

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 20, 2024

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

We are extremely concerned with recent reports that U.S.-designated transnational criminal organization (TCO), Tren de Aragua, is expanding its presence within the United States. Given the damaging consequences of their violent crimes on the American people, we write to urge the Department of Justice (DOJ) to investigate Tren de Aragua's rapid expansion to various states and localities. After urging President Biden to designate Tren de Aragua as a TCO in March 2024, we welcomed the Treasury Department's decision to sanction Tren de Aragua as a TCO in July 2024. However, recent reports reveal a disturbing trend across the United States.

From day one of this administration, President Biden and Vice President Harris have made disgraceful decisions that have directly contributed to more than 8.5 million illegal aliens crossing the border. Not only has this crisis caused significant burdens for states as resources are stretched to the limit to accommodate illegal aliens, but it also undercuts the stability and security of our local communities. Tren de Aragua engages in particularly vicious activity in victimizing populations and maintaining sources of income, such as sex and migrant trafficking and the distribution of illegal drugs.

The administration's weak enforcement of immigration laws allows gangs, like Tren de Aragua, to control routes and exploit migrants en route to the border. After my Republican colleagues and I stressed the heinous and bold crimes committed by Tren de Aragua in American cities, the administration finally designated and sanctioned Tren de Aragua as a TCO.

Nevertheless, it appears these efforts occurred too late to prevent the current tragedy that is unfolding across our country – even in communities far from the border. When President Biden took the oath of office, he swore to not only faithfully execute the Office of the President, but to also “preserve, protect and defend the Constitution.” Implicit in this oath is the understanding that the President will defend this country and to execute its laws. With our communities falling prey to Venezuelan and other criminal organizations – who not only willfully violate the laws of the land, but also now threaten American citizens – the President and the executive branch are failing in its responsibilities laid out in the Constitution.

As such, we urge the DOJ to investigate Tren de Aragua's presence across the country. we also request answers to the following questions:

1. What cities or locations, across the United States, is the DOJ is concerned about the presence or influence of Tren de Aragua?
2. Since the designation of Tren de Aragua as a TCO, has the DOJ allocated resources or assistance to local law enforcement anywhere in the country?
3. Moving forward, what additional steps will DOJ take to counter the continued infiltration and activities of Tren de Aragua across the country?
4. Is the DOJ coordinating with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Department of State about known Tren de Aragua members and networks in the U.S., and overseas, in order to prevent such members from obtaining visas to the United States or being granted parole at a U.S. port of entry?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



Pete Ricketts  
U.S. Senator



Charles E. Grassley  
U.S. Senator



Eric Schmitt  
U.S. Senator



Bill Hagerty  
U.S. Senator



John Hoeven  
U.S. Senator



Jerry Moran  
U.S. Senator



Carlos Gimenez  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress



Jennifer González-Colón  
Member of Congress