



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Richard F. Cortez**  
County Judge

**David L. Fuentes**  
Commissioner, Precinct 1

**Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu**  
Commissioner, Precinct 2

**Everardo "Ever" Villarreal**  
Commissioner, Precinct 3

**Ellie Torres**  
Commissioner, Precinct 4

**OFFICE OF  
COUNTY JUDGE  
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

**Public Affairs Division**

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

### **Hidalgo County Judge holds immigration summit with community leaders**

**EDINBURG** – In anticipation of a law enforcement summit with Governor Greg Abbott later this week, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez on Tuesday hosted a local summit with elected officials and community leaders to discuss the latest on immigration and its impact locally.

"I take seriously the concerns that some have regarding the surge of migrants crossing our borders so I wanted to get direct feedback from local stakeholders to prepare for the summit that Governor Abbott has called in Del Rio on Thursday," Judge Cortez said.

The local summit included updates on immigration from the U.S. Border Patrol, as well as representatives from the federal, state and local levels including nonprofits working with the migrants.

Last week, Governor Abbott issued a disaster proclamation for 34 border counties, including Hidalgo County, and called for the border summit while declaring later that he intended to use state resources to begin arresting migrants illegally crossing into the United States.

Based on local discussions, Judge Cortez said he will go to Del Rio with a number of questions for Governor Abbott. Among them:

- What law enforcement agencies will be arresting these migrants?
- What legal standing will these law enforcement agencies have in making arrests?
- Where are those in custody going to be held?
- Who will be paying the cost of holding these prisoners?
- If state charges are filed, the defendants are entitled to a public defender if they cannot afford a lawyer. Who is going to pay for this defense?
- Will local entities be reimbursed for costs typically associated with federal jurisdiction?
- What are the healthcare implications in this time of COVID-19?
- What resources will be available for testing and treatment of COVID-19 or other disease that may be found?

"I empathize with the concerns Governor Abbott has regarding this surge in migration," Judge Cortez said. "But I am responsible to the taxpayers of Hidalgo County and I want to be assured that we will not be incurring additional expense to perform the functions of the federal government."

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*Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at [www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus](http://www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus)*