

# Domestic ask

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# Context



- Millions uprooted worldwide
  - Violent conflict
  - Climate change
  - Corruption
- U.S. response
  - Increased enforcement
  - Fewer refugees
- Facing discrimination
  - Racism, sexism, Islamophobia, xenophobia



# We believe

- *We believe that God is with Dreamers, refugees, immigrants, outcasts and people struggling to overcome poverty. God calls us to offer hospitality to the immigrant and the sojourner, and to break down the dividing walls that separate us. Our faith teaches us the importance of keeping families together, welcoming newcomers with compassion and dignity and aiding our neighbors in need across the world.*



# Speak from your values and experience

- How refugees and immigrants are vital to your community
- International travel and mission work
- Why the issue is important to you personally and to our common values as a nation



# Asks

- We call on Congress to act humanely and responsibly in addressing the world's uprooted peoples. To do so, Congress must:
  - (I) Redirect funding used for deportations, detention and border militarization
  - (II) Invest instead in our communities, support refugees, while increasing poverty-focused and peacebuilding international assistance, which addresses the root causes of forced migration.

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# Deportations

Congress should uphold the values of family unity and show compassion to the most vulnerable among us (Matt. 25:31-40) by redirecting funding away from the Department of Homeland Security for carrying out deportations that are separating families and sweeping up Dreamers and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders.



- No matter where someone came from or how they arrived, their life is of value and they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect — free to live without fear of being separated from their loved ones or displaced from their home.
- Arrests by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have increased dramatically, including for individuals whose only offense is being undocumented.
- ICE agents are not exercising discretion but are targeting anyone who is undocumented.



# Share a story



# Detention

**Congress should act humanely and responsibly by redirecting funding away from immigrant detention and end mandatory detention**, particularly for asylum seekers, children, the elderly, the disabled and pregnant women.



- Every day, tens of thousands of people — including asylum seekers and those whose only offense is being undocumented — are detained by ICE though they pose no flight risk or threat to public safety.
- Congress appropriates enough money to maintain 34,000 detention beds. ICE is now detaining an average of 41,000 people per day. The administration wants to increase this to 51,000 beds.
- Each adult detention bed costs an average of \$126.46 per day and family beds cost \$161.36. The total annual cost for detention is more than \$2 billion.
- Alternatives to detention, such as community-based release, are more humane and also more cost effective.

# Pushback



You might hear: “We have to detain people or they won’t show up for hearings”

Response: People show up when they have access to legal advice

- Congress should continue to fund programs like the Legal Orientation Program
  - Provides basic legal information, referrals to pro bono attorneys
  - Cost: \$10 million/year (\$2 B for detention)
  - Began in 2003
  - 2012 DOJ analysis: net savings!



# Pushback



Also...

- Inhumanity of detaining people fleeing violence, families with small children, pregnant women



# Border walls

**Congress should redirect unnecessary and wasteful funding away from border enforcement and refuse to approve additional funds for the border wall** that would cut through wildlife refuges, require the seizing of privately property, infringe on the sovereignty of native lands and further militarize already over-militarized border communities.

- Statistics show that unauthorized crossings are at their lowest level in 45 years, making such funding unwarranted.
- The U.S. spends more than \$18 billion per year on immigration enforcement, more than all other federal law enforcement agencies combined.
- The southern border region is home to some 15 million people and is among the safest communities in the country, with crime rates well below the national average.
- The dramatic militarization of the region has already stifled the economic vitality and overall well-being of U.S. border communities



# Pushback



Argument: “We have to build more walls and increase detention spending, more people are coming across the border”

Response: 45-year low in unauthorized border crossings

- Has been declining for several years



Fence = wall







Border wall construction has  
access to food and water res  
fragmented animal populat  
them vulnerable to genetic  
inbreeding and disease.

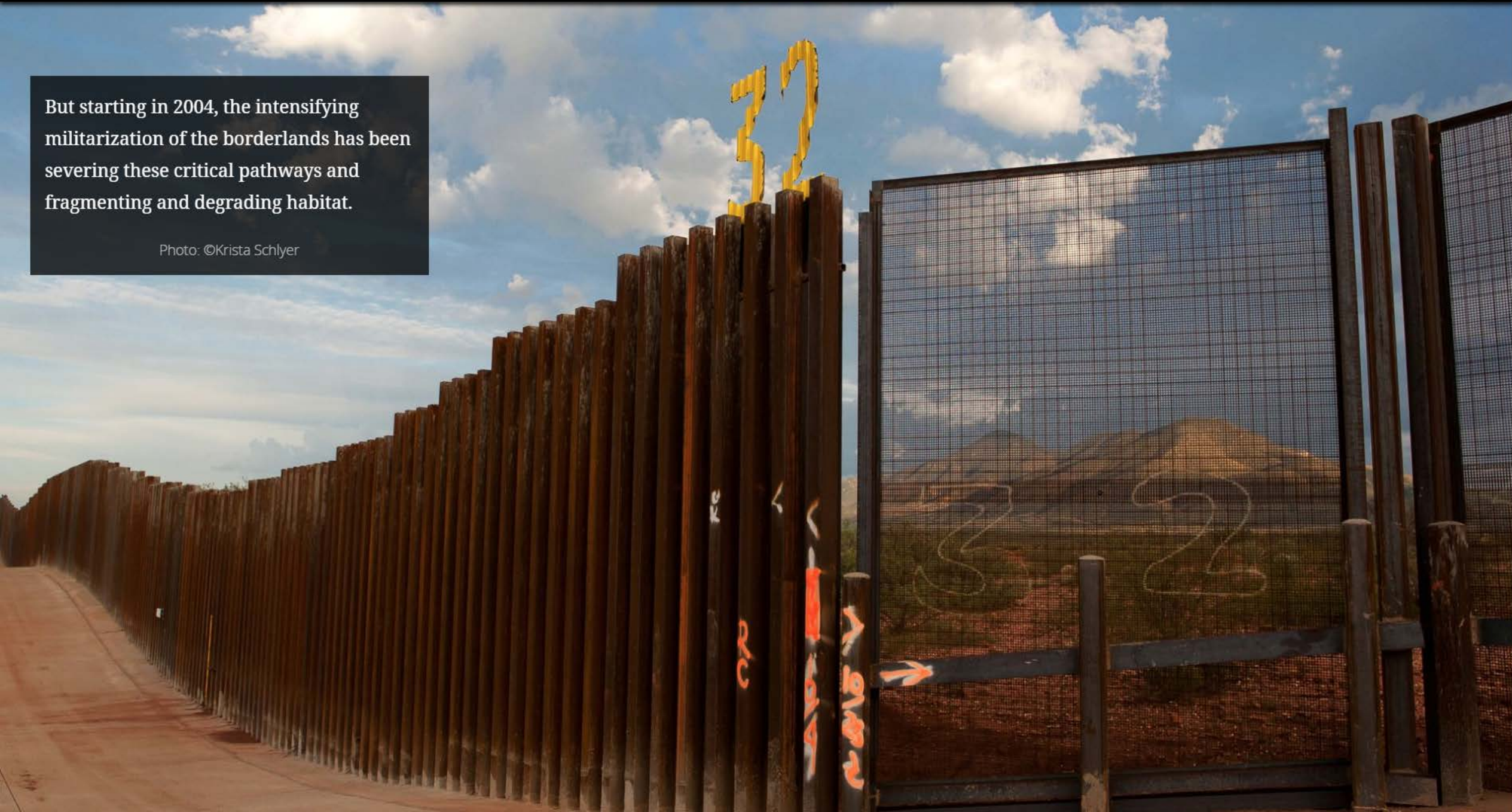
Photo: ©Krista Schly





But starting in 2004, the intensifying militarization of the borderlands has been severing these critical pathways and fragmenting and degrading habitat.

Photo: ©Krista Schlyer







## Fence = wall

- People
- Wildlife
- Flooding
- Landowners

# Leave behind

- Overall ask: Stop spending money oppressing immigrants and spend money instead on addressing the root causes of migration
- You don't have to be an expert!
- Speak from your values
- Share stories
- Members of Congress need to hear positive messages about immigrants





# Questions?

