

DATE: January 14, 2024
TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Immigration Hub
REF: A Who's Who of the Incoming Trump Administration: RFK Jr.

This past November, President-elect Trump [announced](#) Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as his nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services, placing him in a key position to shape federal health policies in alignment with Trump's vision for his second term. While much of the initial backlash to Kennedy's nomination focused on his long-standing anti-vaccine views, his extremist stance on immigration is equally concerning. Once attempting to position himself as more moderate than Trump on immigration during his presidential campaign, Kennedy has since embraced Trump's extremist immigration agenda, echoing his calls to "seal the border" and championing enforcement measures that strip protections for immigrant communities across the country.

Kennedy's statements and policy proposals align closely with Trump's most controversial and restrictive immigration policies. He has advocated for reinstating the "Remain in Mexico" policy, expanded funding for the border wall, and stricter limits on the refugee and asylum systems. Kennedy has also embraced the GOP's rhetoric of portraying immigrants as invading the country, adopting Trump's border crisis narrative and framing immigrants as threatening the country's security and stability.

During his 2024 presidential campaign, Kennedy:

- [Advocated](#) for increasing funding for border wall construction and policies to strip America's asylum system, framing these measures as essential to "seal the border."
- [Called](#) for hiring additional Border Patrol agents and [reimplementing](#) Trump's "Remain in Mexico" policy during the National Sheriffs' Association convention in June 2024.
- In a 2023 PBS [interview](#), Kennedy falsely claimed, "they are coming right through," "everybody is allowed through," while inaccurately asserting that 7 million people had entered the U.S. in the past three years under the Biden administration.
- [Proposed](#) requiring all Americans to carry a "passport card" with a photo to gain employment, arguing that it would deter asylum seekers at the border and "reduce anxiety about voter fraud."
- Drove the [unfounded claim](#) that Border Patrol in Arizona drive immigrants to Yuma Airport, place them on flights to "any destination in the United States," and, if they couldn't pay for the flight, Border Patrol would cover the cost, later reimbursed by FEMA.
- During a campaign visit to the Arizona border, Kennedy met with local leaders and posted a [video framing](#) immigrants as a strain on local communities and the cause of increased crime and fentanyl trafficking.

Kennedy's Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric:

- "Let's get @realDonaldTrump back in the White House so he can get the border crisis under control." ([RFK Jr. via X](#))
- "The Democrats have transformed every American community into a border town and have declared war on the poor and the middle class." ([RFK Jr. via X](#))
- "Our communities are slashing education funding to accommodate illegal migrants." ([RFK Jr. via X](#))
- "Is it possible to be pro-immigration AND pro closing the border? Yes. America should be a haven of freedom and prosperity, open to law-abiding migrants who will contribute to our society. However, immigration must proceed in an

orderly, lawful manner. Right now we have chaos at the border. Human trafficking, criminality, intolerable stress on border states like Texas. It is a humanitarian nightmare.” ([RFK Jr. via X](#))