



Three Southwestern Governors Sending Guard Troops to Mexican Border

In response to a request from President Trump, the governors of three southwestern states (Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas) on April 9 committed 1,600 National Guard members to help patrol the U.S.-Mexico border. The only governor of a border state to refrain from making such a pledge was also the only Democrat to head a border state, California Governor Jerry Brown. Brown has repeatedly fought with Trump over immigration policy and signed a bill into law last October 5 prohibiting state and local agencies from enforcing immigration laws or from working with immigration enforcement agencies, effectively making California a sanctuary state.



As we reported recently, President Trump said during an April 3 news conference that he planned to send U.S. troops to guard the southern border with Mexico until his proposed wall is built. “Until we can have a wall and proper security, we are going to be guarding our border with the military,” Trump said with Defense Secretary James Mattis sitting alongside him. “That’s a big step. We really haven’t done that before, or certainly not very much before.”

Trump’s comments were prompted by what he described as a “caravan” of more than 1,000 migrants from Central America that has been making a 1,200-mile journey from the Mexico-Guatemala border to the United States.

The White House said in a statement released on the evening of April 3 that Trump and his team discussed “the mobilization of the National Guard” as part of a new border strategy. This latest action by the governors of the three border states was made in response to Trump’s call to action.

AP reported that Trump said last week he wants to send 2,000 to 4,000 National Guard members to the border, and issued a proclamation citing “the lawlessness that continues at our southern border.”

“My administration has no choice but to act,” the president wrote.

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (shown, in dress shirt) said on April 9 that 225 members of the state’s National Guard are being sent to the U.S.-Mexico border in support of Trump’s request for national guard troops to help secure the southern border.

“Just updated Arizona border sheriffs on today’s deployment of National Guard. LATEST: 225 guard members being deployed today, additional members tomorrow,” Ducey said in an April 9 tweet.

“These troops will be helping our federal partners with any support role responsibilities that they need, and will be stationed in both the Tucson and Yuma sectors,” Ducey added in a second tweet.

The AP report noted that Ducey told a group of national guard troops preparing to deploy from a



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Phoenix military base that their “mission is about providing manpower and resources to support federal, state, county, tribal and local law enforcement agencies in stopping the flow of criminals, narcotics, weapons and ammunition that is being trafficked into our state.”

The report stated that New Mexico’s Republican governor, Susana Martinez, has said her state would take part in the operation but there has been no announcement about their deployment.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said in a statement on April 4 that he welcomed the Trump administration’s announcement, and that Texas will “immediately” deploy guardsmen to the southwest border. Abbott said the announcement “reinforces Texas’ longstanding commitment to secure our southern border.”

Former Texas Governor Rick Perry ordered 1,000 guardsmen to the border in July 2014 as a result of a large increase in border crossings that year by unaccompanied migrant children. Former President George W. Bush sent about 6,000 Guard troops to the border in 2006, while former President Obama sent about 1,200 guardsmen to the border in 2010.

While all reports so far have said that Jerry Brown has not announced whether troops from California’s national guard would participate in Trump’s call for the guard to assist with border security, it is highly doubtful — given Brown’s track record on immigration — that he will cooperate. As we have noted, Brown signed a bill last October prohibiting state and local agencies from enforcing immigration laws or from working with immigration enforcement agencies. All that federal immigration authorities were asking was that local law enforcement honor their detainer requests and inform agencies such as ICE when illegal aliens in their custody would be released from detention.

If Brown was so adamant that California law-enforcement authorities should not cooperate in a way that required relatively little effort on their part, then how likely will he be to support the much greater effort required to mobilize national guard troops and send them to the border?



Photo: AP Images

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