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TITLE 42 IS CRITICAL TO OUR HOMELAND SECURITY

As the Pandemic Rages in South America, Now is Not the Time to End Title 42

According to media reports, the Biden Administration is considering ending Title 42 as early as July 31. Title 42 is the CDC public health authority that allows U.S. border officials to quickly turn back migrants due to the danger posed by communicable diseases.

More and more migrants from beyond Mexico and Central America are now attempting to illegally enter the country. In May 2021, CBP encountered **40,607** migrants crossing into the U.S. from nations other than Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, up from **9,671** in January 2021. Many of these migrants are coming from countries with some of the world's highest infection rates of COVID-19, including India, Brazil, and Paraguay. The *New York Times* reports migrants from more than **160** countries have been encountered at the border in recent months.

South America is increasingly becoming the epicenter of the disease. Not only are migrants arriving at the southern border from places around the world that are battling rampant COVID-19 infection rates, but they are traveling through high risk South and Central American countries en route to the border. In addition to spiking case and death rates, the low vaccination rates and reliance on ineffective vaccines are just as concerning.

With the U.S. moving steadily toward a post-pandemic recovery, now is not the time to end the use of Title 42. As powerful variants continue to spread around the world, preserving COVID-19 pandemic recovery in the U.S. is exactly why it's now so important to keep Title 42.

1. South America has become a major COVID-19 hot spot, with current death rates eight times the global average.

- With just 5% of the world's population, South American countries now account for a quarter of the global death toll.

2. CBP continues to rely heavily on Title 42 authority to expel single adults and family units that illegally cross the border. Single adults continue to make up the majority of CBP encounters at the southwest border.

- In May 2021, CBP expelled 112,302 individuals under Title 42.

3. The eroding usage of Title 42 authority is a significant problem. DHS has gone from expelling the “vast majority” of illegal encounters to just barely above 60%.

- Just 62% of all May encounters resulted in a Title 42 expulsion.

COUNTRY	INFECTION RATE	VACCINATION RATE
Paraguay	7x per capita compared to U.S.	4.7%
Colombia	16x per capita compared to U.S.	15.9%
Brazil	Over 10x per capita compared to U.S.	22%
Honduras	Nearly 3x per capita compared to U.S.	5%
El Salvador	Over 1.5x per capita compared to U.S.	16.4%
Guatemala	Over 2.5x per capita compared to U.S.	0.9%

4. To reduce the spread of COVID-19, DHS just announced it is extending its ban on non-essential travel at our northern and southern borders through July 21.

- While discussing plans to end Title 42 authority at the southwest border, the administration announced an extension of public health precautions at the northern and southern borders, which continues to hamper local economies and even the travel of vaccinated Americans. This inequity is nonsensical.

While at the southwest border, Homeland Security Republicans were consistently told by frontline Border Patrol agents that Title 42 authority is vital to managing and stemming the surge of migrants at the border.

If President Biden and Vice President Harris, appointed “Border Czar,” traveled to the *real hot spots* on the southwest border, they would hear the same plea from our frontline law enforcement for themselves.