



Arizona State Legislature  
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## **Legislature’s Border Democrats Applaud Lukeville Port of Entry Reopening; Continue Call for Additional Crisis Management Funding**

**PHOENIX** – The Lukeville port of entry was reopened this morning, a month after it was shut down because of increased migrant arrivals. While Legislative Democrats who represent border communities celebrate the reopening, they continued their call for the federal government to increase its funding and resources for Arizona border towns. The members stressed that the closure of the Lukeville port of entry resulted from lack of resources from the federal government for southern Arizona communities to manage the ongoing influx of migrants. Instead of sending money and resources to Arizona, and other southern border states, the federal government has consistently underfunded their greatest partners in executing humane, swift crisis management.

“I am happy to see the Lukeville port of entry reopen. The month-long closure created negative economic impacts on Arizona’s surrounding border cities and towns, including Nogales and Naco,” said **Senator Rosanna Gabaldón**. “On top of the economic impacts, the closure also created humanitarian issues by separating families who once were able to cross the border and visit relatives easily. While opening the Lukeville port of entry is a good first step, the Biden administration still needs to send a surge of resources and staffing to Southern Arizona and start working with Congress to deal with the root causes of migration and develop a coordinated and long-term federal response. The financial and humanitarian costs are too high for us to ignore this issue any longer. This is as much a matter of the heart as it is a matter of policy – it’s time to put away partisanship and fix our immigration system and invest in our crisis management abilities.”

“As a Representative of the district that includes Lukeville and after advocating directly to President Biden, I’m pleased to see the port of entry reopen today,” said **Representative Mariana Sandoval**. “Border communities like Why and Ajo have been hurt economically by the closure. However, they won’t be the only ones that feel the brunt without critical funding from the federal government. Pima County spends almost \$4 million a month in federal funds to address the humanitarian crisis at the border but will run out of that funding within the next few months. Once gone, our southern Arizona communities will no longer be able to provide agencies with the critical resources they need to assist asylum seekers.”

**Senator Brian Fernandez added,** “Opening the Lukeville port of entry is a good first step in helping Arizona address the influx of migrants seeking asylum but that does not change the fact that the federal government's decision last month to shut down the port of entry was a direct result of the dereliction of federal responsibility. Even with the port of entry reopened, the migrant situation is unsustainable and growing worse each day as Congress ignores the human and economic impact in southern Arizona. Our border communities deserve safety and security. It is vital that this funding finds its way to southern Arizona immediately.”

“Arizona communities are on the frontlines of this humanitarian crisis at the southern border. We have seen a record number in asylum petitions at our southern border and the financial responsibility of this process should not fall solely on state and city governments,” **said Representative Stephanie Stahl Hamilton.** “We continue to urge Congress to provide the needed funding to address this crisis and to assure we hold intact the dignity and respect of every migrant as they move through the immigration process.”

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