

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 11, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It has been nearly a month since we first wrote to you requesting that the Oversight Committee hold a hearing on the Trump Administration's inhumane child separation policy.¹ Unfortunately, you have failed to respond to our request in any way.

We are writing now to reiterate our request for our Committee to hold a hearing within the next two weeks with Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar to explain their actions before, during, and after the implementation of their horrendous policy.

Since we wrote to you last month, President Trump caved to massive public outrage and bipartisan political pressure to halt his child separation policy. However, it has become clear over the past several weeks that the Trump Administration had no plan to reunite these children with their parents at the conclusion of proceedings initiated under the "zero tolerance" policy announced in April.

We do not know whether this was an intentional effort to create a deterrent or a failure to consider the basic human ramifications of their policy. However, it is obvious that Trump Administration officials gave little or no thought to how they would track and reunite these children with their parents. They also apparently had no regard for the immense toll their actions would take on these children.

This issue cries out for a public hearing. Members of Congress should have the opportunity to ask basic questions that these officials still have not answered after weeks of chaos. We have an obligation to step in, exercise our responsibilities under the Constitution, and hold Trump Administration officials accountable for their decisions and their actions.

¹ Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, et al., to Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (June 17, 2018) (online at democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/2018-06-17.OGR%20Dems%20to%20Gowdy%20re%20Request%20for%20Child%20Separation%20Hearing.pdf).

Since we wrote to you several weeks ago, our Committee has held a series of public hearings on a wide range of topics, including:

- “A Review of Various Actions by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice in Advance of the 2016 Election”
- “Holding Cuban Leaders Accountable”
- “Access to Public Lands: The Effects of Forest Service Road Closures”
- “Examining the Administration’s Governmentwide Reorganization Plan”

Surely, the Trump Administration’s policy of intentionally removing thousands upon thousands of children from their parents’ arms—with no discernable plan for reuniting them—merits at least a single hearing by Congress’ premiere oversight committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Tump

John

Brenda Lawrence

Steve E. Paskett

Mark E. Tomlin

W. G. RA

Wm Jay Cox

How

Jimmy Ganez

Raja Krishnamoorti

Conor B. Maloney

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