

# I went to Tijuana to see Trump's manufactured border crisis

Excerpt from ACLU email - January 28, 2019



Today, 800,000 federal government workers and countless contractors are wrestling with the fallout of the longest government shutdown in history. On Friday, President Trump reopened the government without his border wall. **Now we have three weeks before the current funding runs out to ensure the government stays funded – but with no money for a wall or a raise for Trump's detention and deportation force.**

Let's not forget how we got into this mess: Trump's desire to implement unconscionable, inhumane, and illegal immigration policies. **He created a crisis at the border with his own policies that target asylum seekers. A wall and more border militarization won't fix it.**

I witnessed the crisis firsthand a few weeks ago when I traveled to Tijuana, Mexico. Because in order to win this fight, we must confront the realities of Trump's anti-immigrant agenda. [Read about the real problems at the border – all consequences of the administration's own policies.](#)

The Trump administration is violating U.S. and international human rights law by denying asylum seekers entry. As a result, migrants who are fleeing persecution and violence must wait in Mexico in cities like Tijuana. Many stay in overcrowded shelters, where a thin plastic sheet is the only barrier protecting them from dirt floors. Those who can't find a space in a shelter live in tent encampments on the street. Respiratory illness, chicken pox, and other sicknesses run rampant as a result of people sleeping outside for months. And as children wait for asylum, cartels prey on them – kidnapping, extorting, torturing and murdering them.

These conditions become worse as the backlog of migrants seeking refuge grows – a backlog that the Trump administration has created as it continues to illegally deny people's right to claim

---

asylum. The administration can fix this problem by reversing its own anti-asylum policies – not by building a wall, and not by giving any more money to ICE or CBP.

**As Trump insists on ineffective solutions like a wall and jailing an unprecedented 52,000 immigrants per day, we must confront the real crisis on the border and the policies that manufactured it.** When we call on our members of Congress again, we'll remember what we're fighting for.

Lee Gelernt  
Deputy Director of the ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project

---