



EL PASO COUNTY
STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



WHEREAS, in 2023, the International Organization for Migration identified the US-Mexico border as the world’s deadliest migration route, with at least 5,405 deaths or disappearances recorded since 2014, and record-high fatalities beginning in 2021; and,

WHEREAS, migrant deaths in the El Paso Border Patrol Sector – which encompasses New Mexico, El Paso County, and Hudspeth County – have risen for five consecutive years, surpassing 100 fatalities for the first time in 2023; and,

WHEREAS, in 2024, the El Paso Border Patrol Sector became the deadliest along the US-Mexico border, accounting for 196 deaths – 40% more than the next deadliest sector; and,

WHEREAS, the death toll in the El Paso sector exceeds fatalities from national disasters such as the Lahaina, Hawaii, and Paradise, California, fires, as well as Hurricane Harvey in 2017; and,

WHEREAS, scholars, advocates, and researchers have linked the rise in border fatalities to the 1994 implementation of “prevention through deterrence,” which has directed migrants to remote and hazardous areas due to increased enforcement; and,

WHEREAS, the rising tide in migrant deaths represents a tragic but preventable trend in public health, one which can be addressed through adequate governmental record keeping and transparency, increased support to search, rescue and identification efforts, and changes in border enforcement strategies; and,

WHEREAS, crossing the border should never be a death sentence, and the crisis of fatalities in the El Paso sector constitutes an unnatural disaster, demanding justice and heightened visibility to address this humanitarian tragedy; and,

WHEREAS, mass migration is a global phenomenon, not confined to the Americas or the United States, that must be humanely managed and addressing its root causes is a more sustainable and humane strategy than deterrence-based policies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the El Paso County Commissioners Court denounces the crisis of migrant deaths in our region, commends the community of El Paso that is already working on addressing this issue and providing humanitarian aid, and recognizes the responsibility we all share in working toward a humane immigration system that meets the challenges of the social and economic realities of migration in the 21st century.

SIGNED, this 13th day of January 2025

Commissioner Jackie Butler, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Sergio Coronado, Pct. 4

Ricardo A. Samaniego, County Judge