

STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0090

Brian P. Kemp
GOVERNOR

February 24, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As I have stated many times in the past, your actions and those of your administration have resulted in every state in the country experiencing the disastrous impacts of an unsecured U.S. southern border. More than nine million illegal immigrants have crossed the border since you took office – with an additional, unknown number of migrants who were not detained and processed – while at least 58 people on the terror watchlist have been encountered between ports of entry this fiscal year alone. Moreover, nearly two thousand pounds of fentanyl and five thousand pounds of methamphetamines were seized at the border in just the month of January. In addition to the serious national security implications of this crisis, the increased burden on state and local resources is not only unsustainable, it also presents a clear and present danger to our citizens and communities.

While the dangers of this crisis have never been theoretical, this week our state witnessed a devastating tragedy. Laken Riley, a 22-year-old nursing student at Augusta University and beloved member of the University of Georgia (UGA) community, was found dead near UGA's East Campus intramural fields on Thursday. After her death had been ruled a homicide, state and local law enforcement coordinated on identifying, locating, and arresting the suspected murderer. This coordinated effort resulted in the arrest of Jose Antonio Ibarra, a Venezuelan national, on multiple charges including malice murder. It has since been revealed by the United States Department of Justice that the investigation into Laken Riley's murder also resulted in the arrest of his older brother, Diego Ibarra, on charges of possessing a fraudulent U.S. permanent resident card. Furthermore,

despite having been arrested on multiple occasions since September 2023 on charges ranging from driving under the influence to shoplifting, your Department of Justice has confirmed that Diego Ibarra has been released back into the community while his asylum claims are being processed.

This past September I joined twenty-four governors in writing you a letter requesting “accurate, detailed, thorough data and information” regarding all illegal border crossings, relocation efforts, and how asylum claims were being processed. This followed another letter from the nation’s governors laying out actions you could carry out today to begin securing the border and restricting the flow of illegal crossings into our country.

Frankly, Mr. President, your continued silence in response to these reasonable requests is outrageous. The American people deserve to know who is illegally entering our country due to your administration’s failures, and what risks and challenges every state must now face.

Today, I renew those requests, and additionally request answers to the following questions specifically related to Laken Riley’s murder:

- Why was my administration not made aware of the asylum claims and subsequent release of an illegal resident who presented fraudulent identification?
- What is the current immigration status of Jose Antonio Ibarra and why has this information not been relayed to my administration?
- What additional information does your administration possess regarding these individuals and the circumstances surrounding their entry into the country?

While media reports surrounding this case have relied on sources and leaks from your own federal agencies, the answers to these basic questions must be provided publicly as soon as possible to ensure state and local officials have the information we need in order to keep our communities safe.

These tragedies are not unique to Georgia. While we will continue to support Texas with National Guard resources as we have since 2019, federal action to secure the border is the only way to wholistically address this ongoing crisis and ensure Laken Riley’s horrible fate is not replicated across the country.

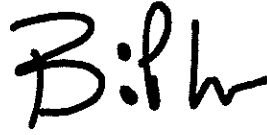
However, if you continue to refuse to exercise your authority as president, your administration must provide the information necessary for Georgia and other states to protect our citizens.

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

February 24, 2024

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B:lh". The letters are stylized and connected, with a prominent vertical stroke for the letter "B".

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

CC: The Honorable Jon Ossoff
The Honorable Raphael Warnock
The Honorable Earl "Buddy" Carter
The Honorable Sanford Bishop
The Honorable Drew Ferguson
The Honorable Hank Johnson
The Honorable Nikema Williams
The Honorable Lucy McBath
The Honorable Rich McCormick, M.D.
The Honorable Austin Scott
The Honorable Andrew Clyde
The Honorable Mike Collins
The Honorable Barry Loudermilk
The Honorable Rick Allen
The Honorable David Scott
The Honorable Marjorie Taylor Greene