



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

June 20, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

I write to invite you to visit Texas to see firsthand the humanitarian crisis unfolding as a result of the massive influx of unaccompanied alien children (UAC) crossing our border with Mexico. There is no doubt that I have disagreed with you and your administration on many policies over the years. This crisis, however, transcends any political differences we may have. The safety and security of our border communities is being threatened by this flood of illegal immigration, and the crisis worsens by the day.

While I am encouraged by your recently announced initiatives to more aggressively repatriate illegal immigrants back to their countries of origin, and provide additional aid to those countries to combat violence and security issues that prompt many of their citizens to flee to the United States, these steps only address symptoms of the problem.

The problem remains our porous border and federal policies encourage, rather than discourage, illegal immigration. The federal government must commit the resources necessary to truly secure our border and adopt policies that won't reward those who come here by releasing them on their own recognizance with a Notice to Appear (NTA) in federal court. In the current system, these notices effectively amount to a "free pass" into our country with little to no consequences for failure to comply.

All of these problems and solutions are the responsibility of the federal government, but Texas cannot sit idly by waiting for a resolution while our communities become overwhelmed by illegal immigrants and their need for the basic necessities of food, shelter and sanitation. That's why, in an effort to stem the tide, we have authorized the Texas Department of Public Safety to conduct law enforcement surge operations combatting criminal activity associated with illegal immigration and drug trafficking. This effort will cost our taxpayers approximately \$1.3 million per week.

Therefore, I respectfully request the following immediate actions from your administration:

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Under Title 32, deploy an additional 1,000 National Guard troops to the Texas–Mexico border, including additional Lakota helicopters, and give the National Guard arrest powers to support Border Patrol operations until sufficient Border Patrol resources can be hired, trained and deployed to the border.

Direct the Federal Aviation Administration to allow the National Guard to utilize Predator drones along the Texas–Mexico border for identifying and tracking human and drug trafficking.

Direct the Centers for Disease Control or another appropriate federal agency outside the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct, in conjunction with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), inspections of facilities in which illegal immigrants, including UACs, are being housed to ensure accepted international and national emergency sheltering standards are met. Preliminary reports from DSHS officials who have visited such facilities indicate insufficient bathroom facilities, lack of adequate water supplies and other conditions that could result in epidemics of pertussis, tuberculosis and other diseases. The conditions affect not only the UACs but also employees working there and the community at large when those detained are released.

Modify or rescind policies that serve as a magnet to encourage illegal immigration, including:

- DHS Catch and Release policies by which DHS issues an illegal immigrant an NTA before an immigration judge and releases them. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that 33 percent of those released on their own recognizance failed to appear in FY 2013.
- DHS policies specifically regarding UACs from countries other than Mexico (OTM) that prohibit the agency from immediately deporting UACs back to their country of origin. After DHS processes OTM UACs, DHS issues an NTA, locates a relative in the United States, and delivers the OTM UAC to a relative, regardless of the relative's immigration status.

Mr. President, the complex situation along the border is deteriorating, and it requires a multifaceted approach to resolve, and must begin with border security. On behalf of Texas' 26 million residents, I request you take immediate and decisive action.

Sincerely,



Rick Perry
Governor

RP:afp

cc: Texas Congressional Delegation