

NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt

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7:01:18 p.m. [TEASE]

6 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; Crisis at the Border]

LESTER HOLT: The massive migrant surge at the border. What's causing it and why more people may arrive in the coming days.

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7:11:58 p.m.

2 minutes and 21 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; Crisis at the Border]

HOLT: Now, to that new wave of thousands of migrants crossing the southern border. Officials in El Paso tonight are calling it a crisis even before a Trump-era immigration restriction is expected to end next week. Gabe Gutierrez is on the Mexican side of the border tonight.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; Migrant Crossings Surge at the Border]

GABE GUTIERREZ: Overnight, even more migrants crossing the Rio Grande into El Paso, Texas. Thousands have come in huge groups just over the past several days, burning fires to keep warm, many from Nicaragua. Here in Juarez, Mexico, tension has been ramping up. Weeks ago, riot police broke apart of migrant camp that had formed along the border. Now, shelters are filling up. Late today, there are still hundreds of migrants that have walked across the Rio Grande and right now are waiting to get into El Paso. This new influx that we're seeing comes just days before a federal court is set to lift the pandemic-era border restriction known as Title 42. Today, we met this family of four from Guatemala who arrived here weeks ago. Now, they're waiting until Title 42 is lifted before they decide whether to cross into the United States. With U.S. migrant processing centers already crowded, and some migrants even sleeping outside, some officials in El Paso are urging the mayor to declare a state of emergency.

EL PASO, TEXAS DEPUTY CITY MANAGER MARIO D'AGOSTINO: It is a crisis. It is a state of emergency. There is no — there is no municipality alone that can handle what we're seeing and what we're about to see with the lifting of Title 42.

GUTIERREZ: Today, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas visited El Paso when he's facing Republican calls for impeachment. There was a record- breaking 2.4 million illegal border crossings in the last year. Critics of the Biden administration say its lax border policies will encourage an even larger influx when Title 42 is lifted. Customs and Border Protection agents tell NBC News, daily illegal border crossings could reach a record 10,000 per day. This man from Ecuador says a cartel kidnapped him during his grueling journey, and that he only

survived because the Mexican military rescued him and hundreds of others. Tonight, Secretary Mayorkas is defending the administration's border policies, saying immigration is very complex. And Lester, we're just now seeing how challenging it may be about to get.

HOLT: Gabe Gutierrez, thank you.