right, great discussion. Panel, thanks.

Finally tonight, a special day.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It's kind of like embracing your youth and kind of being a kid again, right. Like, we are all out here working all the time, and we haven't had a snow day in D.C. in a while. So I think a lot of people just wanted to come out and have a good time together.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Washington, D.C.'s first significant snowfall the last two years had locals heading to the National Mall and enjoy some of their favorite snow activities, maybe a snowball fight or two. Meanwhile, on Capitol hill children off from school enjoyed their snow day by getting a little sledding. And the hills are good there on Capitol Hill. Take a look.

Tomorrow on SPECIAL REPORT, FOX News senior strategic analyst retired General Jack Keane on Iran not taking the hint, Ukraine not getting the money so far.

Please join Laura Ingraham tonight. In a moment she'll talk with House Speaker Mike Johnson.

Thanks for inviting us into your home tonight. That's it for this SPECIAL REPORT, fair, balanced, and still unafraid.

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2024

**End of Document**