



ARIZONA SENATE REPUBLICANS LAUNCH BORDER SECURITY PLAN, HOPEFUL FOR HOBBS' SUPPORT - THE CENTER SQUARE

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Photo: Arizona Senate Republicans announce their border security plan for the legislative session on Jan. 24, 2024. ([Cameron Arcand | The Center Square](#))

Arizona Senate Republicans launched their border security plan for the legislative session on Wednesday, including a bill that would designate the migrant surge an invasion.

Senate Bill 1231, introduced by Sen. Janae Shamp, R-Surprise, would make it a state crime to enter the state from Mexico unless it is through a legal port of entry.

"Joe Biden and his administration have made it unequivocally clear that they have they have abandoned their duties to enforce immigration policy at the federal level," Shamp said at a news conference over the bill she is dubbing the "Arizona Border Invasion Act."

Even though it's already against federal law to cross into the United States through a non-legal entry point, this would be similar to the strategy Texas has **employed** to combat the migrant surge, despite their numerous legal battles with the Biden administration.

Sen. David Gowan, R-Sierra Vista, is also expected to introduce a bill later on Wednesday intended to assist local law enforcement, especially when it comes to the high number of car crashes and pursuits around the border. According to a news release, the bill would increase penalties for when drivers "endanger the life of another person" during a pursuit.

When asked if progress was made over the past year when it comes to getting things done on border policy with Democratic Gov. Katie Hobbs, Sen. Ken Bennett, R-Prescott, expressed optimism. He said that even though she vetoed Republican-backed border bills last session.

"But she's admitted that there is a crisis now. Most Democrats would not even use that word a year ago. And now we have our own Democrat governor saying that it is a crisis, so I think that's a step forward," Bennett said.

Gov. Katie Hobbs deployed National Guard troops to the southern border in late December following the Lukeville Port of Entry closure. Hobbs originally asked the Biden administration to step in first before sending troops in to assist state authorities already in the area.

In her Executive Budget proposal, she is asking lawmakers for funds to support Operation SECURE, which relates to border security, as well as the SAFE Initiative, which has to do with the fentanyl crisis, [The Center Square](#) reported.