



## House Bill 3782

*Selene Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Federal Affairs*

### Purpose

House Bill 3782 ([2023](#)) proposes to establish a Border Security Advisory Council to advise the governor or the governor's designee on homeland security issues impacting the security of the Texas–Mexico border and on streamlining statewide border security activities and initiatives.

### Background

The state of Texas has taken considerable measures to regain and maintain operational control of the Texas–Mexico border. The state has provided historic funding to various state agencies ([Rodriguez & Scott, 2022](#)) to support Operation Lone Star and border security operations, and said agencies now have to coordinate agency goals and responsibility for border security efforts.

As of January 2023, Gov. Abbott designed former U.S. Border Patrol agent Mike Banks as the first *border czar* of Texas. Mr. Banks' role is to oversee Texas' fight against the surge of illegal immigration, lethal drugs, and deadly weapons flowing into Texas and the nation. He reports directly to Gov. Abbott and ensures border security strategies are fully executed in Texas. According to the Office of the Governor ([2023](#)), he will collaborate daily with the Texas Military Department, the Department of Public Safety, and other state agencies, local officials, and Texas landowners to carry out Operation Lone Star's mission of deterring and repelling migrants from illegally crossing into Texas from Mexico. Mr. Banks will also advise the governor on border security situations and strategies, including the planning of operations ahead of migrant surges.

Appointing Mr. Banks to this role is a great first step toward a more effective, organized, and economical mission of securing the Texas–Mexico border. The bill would allow the governor to designate someone to receive the council's advice on his behalf, which could be part of Mr. Banks' role—if the governor so chooses.

### Proposal

HB 3782 would create a Border Security Advisory Council that would advise the governor's office on homeland security issues impacting the security of the Texas–Mexico border and on streamlining statewide border security activities and initiatives.

HB 3782 would allow for government organizations under Operation Lone Star to assign a representative to the advisory council. The appointees will work together to meet mission requirements, work within a conservative Texas budget, and thwart national security threats posed by an unsecured international border. Organizations include but are not limited to:

- (A) Department of Public Safety;
- (B) Texas Military Department;
- (C) Texas Division of Emergency Management;
- (D) Parks and Wildlife Department;
- (E) Texas Department of Criminal Justice;
- (F) Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System

HB 3782 will help improve transparency of border security operations, increase intelligence sharing, and more accurately keep the state Legislature informed on funding requirements and expenditures.

Finally, HB 3782 would help the state of Texas be proactive with state cooperation to strengthen the effectiveness of Texas' border security apparatus.

## References

HB 3782. Introduced. 88th Texas Legislature. Regular. (2023). <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=88R&Bill=HB3782>

Office of the Texas Governor. (2023, January 30). *Governor Abbott announces new Texas border czar* [Press release]. <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-announces-new-texas-border-czar>

Rodriguez, S., & Scott, R. (2022). *Texas border security panorama*. Texas Public Policy Foundation. <https://www.texaspolicy.com/texas-border-security-panorama/>

**Selene Rodriguez** is the assistant director of federal affairs at the Texas Public Policy Foundation. In this role, she conducts research on public policy issues; assists the Foundation in academic publication; educates lawmakers and members of the public on Foundation research; and provides formal testimony to local, state, and federal entities. Prior to this position, Rodriguez served in the Marine Corps as an intelligence specialist and completed an internship at the Texas Public Policy Foundation. Born and raised in Del Rio, Texas, Rodriguez graduated from Texas State University with a B.A. in political science and is currently a graduate student. She has a passion for spending time with her family and volunteering in local community programs and political organizations.

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