



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

1825 K Street, NW · Suite 411 · Washington, DC 20006 · 202.223.2532 · Fax 202.223.2538 · www.chn.org

June 26, 2019

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of the Coalition on Human Needs, I write to convey our dismay over the disgraceful failure of the Trump Administration to safeguard the immigrant children and adults in its care, and to urge in the strongest possible terms that the border supplemental funding legislation you enact will provide both the resources needed to provide for humane treatment and rigorous restrictions and oversight by Congress to prevent the misuse of the funds Congress appropriates.

The Trump Administration has attempted to deter immigration by its inhumane treatment of desperate migrants. This morally bankrupt policy has dramatically worsened conditions and backfired in every way. There are more migrants, more are detained, and more are held for longer periods. Both House and Senate have recognized the urgent need to provide for decent facilities for children as the law and common decency requires. As reported by the organization Human Rights Watch, the Department of Homeland Security as of late May had 2,350 unaccompanied children in its custody awaiting placement in facilities run by U.S. Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement. Children are supposed to be transferred from DHS to HHS in a matter of days. They have instead been jailed in abysmal conditions for unlawfully long periods because the Administration is failing to take the steps needed to reunify these children with their families. It is shocking that children have been left uncared for except by other children, with inadequate food and unsanitary conditions. While 249 children in the inhumane Clint, Texas facility were expected to be moved out of it after its appalling conditions came to light, there were further reports that other children would be moved in. The exposure of the Administration's unlawful and inhumane actions underscores the need for adequately funded facilities, but especially underscores the need for Congress to exert its authority to monitor conditions and to prevent the use or transfer of funds to maintain inhumane and illegal incarceration of migrants.

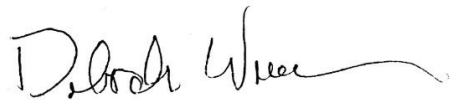
The supplemental appropriations bill passed by the House comes closest to providing the resources needed for humane treatment while reining in the Trump Administration's recklessly inhumane practices. We believe the need for supplemental appropriations is clear and urgent, but must include protections minimally including

- directing the establishment of policy and guidance to address reforms within the Migrant Protection Protocols (Return to Mexico) program;
- directing the establishment of policies, procedures, guidance, and training programs to ensure CBP facilities funded in the bill comply with the National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search;
- funding for the Inspector General to conduct oversight of activities in the Unaccompanied Children program;
- strict limits on the use of influx shelters, with requirements that they follow the provisions of the Flores Settlement and prohibiting the Secretary from waiving such requirements;

- condition the provision of emergency funding on HHS accelerating the identification and approval of sponsors for unaccompanied children;
- preventing the use of information about sponsors by DHS for immigration enforcement actions;
- required allowance by facilities housing unaccompanied minors for members of Congress to conduct oversight visits without prior notice;
- prioritizing use of community-based residential care and state-licensed facilities;
- requiring HHS and DHS to provide to Congress and make public monthly reports on unaccompanied children who were separated from their parents or legal guardians; and
- reporting deaths of unaccompanied children within 24 hours.

It is the duty of Congress to meet the urgent humanitarian needs at the border and to exercise its authority to prevent unlawful actions by the Trump Administration. We urge speedy action to carry out your responsibilities by enacting supplemental appropriations legislation closely adhering to the protections contained in the House bill.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Weinstein", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director