



United States Senate

January 8, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

I urge you to immediately stop deporting asylum seekers to Guatemala. Guatemala does not have the ability to protect or process these asylum seekers.

In drafting the asylum laws, Congress specifically allowed for asylum seekers to only be removed to other countries that have full and fair procedures for determining asylum claims.

Reportedly, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has already deported over 80 asylum-seeking Salvadorans and Hondurans, including families, to Guatemala. DHS further confirmed that it will now deport Mexicans seeking asylum at the border to Guatemala.

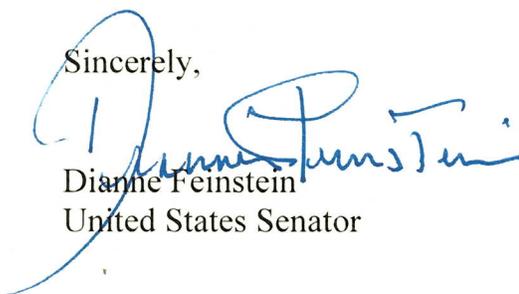
Simply put, Guatemala is dangerous. The State Department's travel advisory for Guatemala warns: "Violent crime, such as armed robbery and murder, is common. Gang activity, such as extortion, violent street crime, and narcotics trafficking, is widespread."

Guatemala cannot protect these asylum seekers. Its asylum system lacks capacity and there is little protection from gangs and traffickers operating in El Salvador and Honduras. It is also concerning that DHS is considering deporting asylum seekers to Honduras and El Salvador. Those countries lack even rudimentary asylum systems and are even more dangerous than Guatemala.

Therefore, I ask that you immediately halt the deportation of asylum seekers to Guatemala and end all efforts to deport asylum seekers to Honduras and El Salvador.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator