

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

October 29, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
United States Department of Homeland
Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
United States Department of Health and
Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Secretary Mayorkas, Attorney General Garland, and Secretary Becerra:

We write today with severe concerns regarding recent reports that your three agencies are in discussions to offer illegal immigrants that unlawfully crossed the U.S. border in 2018 roughly \$450,000 per person in compensation. The rationale for this egregious abuse of taxpayer dollars is to compensate these persons for “lasting psychological trauma.”¹ Do, however, note that these persons crossed into our country in a knowingly illegal manner, fully aware of the consequences of violating our rule of law.

Actions have consequences, especially illegal actions made consciously. We are a nation of laws, and our laws must be enforced. Promising tens of thousands of dollars to those who unlawfully entered the United States would not only reward criminal behavior, but it would surely send a message to the world that our borders are open, and our rule of law will not be enforced.

The Biden Administration has been incentivizing illegal immigration since its first day in office through a series of catastrophic failures, including: stopping construction of the border wall, halting the Remain-in-Mexico policy, and rolling back former President Trump’s commonsense border protections that kept our nation safe. Now, under President Biden, we are witnessing the worst border numbers in a generation, and the worst self-inflicted border crisis in history.

If your Administration decides to give out financial compensation to thousands of illegal immigrants in the amount of roughly one half of a million dollars, you will unilaterally incentivize migrants from more than 150 nations across the world to surge our border.

According to recent CBP data, more than 1.7 million illegal immigrants have attempted to cross our border in FY 21 alone, with projections of 2 million more before the end of this year. The U.S. Border Patrol reported nearly 200,000 encounters with migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border earlier this summer in July; this was the highest monthly total in more than two decades.²

¹ https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-administration-in-talks-to-pay-hundreds-of-millions-to-immigrant-families-separated-at-border-11635447591?mod=politics_lead_pos10

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/08/13/migrant-encounters-at-u-s-mexico-border-are-at-a-21-year-high/>

Compensating families who crossed our border illegally and knowingly will certainly exacerbate the greatest immigration and border security crisis that our nation has ever seen historically. This is in addition to the signal this sends to Cartels seeking to take advantage of illegal crossings however possible.

Frankly, this disastrous policy will cue migrants across the border that they are not only welcome to enter the country illegally, but they are encouraged to do so as they will benefit financially from ignoring our rule of law. Paying thousands of illegal migrants half a million dollars each could quickly cost American taxpayers up to one billion dollars or more.

Compare this hefty compensation sum to the 2019 average median American household annual income of \$68,703. Furthermore, compare it to the maximum payout from a SGLI life insurance policy for military members, which is \$400,000. The idea that we would give illegal foreigners who broke the law a check that exceeds the amount that our government supplies to our valiant and heroic Gold Star Families is shameful, reprehensible, and morally indignant.

At a time when the American household is dealing with historic rates of inflation and the price of average consumer goods – groceries, gasoline, and heating – have risen exponentially, it's shocking that our government is considering rewarding illegal activity for purely political reasons. Why is this potential compensation for families separated in 2018 under the previous administration and not those separated between 2008-2016 or since 2021?

Additionally, this compensation will cost billions of dollars if enacted. This is money that could be better spent on curbing illegal immigration during our current crisis, long-term investments for national defense as our adversaries improve, reforms to our education system, and infrastructure investment to fix crumbling bridges, roads, and broadband lines.

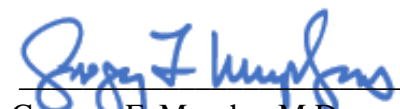
As Members of Congress, we are extremely alarmed that this misguided policy shows that the Administration wants to treat illegal immigrants better than law-abiding citizens who create families and contribute to our economy through hard, legal work. We are the country of the strong and the brave, not the country of exploitation and shortcuts.

The Constitution reads “We the People” not “We the Government.” As humbly elected representatives of the American people, we urge your agencies to not only reconsider this horrific decision but also rescind any potential action to this effect.

We pray that you heed our concerns and respond as soon as humanly possible. The future of our country's reputation, border security, and national security depend on better policymaking. We are more than able to meet to discuss this urgent travesty.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your prompt response.

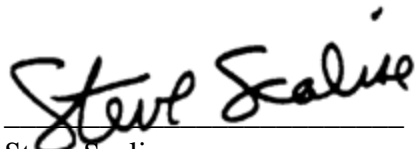
Sincerely,



Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



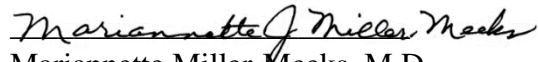
David B. McKinley P.E.
Member of Congress



Tim Burchett
Member of Congress



Victoria Spartz
Member of Congress



Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



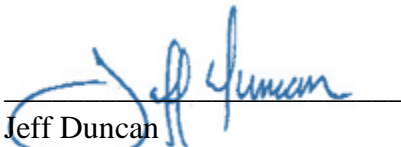
Diana Harshbarger
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Member of Congress




Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



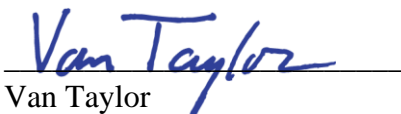
Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



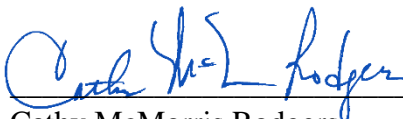
David Rouzer
Member of Congress



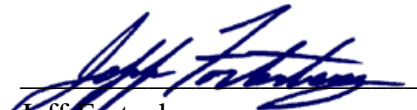
Brian Mast
Member of Congress



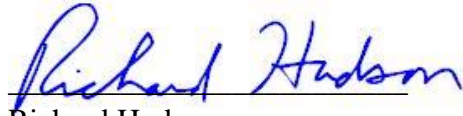
Van Taylor
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
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John R. Moolenaar
Member of Congress



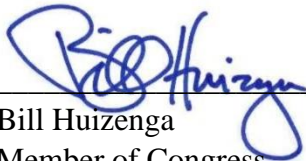
Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress



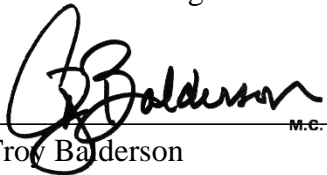
Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



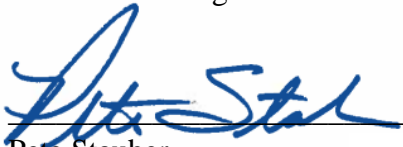
Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress



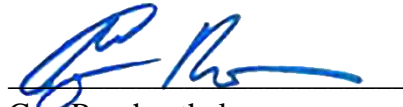
Troy Balderson
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress



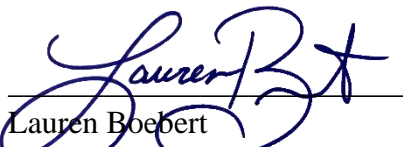
Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



Guy Reschenthaler
Member of Congress



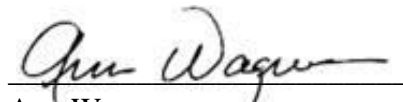
Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



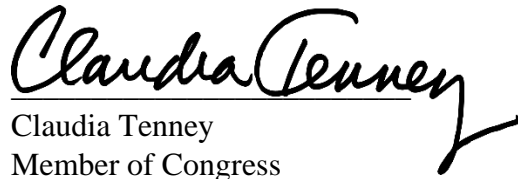
Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress



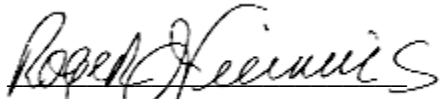
Ann Wagner
Member of Congress



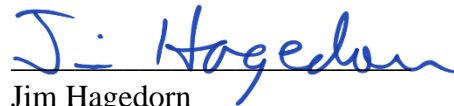
Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



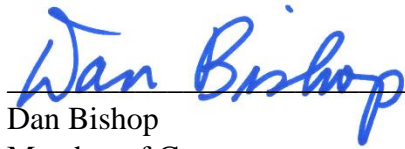
Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



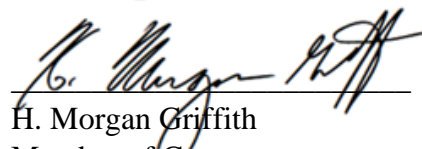
Roger Williams
Member of Congress



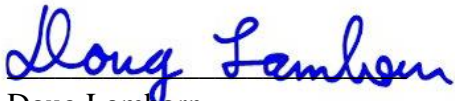
Jim Hagedorn
Member of Congress



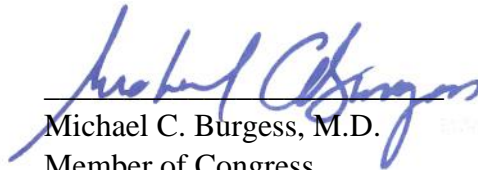
Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



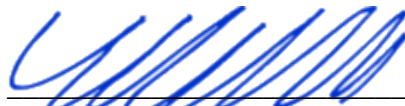
H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



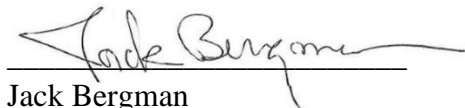
Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



Mike Garcia
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Bob Good
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Jack Bergman
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