

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0609

May 9, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
2801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

As we anticipate the end of the Title 42 public health order on May 11, 2023, we urge the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to prioritize direct funding and support for non-border jurisdictions and states that do not have the resources to sufficiently care for migrants. In recent months, the State of Colorado, the City of Denver, and other jurisdictions have experienced a dramatic influx of new migrant arrivals and are struggling to meet the immense humanitarian needs. As Colorado and Denver apply for funding to address this crisis, we urge you to rapidly respond to current applications, release funding prior to the administration's lifting of Title 42, and expand access to work authorization for migrants.

Since December 2022, Denver has spent over \$15.7 million to serve 8,500 new arrivals, and the state has provided \$8.35 million over that same time period. Denver initially applied for Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Emergency Food and Shelter Program – Humanitarian (EFSP-H) to get \$2.8 million reimbursed for costs incurred in December 2022, but was allocated only \$909,000, and has so far received just \$248,823 from the first round of disbursements on May 5, 2023. In the absence of sufficient federal assistance, Denver has been forced to seek an additional \$11 million from its own contingency fund.

Cities and states across the nation have assumed responsibility for recent arrivals of undocumented migrants, resulting in a significant drain on local financial resources. In anticipation of the administration's lifting of Title 42, Colorado and Denver expect to support more than 1,200 migrants each day, and have requested over \$50 million in advance funding to provide food, shelter, transportation, staffing, and other services through the EFSP-H funding stream. This funding is critical to maintain a sufficient response. As of today, Denver's four shelters are nearly full, accommodating 955 migrants following five consecutive days of more than 200 daily arrivals. The situation in Colorado illustrates that we face nearly the same challenges as southern border states. The city is striving to accommodate as many migrants as possible, but the system has reached capacity.

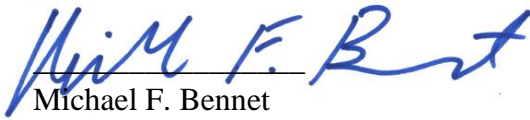
In addition to providing critical resources and funding to assist Colorado's and Denver's response, we also urge DHS to grant expedited and temporary work authorization for migrants,

allowing them to support themselves while being processed. This will help minimize the cost to federal, state and local governments.

We urgently request your assistance to ensure that Colorado and Denver receive the funding and resources they need to address this crisis. We are ready to engage and cooperate further to address the needs of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michael F. Bennet in blue ink.

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of John Hickenlooper in blue ink.

John Hickenlooper
United States Senator