

Kamala Harris to visit El Paso on Friday in first trip to U.S.-Mexico border as vice president

Former President Donald Trump plans on touring Texas' southern border with Gov. Greg Abbott later this month.



Vice President Kamala Harris will visit El Paso on Friday. *Credit: REUTERS/Carlos Barria*

Vice President Kamala Harris is set to visit El Paso on June 25, her chief spokesperson confirmed Wednesday in a statement.

There are still no exact details or agenda for the visit, but according to the statement, the goal is to “address the root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.”

The vice president was just in Guatemala and Mexico earlier this month in her first trip overseas since taking office. The trip was met with a whirlwind of criticism from all sides of the political aisle. Conservatives, particularly U.S. Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn of Texas, accused Harris of having her attention set on the wrong border, while progressives lambasted Harris after a video of her urging Guatemalan migrants to not come to the United States went viral — and questioned why Harris, a daughter of immigrants herself, would make such a remark.

The vice president will be accompanied by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, the statement confirmed. It's her first visit to the border since becoming vice president.

Conservatives have been pushing Harris to visit the border for weeks as they raise alarm over what they have described as a crisis. Gov. Greg Abbott has blamed the Biden administration's immigration policies for the increase of immigrants on the state's southern border, saying in an earlier disaster declaration that new federal policies have paved the way for "dangerous gangs and cartels, human traffickers, and deadly drugs like fentanyl to pour into our communities." He announced earlier this month that Texas will take steps to build its own border wall.

In a statement issued Wednesday, Abbott called Harris the "Border Czar," and touted Operation Lone Star — an initiative to amp up state law enforcement presence at the border.

Cornyn said in a statement Wednesday, before the trip was announced, that any reluctance to do so is "willful ignorance."

"Despite what Kamala Harris said in Central America when she said, 'Do not come,' the people who are coming are talking to friends and relatives in the United States, they see what's happening on TV, and the cartels are whispering in their ear," Cornyn said.

Cruz accused the Biden-Harris administration of being "the last mile of a human trafficking and illegal drug network that cartels are exploiting."

"It only took more than half a million illegal immigrants entering the United States, more than 400,000 pounds of drugs seized, 19 U.S. Senators traveling to

the southern border and 92 days after being appointed border crisis czar for Kamala Harris to visit the southern border,” he said in a statement.

Meanwhile, President Joe Biden has disputed the idea of a crisis on the border, as NBC News reported, and has said that any ongoing problems at the border are to be blamed on the Trump administration for refusing to cooperate during the presidential transition period.

Harris is not the only major politician making news for planning a visit down to the border. Former President Donald Trump plans on touring Texas’ southern border with Abbott.

The Department of Homeland Security did not return any requests for comment.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/06/23/kamal-harris-el-paso-border/>

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