

Dem border rep brags about voting against Laken Riley Act

Democratic Rep. Gabe Vasquez says Trump policies are violating due process

By [Preston Mizell](#) [Fox News](#)

Published [April 28](#), 2025 3:15pm EDT

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/dem-border-rep-brags-about-voting-against-laken-riley-act>.

Rep. Gabe Vasquez, D-N.M., touted his vote against the Laken Riley Act and bashed President Donald Trump's administration at an April event, saying deporting Kilmar Abrego Garcia, along with other [illegal immigrants](#), is "testing and stretching the fabric of our democracy to a place we have never seen before."

In his speech, Vasquez claimed some said it would take "courage" to vote against the [Laken Riley Act](#), to which the Democratic congressman exclaimed, "I did. I voted against [the bill]," leading the audience to cheer. "Because due process is a fundamental part of who we are as Americans," he continued.

The Laken Riley Act, which was signed into law by Trump on Jan. 29, was introduced after an illegal immigrant brutally murdered 22-year-old nursing student Laken Riley while she was jogging in Athens, Georgia, in February 2024. The law established that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) must detain illegal migrants if they are arrested or charged with a violent crime.

CHANCE OF LAKEN RILEY'S ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT KILLER DOING TIME IN EL SALVADOR PRISON ADDRESSED BY LAWMAKERS

Just a month after the Laken Riley Act was signed into law, [Secretary Kristi Noem and DHS announced](#) a "627% increase in monthly arrests compared to just 33,000 at-large arrests under Biden for ALL of last year."

Texas Republican Rep. Tony Gonzales, whose district contains the longest stretch of U.S. land neighboring Mexico, defended the bipartisan bill in a statement to Fox News Digital Friday.

Gonzales explained that border security is "a real and lasting issue as a result of four years of inaction under President Biden. That's why Americans voted for safer communities and to restore law and order and President Trump is delivering on that promise with legislation like the Laken Riley Act and much more that is coming down the pike."

Vasquez went on to bash the Trump administration for deporting illegal migrants, including Abrego Garcia, claiming U.S. citizens aren't safe from being removed from the country if the Trump administration gets "their way."

"Time and time again, out-of-touch Democrat Gabe Vasquez chooses to prioritize criminal illegal aliens over the well-being of hardworking New Mexicans," National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) spokesman Zach Bannon told Fox News Digital. "He's completely abandoned common sense, pandering to the radical left while betraying the very people who will vote him out of office next year."

DEMS RIDICULED FOR GOING 'ALL IN' ON SUSPECTED MS-13 GANG MEMBER KILMAR ABREGO GARCIA

Abrego Garcia, who has been the focus of Democratic talking points criticizing Trump's immigration policies, was one of many illegal immigrants who were

deported to the El Salvadorian "Terrorism Confinement Center" (CECOT) in March.

It was most recently revealed that the 29-year-old illegal migrant and suspected member of the violent MS-13 gang was pulled over while driving an SUV that belonged to another illegal immigrant who [confessed to human smuggling](#) in 2020.

While the Trump administration has maintained their position on Abrego Garcia's gang ties and [history of violence](#), a federal judge and even the U.S. Supreme Court have ordered the Department of Justice (DOJ) to facilitate his return. Abrego Garcia had been living in Maryland with his family prior to being sent to El Salvador, on the grounds that his removal to the country was unjustified.

TOP TRUMP OFFICIALS FILE CHARGES AGAINST ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT AFTER FOX NEWS EXPOSES EARLY RELEASE PLANS

Some Republicans have pushed back at the decision to double down on Abrego Garcia's stay in El Salvador, including Louisiana Sen. John Kennedy, who [said in an interview](#) with NBC's "Meet the Press" that Abrego Garcia's deportation was a "screw up."

On Thursday, U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis gave the DOJ a week's extension to provide explanation, documentation and testimony defending the decision to deport Abrego Garcia.

Preston Mizell is a writer with Fox News Digital covering breaking news. Story tips can be sent to Preston.Mizell@fox.com and on X [@MizellPreston](https://twitter.com/MizellPreston)