A RESOLUTION

To urge the United States government to secure its borders.

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Ohio:

WHEREAS, A strong, secure border benefits the United States; and

WHEREAS, The well-being and safety of the citizens of the United States is being jeopardized by threats from transnational criminal organizations; and

WHEREAS, It is integral to the security, well-being, and harmony of the people of the United States to sustain secure borders; and

WHEREAS, The dedicated individuals of the United States Customs and Border Protection work diligently and honorably to secure borders in the most efficient and humane manner; and

WHEREAS, The Governor of Ohio has allocated our state's resources to secure our borders through the assignment of over one hundred members of the Ohio National Guard to support United States Customs and Border Protection and the assignment of troopers from the Ohio State Highway Patrol to travel to Texas to support local law enforcement with border surveillance; and

WHEREAS, Ill-motivated individuals continuously seek to cause harm, danger, injury, hazard, and peril to those who protect the United States' borders; and

WHEREAS, Those individuals who cross the United States' borders without regard for the legal immigration process circumvent the individuals who show respect for the rule of law; and

WHEREAS, Those same individuals defy the right of the United States to control its own sovereign territory and regulate the happenings within its rightful borders; and

WHEREAS, The smuggling of contraband, such as drugs and weapons, have plagued the United States' borders; and

WHEREAS, In fiscal year 2021, United States Customs and Border Protection seized more than 319,000 pounds of marijuana, 109,000 pounds of methamphetamine, 97,000 pounds of cocaine, 11,000 pounds of fentanyl, and 5,400 pounds of heroin; and

WHEREAS, These illegal drugs are sold, spread, and used throughout the American citizenry as drug overdoses and abuse rates reach the highest levels on record in the United States, including Ohio hitting a record death rate from opioid overdose during the second quarter of 2020; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, 81% of overdose deaths in Ohio involved illicit fentanyl or fentanyl analogs, while drug deaths related to fentanyl increased 32% from 2019; and

WHEREAS, Most fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances abused in the United States are trafficked into the country via international mail, express consignment, or across the southwestern border; and

WHEREAS, The act of human smuggling, which deliberately evades immigration laws, is a daily occurrence at the southwestern border according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Individuals who are smuggled into the United States may be involved in transnational criminal organization operations or may be forced into human trafficking situations; and

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is a serious issue in Ohio, as state sources identified over 1,300 cases between 2014 and 2020, ranking the state among the ten worst in the nation for human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of State has urged state and local governments, as well as nonprofit organizations, to address cross-border trafficking issues and support strong collaboration at the borders to identify and prevent human trafficking; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Senate of the 134th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, support the investment of necessary resources by the United States government to ensure secure, strong, and sustainable borders; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President and Vice President of the United States, the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio.

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President _____ of the Senate.

Adopted _____, 20____