OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

May 4, 2012

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

Dear President Obama:

There are many consequences of having an unsecure border. Not only are drug seizures up and cartels infiltrating our communities, but, as your administration is fully aware, there is a surge of unaccompanied illegal minors entering the United States. Aside from being part of an obvious humanitarian crisis, these unaccompanied illegal minors have left the federal government scrambling to triage the results of its failed border security and immigration policies.

This is precisely what happens when the federal government refuses to recognize its responsibility for our nation's immigration and border security, and fails to immediately work with the countries of origin to return these unaccompanied illegal minors to their homes. On a recent conference call, a member of your own administration indicated that fewer than 10 percent are deported.

To be clear, Texas has been working diligently to protect the immediate health and safety of our citizens and the unaccompanied minors now in our state. However, by failing to take immediate action to return these minors to their countries of origin and prevent and discourage others from coming here, the federal government is perpetuating the problem.

Inaction encourages other minors to place themselves in extremely dangerous situations. The vast majority of these unaccompanied illegal minors come from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, as well as Mexico. In the first six months of this fiscal year, reports indicate more than 5,200 unaccompanied minors have crossed the border illegally into the United States, with more than 1,300 arriving in March alone. This represents an increase of more than 90 percent over the same period last year. On their journey, they are exposed to violent and ruthless criminal organizations and many are robbed, assaulted, kidnapped, seriously injured or even killed. But the dangers don't end there for them, or for our citizens. Recently, dozens of these

minors have had to be quarantined due to a measles scare and an outbreak of chicken pox, providing a warning of the additional risks this situation poses.

These unaccompanied illegal minors should be cared for in their home countries, rather than burdening our already unsustainable entitlement systems. Projections indicate the number of illegal crossings will continue to increase. With no long-term plan to address this situation, the federal government is simply ignoring the fiscal, health and social interests of our own citizens. We cannot and should not be held responsible for the citizens of other nations.

Every day of delay risks more lives. Every child allowed to remain encourages hundreds more to attempt the journey. Our country can no longer provide the temptation for these unaccompanied minors to engage in this tragic and illegal migration. To end it, the federal government must stop new arrivals at the border, repatriate those already here and prevent and discourage others.

I have asked my staff to further work with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to determine the extent of this situation and seek answers to questions your administration has thus far been either unwilling or unable to answer.

I urge you to begin immediate consultation with governments of the countries of origin. These nations must assume responsibility for their own citizens, recognizing that they have the power and ability to prevent this dangerous situation.

This must stop, Mr. President, and it is your responsibility to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Rick Perry

Rick Perry
Governor

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