

# [***Greg Abbott Celebrates Arresting Nearly 500,000 Migrants***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BJ6-PY81-DY68-10M7-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 588 words

**Byline:** Andrew Stanton

**Highlight:** Abbott touted the arrests as helping to fill "dangerous gaps" created by the federal government regarding border control.

**Body**

Texas Gov. [*Greg Abbott*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/greg-abbott?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) celebrated his state arresting nearly 500,000 migrants in a new report released Tuesday.

Abbott, a Republican, released a report touting his efforts to secure the U.S-Mexico border amid an uptick in migrant crossings in recent months. He has argued that Texas is facing an "invasion" caused by President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s policies surrounding immigration and border security.

His efforts, some of which have been criticized as being inhumane, have sparked legal battles with the Biden administration, which argues the federal government has broader authority to control the border.

In 2021, he launched "Operation Lone Star," a multi-billion dollar project aimed at securing the border. The program has seen the Texas government transport thousands of migrants to Democratic-run "sanctuary cities," which protect undocumented immigrants from deportation, as well as implement controversial measures such as razor wire and floating barriers along the border, which the [*federal government has challenged in court*](https://www.newsweek.com/republican-judges-deal-blow-greg-abbott-border-fight-1869679?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

On Tuesday, in his "2024 Report to the People of Texas," Abbott celebrated the state's efforts on immigration, highlighting that more than $11 billion have been allocated to the border and that more than 458 million doses of fentanyl have been seized.

Abbott celebrated that through the end of 2023, there were "over 494,400 illegal immigrant apprehensions" in Texas.

"Operation Lone Star continues to fill the dangerous gaps created by the Biden

administration's refusal to secure the border," the report reads. "Every individual who is apprehended or arrested and every ounce of drugs seized would have otherwise made their way into communities across Texas and the nation due to President Biden's open-border policies."

Notably, the majority of fentanyl is seized at legal ports of entry, rather than in between, according to data from U.S. Customs of Border Protection. [*CBS*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/cbs?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) News reported last year that from 2017 to 2021, 86 percent of those arrested for allegedly trafficking fentanyl were American citizens.

Amid his border crackdown, Abbott's popularity in Texas has increased, according to the Texas ***Politics*** Project, which regularly conducts surveys on his approval rating. In February, 53 percent of Texans held a positive view of Abbott, while only 37 percent viewed him negatively.

One year earlier in February 2023, 46 percent of Texans said they approved of his job performance, while 43 percent gave him negative marks. Still, some Texas residents continue to [*take a critical view of his border policies*](https://www.newsweek.com/greg-abbott-pushes-eagle-pass-residents-border-fight-1869265?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

*Newsweek has* reached out to Abbott's office for comment via email.

In the report, he also highlighted that his administration has allocated "resources to acquire 1,700 unused steel panels to build the border wall in Texas." These panels were initially meant for former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s border wall, but had been [*declared "surplus" once Biden halted its construction*](https://www.newsweek.com/texas-claims-1700-free-panels-feds-good-13-miles-border-wall-1679596?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

The report celebrating his immigration efforts comes as Abbott faces another legal headache over one of his policies, this time surrounding a law that would allow Texas police to arrest individuals believed to have crossed the border illegally. According to *The Texas Tribune,* the U.S. [*Supreme Court*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/supreme-court?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) ruled on Tuesday that it would extend a stay on the law until at least March 18.

U.S. District Judge David Ezra previously prevented the law from going into effect, arguing that it "threatens the fundamental notion that the United States must regulate immigration with one voice," the newspaper reported.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2361555/greg-abbott-celebrates-texas-arresting-500000-migrants.jpg)

**Graphic**

Greg Abbott celebrates Texas arresting 500,000 migrants

Brandon Bell/Getty Images

Texas Governor Greg Abbott speaks at a news conference in Beaumont, Texas on October 17, 2022. Abbott on Tuesday released a report celebrating the arrest of nearly 500,000 migrants amid his efforts at strengthening the U.S.-Mexico border.

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