



The Senate of Texas

CÉSAR J. BLANCO

TEXAS SENATOR
DISTRICT 29

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 13th, 2023

Contact: Taylor Sanchez
915.276.3872

Taylor.sanchez@senate.texas.gov

Senator César J. Blanco Votes FOR Enhanced Penalties for Smuggling and Operating Stash Houses and Votes AGAINST Criminalizing Migrant Crossings

Austin, Texas – Today, Senator César J. Blanco voted for Senate Bill 4, which would increase criminal penalties for smuggling, continuous smuggling, and operating a stash house.

In the past year alone, Border Patrol Agents in El Paso have discovered more than 281 houses containing over 3,600 smuggled migrants, up from 240 stash houses with more than 2,000 migrants from last year.

“In recent months, stash houses and human smuggling have significantly increased in our border communities, endangering not just migrants but also local residents,” said Senator Blanco. “This bill will crack down on cartel smuggling and stash house operations with enhanced penalties to better protect our local neighborhoods and migrants preyed upon by the cartels.”

Conversely, Senator Blanco voted against Senate Bill 11 which creates a state crime for unlawful entry into Texas.

Senator Blanco also added, “The federal government already has an offense for unlawful entry, and that has not turned away desperate migrants looking for a better life. This bill will only overwhelm local prisons and court systems with non-violent offenders, and raise taxes on border communities while doing nothing to stem the flow of migrants looking for a better life. We can do better than this.”

Senator Blanco authored an amendment to ensure the State of Texas pays for the detention of migrants charged for unlawful entry so that border communities and taxpayers are not further financially burdened with the additional expenses of detaining migrants on state charges. The amendment ultimately failed on party lines.

These two bills now go to the House of Representatives for consideration.

###