

# Humanitarian Disaster Brewing at the Border

9,000 unaccompanied alien children projected for February — traditionally a low-travel month.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday that the number of unaccompanied alien children (UACs) apprehended by CBP at the Southwest border in February is projected to increase by 50 percent compared to January, to 9,000. February is traditionally one of the lowest travel months for illegal entrants, and has the fewest days. That projection reveals that there is a new humanitarian disaster brewing — one that could scuttle President Biden's immigration plans.

By way of comparison, UAC apprehensions at the Southwest border totaled just 1,910 in February 2017 — the month after the inauguration that year. That was likely attributable to what I termed the "Trump effect". Simply put, at the beginning of his term, the 45th president's campaign rhetoric dissuaded would-be entrants.

Now, on the other hand, CBP is dealing with the consequences of what my colleague Todd Bensman has deemed the "Biden effect". Most of the president's immigration actions and policies are direct rebukes of his predecessor's, and have had the opposite response. Amnesty is on the president's menu, and not surprisingly, would-be applicants are lining up on the nation's doorstep.

The month of February was the harbinger of the humanitarian disaster at the border that played out in FY 2019.

That year, CBP recorded almost one million "encounters" of illegal aliens along the line with Mexico. In February 2019, UAC apprehensions jumped 33.5 percent (to 6,817) from the month before. By the end of FY 2019, there were just over 76,000 UACs apprehended by the Border Patrol at the Southwest border.

Needless to say, a 50-percent increase is greater than a 33.5-percent one, and 9,000 is 32 percent higher than 6,817. The pandemic has shrunk shelter space for those UACs, as I explained on February 24. As a consequence, the Biden

administration is scrambling to find room to house them, going so far as to reopen a detention facility at Carrizo Springs, Texas, that had been opened and then closed under the Trump administration.

The president's handling of the issue has been unpopular to say the least. Note that during that earlier FY 2019 crisis, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) (AOC) complained that: "The United States is running concentration camps on our southern border, and that is exactly what they are — they are concentration camps".

Here's AOC's Tweet in response to the Biden's administration's reopening of the Carrizo Springs facility:

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez@AOC

This is not okay, never has been okay, never will be okay – no matter the administration or party.

The Washington Post@washingtonpost

First migrant facility for children opens under Biden <https://wapo.st/3upDNPq>

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At least she's consistent.

According to Rasmussen Reports' polling for the week ended February 18: "55% of Likely U.S. Voters feel the government is already doing too little to reduce illegal border crossings and visitor overstays." Significantly, 63 percent of those unaffiliated with either party — crucial swing voters in mid-term elections — agree.

That was more than a week ago. I doubt that the new CBP projection of 9,000 UACs arriving in February is going to push more voters into the "government is doing too much to reduce illegal border crossings" (as per Rasmussen, 18 percent of likely voters) category.

The day before President Biden took the oath of office, I predicted that a surge of migrants at the border could doom his amnesty plans. I am sticking with my assessment. And that surge is already building, in the year's shortest month, and one that usually does not see a lot of Southwest border encounters by CBP.