

I am writing this letter to express my growing concern about the crisis on our borders and the impact it is having on not only public safety in our community and beyond, but the potential fiscal impacts on our local schools and budgets as outlined in the Governor's proposed budget.

As you are aware, our open borders are allowing an unprecedented number of undocumented migrants to cross into our country, many of whom are being transported to NY City and other areas of our state, placing a significant strain on local resources to house and care for these individuals. Even more concerning is the fact that this crisis has provided an open door into our country for those wishing to profit from the illegal sale of fentanyl and other dangerous drugs that come from countries outside the United States and ultimately are distributed throughout our nation and into our own community. These drugs are killing people, right here in Cayuga County. Mexican Cartels are making billions of dollars moving these drugs into our country and trafficking human beings. Equally disturbing is the fact that 169 non-U.S. Citizens on the terrorist watch list were encountered at the southern border in 2023 according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. How many have crossed into our country without our knowledge? We continue to leave our border open and provide a path for these criminal enterprises to prey on not only people living where we call home, but millions that are being trafficked into our country illegally.

Recently I learned that the Governor's proposed budget in New York State has set aside over two billion dollars to care for undocumented migrants in NY City that have crossed our borders illegally, while at the same time cutting millions of dollars in local funding to Cayuga County schools. Our schools desperately need this funding to address our children's educational needs as well as a growing mental health crisis that will undoubtedly present additional challenges for us moving forward. Funding should be directed back to our school districts as well as to our community to address a growing crisis with homelessness and other local public safety needs.

I urge you to push back on this proposed budget and return funding to our schools and local community. I also urge you to support addressing our border crisis NOW. It is impacting our own community, and country, in a negative way that is not only impacting our quality of life, but also taking lives. Our national leaders must explore alternative solutions to assist with the humanitarian needs of those living beyond our borders. Leaving our border open is not the answer. It is not sustainable as we are already seeing.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my letter. Again, I urge you to address the misguided priorities in our state budget and border challenges now.

Sincerely,

Brian Schenck
Cayuga County Sheriff