



United States Senate

November 19, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham,

I write to request that the Committee hold a hearing before the end of this year on the highly concerning treatment of families and children subject to the “Remain in Mexico” program administered by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice. This program is putting asylum seekers – including small children whose families are fleeing violence – in harm’s way. Immigration law and policy fall squarely within this Committee’s jurisdiction, and it is important that we look into this troubling policy.

The administration has sent more than 58,000 asylum seekers to squalid and dangerous conditions in Mexico. According to a *Reuters* investigation, that number includes 16,000 children, at least 4,300 of whom were under five years old and 481 were infants under one. Vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, the disabled, and children with serious medical issues are also being sent to Mexico, despite earlier assertions from federal agencies that they would not be included.

Recently, reports surfaced that Customs and Border Protection agents were using fake court dates to send asylum seekers back to Mexico. Earlier this month, the ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties filed a class action lawsuit alleging that the Department of Homeland Security is illegally denying access to lawyers for children and families in the program, and a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order in that case. On Friday, *Buzzfeed* reported on an internal DHS investigation that found CBP agents prevented asylum seekers from speaking with asylum officers and even pressured asylum officers to deny requests for protection.

In light of the permanent and devastating consequences of this policy on the lives of vulnerable children and families seeking asylum, I ask that you schedule a hearing soon on the Remain in Mexico program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dianne" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator