



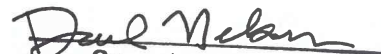
GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

September 16, 2024

Mr. David Nelson
Deputy Secretary of State
State Capitol, Room 1E.8
Austin, Texas 78701

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
11:30 AM O'CLOCK

SEP 16 2024


Secretary of State

Dear Deputy Secretary Nelson:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

A proclamation designating Tren de Aragua as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

The original proclamation is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,


Gregory S. Davidson
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD:gsd

Attachment

PROCLAMATION

BY THE

Governor of the State of Texas

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, issued a disaster proclamation on May 31, 2021, certifying under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code that the surge of individuals unlawfully crossing the Texas–Mexico border posed an ongoing and imminent threat of disaster for a number of Texas counties and for all state agencies affected by the disaster; and

WHEREAS, at my direction, the State of Texas has taken unprecedented steps under Operation Lone Star to mitigate this threat, including apprehending over half a million illegal immigrants, deterring more than one hundred thousand illegal entries, and effectively reducing illegal immigration into Texas by 87 percent over the past three years; and

WHEREAS, despite the extraordinary success achieved through Operation Lone Star initiatives, the federal government’s failure to secure the entirety of our southern border has allowed the surge of individuals crossing the border to continue, resulting in more than 11 million people—a number larger than the population of 40 different States—entering this country illegally in less than four years; and

WHEREAS, the federal government’s open-border policies have predictably resulted in the unchecked entry of transnational criminal foot soldiers, as predicted by former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) officials who warned earlier this year that “the surge in numbers of single, military aged males” from hostile nations and regions “appears to be an accelerated and strategic penetration, a soft invasion, designed to gain internal access to” the United States and “inflict catastrophic damage” on this country; and

WHEREAS, Tren de Aragua is a transnational criminal organization with thousands of members across the globe, who operate a sweeping criminal enterprise that traffics human beings for sex, smuggles drugs and weapons, and tortures and dismembers victims; and

WHEREAS, Tren de Aragua, which originated in a Venezuela prison where leaders ran the criminal enterprise with the comforts of a pool, a night club, and a zoo, quickly moved its activity into surrounding countries like Colombia, Peru, and Chile, before eventually expanding operations to the United States; and

WHEREAS, FBI officials in Texas confirm that “members of Tren de Aragua have crossed into the United States,” and a recent memorandum from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security reveals that the group’s leaders have given members “a ‘green light’ to fire on or attack law enforcement”; and

WHEREAS, reports indicate that, since being released into the country, suspected members of Tren de Aragua have unleashed a scourge of crime and terror across the United States, from murdering a nursing student in Georgia out on a morning jog, to shooting police officers trying to stop a robbery in New York, to sexually assaulting a mother and her minor daughter in Wisconsin, to forcibly assuming operational control to establish large-scale operations in once-quiet suburbs in Colorado; and

WHEREAS, reports confirm that Tren de Aragua has established criminal operations in Texas, including in El Paso where it has recently converted hotels to house gang members, imprison human smuggling victims, and stage criminal operations, resulting in nearly 700 phone calls to local law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, on June 8, 2023, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, signed into law Senate

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Bill No. 1900, which strengthened the tools to combat transnational criminal organizations like Tren de Aragua operating in Texas; and

WHEREAS, Texas Penal Code § 71.01(e) now provides that a Foreign Terrorist Organization “means three or more persons operating as an organization at least partially outside the United States who engage in criminal activity and threaten the security of this state or its residents, including but not limited to a drug cartel”; and

WHEREAS, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code § 125.065 authorizes suit against a Foreign Terrorist Organization for a court order enjoining its operations and “imposing other reasonable requirements to prevent the ... organization from engaging in future gang activities”; and

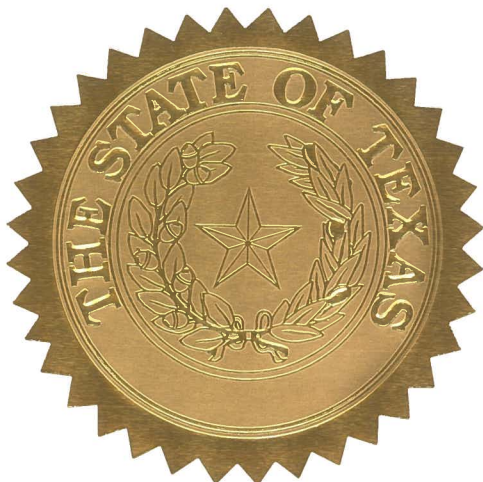
WHEREAS, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code § 125.066 provides that violation of a court order enjoining such operations and activities is punishable by contempt sanctions, including monetary fines and imprisonment; and

WHEREAS, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code § 125.064(b) and § 125.069 further authorize suit against “[a]ny person who owns or is responsible for maintaining a place that is habitually used for engaging in gang activity” by a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and provide that such a person may be subject to the same court order and penalties; and

WHEREAS, Texas Penal Code § 71.02, § 71.022, and § 71.023 impose heightened criminal penalties by making it a crime to engage in, conspire to engage in, solicit, or direct the criminal activities of a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of Texas, under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes of the State of Texas, do hereby designate Tren de Aragua as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and thereby subject Tren de Aragua, and any persons harboring or facilitating its criminal activities in Texas, to the heightened penalties authorized by Senate Bill No. 1900.

I HEREBY DIRECT that a copy of this proclamation be filed in the office of the Secretary of State.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 16th day of September, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

GREG ABBOTT
Governor

ATTESTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Nelson".

DAVID NELSON
Deputy Secretary of State

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