



KINNEY COUNTY ATTORNEY

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Governor Greg Abbott

I would like to thank you for your leadership and ongoing efforts under Operation Lone Star. The border crisis touches each and every Texan, irrespective of where they live in our state. For Texans living on the border, words cannot adequately describe the conditions on the ground. Our homes are being broken into in the middle of the night. The main streets of our small towns are now the place of high-speed car chases with cartel operatives. Walking outside on our own property after dark is no longer safe. Texans who reside on our border no longer enjoy the comfort and safety of their own home. The violence and lawlessness occurring along the southern border is not sustainable for any sovereign state. The willful neglect of the federal government to enforce the laws of our nation has comprised the safety and security of Texans in a way never before witnessed.

As Governor, you are constitutionally authorized to take certain actions to secure the border of Texas. As a border resident myself who was elected to represent thousands of Texans living with this daily nightmare, I cannot stress the importance of passing legislation that creates an effective state agency tasked solely with border security. The text originally included in HB 20 garnered the support of millions of Texans who prayed daily for its successful passage. I myself attended a prayer meeting in Kinney County for the passage of HB 20. Folks on the border are desperate for an end to this nightmare.

Passing legislation that contains the language originally set forth in HB 20 is important for two reasons. First, it retains the essential policies that will provide for the procurement of personnel from Border Patrol and maximizes their effectiveness for on the ground operations by repelling unlawful entry. As the Border Czar demonstrated in Brownsville recently, preventing unlawful entry is key to our success. Second, the language set forth under HB 20 creates a legal framework that would assist future litigation in the federal courts surrounding the constitutional right for Texas to act in the absence of the federal government and its failure to uphold its constitutional guarantees under Article IV of the U.S. Constitution.

The magnitude of this crisis cannot be overstated. The tools that are created to confront this border crisis will ultimately determine the fate of Texas. I therefore support the call for a special session to specifically address the creation of a state agency specifically tasked with border security.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brent Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

Brent Smith,
Kinney County Attorney