

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Discusses border crisis, solutions during interview and roundtable

Posted on Wednesday, Jul 17, 2019

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Contact:

Austin Altenburg

austin_altenburg@hsgac.senate.gov

WASHINGTON — Before chairing a Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee roundtable on the crisis at the border, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) spoke with Fox News' "America's Newsroom" this morning about the ongoing crisis at the border and action that Congress should take to address it. Excerpts of his interview are below, and video can be found [here](#). Video of the roundtable with members of the Homeland Security Advisory Council's (HSAC) CBP Families and Children Care Panel Subcommittee can be found [here](#).

"We do need to change our laws. Primarily, we need to change that initial hurdle rate on asylum claims. Nobody fully knows, but the best estimate is only about 15% of the people who are coming in from Central America over the last five years actually have a valid asylum claim. Only 15%, and yet over the last five years and nine months, 1,086,000 people have come in either as an unaccompanied child or as part of a family unit. We have only removed 12,021 - about 1.5% of the people coming as a family unit. That is a huge incentive."

"I am hoping to have signed a letter today of support for a pilot program that we have been working with DHS on. We call it 'Operation Safe Return.' It's basically making the adjudication process very efficient right at the border to rapidly and

more accurately determine those individuals that clearly don't have a credible fear claim, and safely remove them, return them to their home country. Hopefully we will have bipartisan support as a strong signal to the human traffickers, saying on a bipartisan basis that we are not going to allow human traffickers to exploit our laws any longer."

This fiscal year, apprehensions of unaccompanied minors and individuals in family units at the southwest border or claiming asylum at ports of entry have exploded to more than 495,000. The dramatic increase of those cases can be seen in the graph below.