

EL CAJON MAYOR, BILL WELLS

Mayor Bill Wells

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Mayor Wells Sends Letter to Federal Government Ahead of Title 42 Expiration

With the expiration of Title 42, my City of El Cajon, California, expects a significant influx of new migrants on a daily basis.

I am told that about 1,000 people per day may enter San Diego County, with about 25 percent of them being dropped off at a light rail station in El Cajon. After speaking with Customs and Border Protection staff, my staff said that our small City would have between 300 and 500 asylum seekers left in El Cajon to fend for themselves.

I expect to see these people with no credit cards or bank accounts and limited cash, which puts them in a precarious position regarding securing safe temporary housing. I expect these people may need psychological and/or medical intervention and will likely be exhausted, hungry, and disoriented.

I am sympathetic to those being left in El Cajon. In fact, since 2002, California has resettled the most refugees (about 108,600) in the United States, according to the Pew Institute. A significant portion has settled in the City of El Cajon. For many years, the City has been the welcoming community to Christian Iraqis during the two Gulf Wars and, more recently, Syrians, Afghans, Congolese, and many others from around the globe. This impacts the City's financial resources.

In addition, El Cajon is already in the midst of a homeless crisis. We have many shelter beds available, so we have become a hub of people seeking help throughout San Diego County. I am concerned that without Federal intervention, our current crisis, which takes our resources to an extreme level, will precipitate a full crisis. El Cajon is not equipped to be a refugee center.

I ask the Federal government to meet with our elected officials, the city manager, the Chief of Police, and the Fire Department Chief and work out a plan to calmly and effectively provide services needed to help these immigrants and to provide a level of protection to the community. I also ask for an allocation of Federal funds and resources to be successful in this endeavor. I ask FEMA to come and provide aid. I ask a Federal government representative to be on the ground, for at least the early days of this transition period, to act as a liaison.

Preferably this person will have the authority to make meaningful decisions to help the City and citizens of El Cajon.

Please contact us as soon as possible to discuss these requests. I appreciate you taking the time to consider these respectful requests.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bill Wells, Mayor of the City of El Cajon, California