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# GOP doubles down on impeachment push even as border numbers plummet



Stef W. Kight



Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee Rep. Mark Green (R-TN) speaks at a news conference about DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

**Why it matters:** Despite the trend, House Republicans are slamming Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for "dereliction of duty" at the border in a 111-page report released Wednesday — teeing-up a long-anticipated [impeachment inquiry](#).

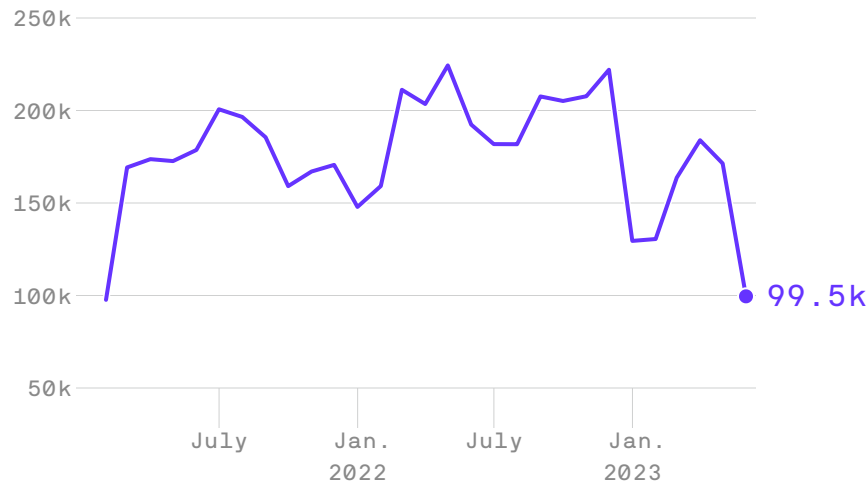
- The exhaustive "phase 1" investigation report describes Mayorkas as "the chief architect of the illegal immigration crisis that Americans have suffered through since January 2021."
- It's another sign of how important the border issue has become for Republicans, even as the chaos in border states has waned.

**By the numbers:** Monthly illegal border crossings dropped to the lowest level in two years in June — falling to under 100,000 for the first time in that time period, according to government data released Tuesday.

- Since taking office, Biden has struggled with logistical, humanitarian and political crises posed by record numbers of migrants crossing the southern border amid unprecedented migration throughout the Western Hemisphere.
- Faced with the end of a pandemic policy called Title 42, which enabled the rapid expulsion of migrants and asylum seekers, [Biden imposed severe new asylum restrictions](#) in May. The rules angered immigration advocates and some Democrats.
- Since then, border numbers have plummeted — though it is unclear how much of the decline can be attributed to the new restrictions.



Monthly, February 2021 to June 2023



Data: U.S. Customs and Border Protection; Chart: Axios Visuals

- Still, the falling border numbers have not swayed Republicans from building their case for an impeachment inquiry into Mayorkas.

**Zoom in:** In the new report, House Homeland Security Committee Republicans — led by Rep. Mark Green (R-Tenn.) lay out familiar lines of attack against Mayorkas.

- They have latched on to the military term "dereliction of duty," which has no legal application to Cabinet members. The report cites a definition from the [Manual for Courts-Martial](#).
- Mayorkas is accused of abusing or not enforcing immigration laws by setting up new parole programs and releasing undocumented migrants into the U.S. — a practice of multiple administrations when border resources have been overwhelmed.
- The report claims he also ignored court rulings and lied to Congress and the American people about the security of the border.

- For decades, parole has been used to respond to refugee crises, but Biden has made [unprecedented use of the tool](#).
- More than half a million people have been admitted into the U.S. through various parole programs under Biden, according to [reporting by CBS News](#).

**What they're saying:** "Instead of pointing fingers and pursuing a baseless impeachment, Congress should work with the Department and pass comprehensive legislation to fix our broken immigration system," a DHS spokesperson told Axios in a statement.

- "I realize Republicans have been counting on chaos on border for months and are now panicking that the Administration policies are working, but there is no valid basis for impeachment," Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie Thompson said in a statement.

**What to watch:** The new congressional report and monthly border numbers come as [a federal judge considers](#) whether to block Biden's new asylum rule, which automatically rejects from asylum most migrants who illegally cross the border and do not first seek refuge in a country they travelled through.

- The case could force the administration to dramatically change its post-Title 42 strategy.

*Editor's note: This story has been corrected to say more than half a million people have been admitted into the U.S. through various parole programs. It originally said half a billion.*

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### Who could replace George Santos now that he's been expelled from Congress



Rep. George Santos (R-N.Y.) on Nov. 1 after House floor debates on a resolution to expel him from Congress. Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

Rep. George Santos (R-N.Y.) [was expelled](#) from Congress on Friday, which means a special election will soon be scheduled to fill the vacancy in New York's third Congressional district.

**Why it matters:** Democrats are vying to re-claim a district that [President Biden](#) carried in 2020, while Republicans are hoping to keep the [seat](#) that Santos flipped.



Jacob Knutson

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## Sandra Day O'Connor, first woman to serve on Supreme Court, dies at 93



Sandra Day O'Connor during her confirmation hearing in 1981. Photo:Wally McNamee/CORBIS/Corbis via Getty Images

Former [Supreme Court](#) Justice Sandra Day O'Connor died on Friday at the age of 93, the court said in [a statement](#).

**Driving the news:** O'Connor became the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court after being nominated by President Ronald Reagan and unanimously confirmed by the Senate in 1981.



Andrew Solender, Ivana Saric  
46 mins ago - Politics & Policy

## Rep. George Santos expelled from Congress in historic vote



Rep. George Santos. Photo: Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images.

The House on Friday voted to expel Rep. [George Santos](#) (R-N.Y.) over his many fabrications on the 2022 campaign trail and his two federal indictments.

**Why it matters:** The vote makes Santos just the [sixth lawmaker](#) – and first Republican – to be expelled from the House in U.S. history.

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