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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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May 12, 2026

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Secretary Kennedy,

Since you became Secretary, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or Department) has gutted the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) child-welfare mission and converted it into a front door for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) deportation operations. By statute, ORR is a child-welfare agency. Your choices show a basic disregard for the rights and safety of vulnerable children, skirt Congress's clear statutory intent, and reflect a calculation that the Trump-Vance administration can treat children this way because they are immigrant children. The result has been entirely foreseeable, and entirely foreseen - you are harming children.

As I raised with you during last month's Finance Committee hearing on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 HHS Budget, I was recently made aware of the case of a three-year-old child who was detained at the U.S. Southern border on or around September 17, 2025.<sup>1</sup> The child was separated from her mother, and placed in the care and custody of ORR in a Texas temporary foster care facility where she was sexually abused by another child in the home.

The child's father, a lawful permanent resident of the United States for over 10 years, applied to sponsor her the very next day, yet waited months for fingerprinting and DNA testing appointments that ORR claimed were unavailable—administrative delays that kept his daughter in the home where she was abused and away from her family. The child's father was never told by ORR staff that his daughter had been sexually abused; instead, ORR described it as an

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<sup>1</sup> Valerie Gonzalez, *3-year-old immigrant suffered alleged sexual abuse during months in federal custody, family says*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Apr. 5, 2026), <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-texas-trump-detention-abuse-b799ace25087c594339298685438e888>.

“accident” and that the child was being examined. You told me you were not made aware that a child was sexually abused in ORR’s care and custody under your watch.

This is alarming in multiple respects. Not only did ORR reportedly know and lie about the sexual abuse of a toddler, leadership at the highest levels of HHS was ignorant to this abuse. To ensure the safety of the 1,887 children in the ORR’s care,<sup>2</sup> for whom you are directly responsible, these abject failings must be rectified immediately.

The Department is required by its own policy to process sponsor applications from a parent or legal guardian within ten (10) calendar days of receipt, yet it ultimately took a habeas corpus petition filed in federal court nearly five months after her father’s sponsor application to secure her release. This child’s horrific experience is unfortunately not an outlier and is consistent with what practitioners on the ground have been warning for months: ORR is holding children in federal custody far longer than its own policies permit, and children are being harmed as a result.

Before you once again respond to legitimate oversight with accusations of “selective indignation” or suggestions that my concern is partisan or new, the record should be clear. My oversight of the federal government’s treatment of vulnerable children spans multiple administrations, including a two-year bipartisan investigation with then-Finance Committee Chair, Chuck Grassley documenting 7,467 reports of sexual misconduct involving unaccompanied children between FY 2016 and FY 2020, peaking at 2,716 reports in FY 2019, under the first Trump administration, and my subsequent investigation into taxpayer-funded abuse and neglect of children in residential treatment facilities.

The Biden-Harris administration’s stewardship of the Unaccompanied Children Program was also not above reproach, and I never treated it as such. There were chilling reports in 2023 documenting migrant children put to work in dangerous jobs that were the product of a federal government that “behaves as if the migrant children who melt unseen into the country are doing just fine.”<sup>3</sup> Given those concerns, I asked to speak directly with the Administration for Children and Families’ (ACF) then-Assistant Secretary. The request was honored.

Those 2023 reports required a response, and the U.S. Government responded swiftly: HHS expanded post-release services (PRS), and invested in legal representation and universal case management; ACF partnered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to facilitate coordination and access to critical services for child labor trafficking victims or potential victims, including a joint Memorandum of Agreement between DOL Wage and Hour Division and ACF; and Congress pursued more than a dozen child labor bills in response because the mission of a child welfare agency does not pause for partisan convenience.

What distinguishes the present moment is not that problems exist; it is that this administration is not trying to fix them. Not only are you worsening these problems, you and your senior team are

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<sup>2</sup> *HHS Unaccompanied Alien Children Program*, HEALTHDATA.GOV, [https://healthdata.gov/National/HHS-Unaccompanied-Alien-Children-Program/ehpz-xc9n/data\\_preview](https://healthdata.gov/National/HHS-Unaccompanied-Alien-Children-Program/ehpz-xc9n/data_preview) (last visited Apr. 29, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> Hannah Dreier and Kirsten Luce, *Alone and Exploited: Migrant Children Work Brutal Jobs Across the U.S.*, THE N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 28, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/series/alone-and-exploited>.

callously neglecting children in ORR care and custody. Look no further than your heartless disregard for a three-year-old survivor of sexual assault in response to my questioning.

You also continue to invoke a figure of 425,000 “lost” or “missing” children under the previous administration as a rhetorical shield. That framing misrepresents what the underlying data actually measures and the scope of ORR’s statutory authority once a child is released to a vetted sponsor. The numbers this administration cites reflect post-release level 1 “safety and well-being” welfare check calls that sponsors and children are under no legal obligation to answer and many, for entirely predictable reasons, declined to pick up a government phone call. That figure is also inflated by aggregation: it counts sponsors and children separately, so a single household where the child answered, but the sponsor did not, or vice versa, is registered as a non-response instead of one successful contact. Those reasons, set apart from the flawed methodology in the number itself, have only grown under this administration, which is actively assisting DHS in using ORR’s own post-release contact systems and data to locate, arrest, detain, and deport the very sponsors ORR previously vetted and approved and the children themselves.

Rather than protecting the welfare of children released to sponsors, this administration is converting ORR into a targeting mechanism for DHS enforcement against their families. The administration is also failing to use the full scope of its resources to ensure vulnerable children are not subject to trafficking and are receiving well-being measures to prevent future exploitation. You cannot cite the Biden administration as a grievance while simultaneously building an apparatus that ensures children and sponsors are regularly disappeared from the country. And you cannot use them to distract from the present-day record of this administration: a three-year-old sexually abused while in ORR’s care and custody and you admitted that you did not know of this child’s case until I raised it. The question is not why I am “suddenly worried.” The question is why you are not.

Recent reporting has also documented adolescents in ORR custody complaining of being punished with restraints or being placed alone for days in what they described as a “red room.”<sup>4</sup> These atrocities are emblematic of the failures of your Department to ensure the safe and timely release of unaccompanied children in federal custody to their family members or other qualifying sponsors. These failures are not the product of a single breakdown. They reflect a predictable top-down and calculated dismantling by this administration of the oversight, communication, and accountability structures that Congress designed to protect vulnerable children, structures that ACF and ORR are obligated by statute and by their own policy to maintain and enforce.

ORR’s own Policy Guide requires that Category 1 sponsor applications — those filed by a parent or legal guardian, the closest family relationships Congress identified for prompt reunification — be processed within ten (10) calendar days absent documented extraordinary circumstances.<sup>5</sup> Category 1 cases are, by design, the “uncomplicated” cases, and as such, these children should spend the least time in government care. Instead, legal service providers (LSPs) report that between November 2025 and January 2026 alone, children in this category went weeks and then months without any case movement. LSPs have also been forced to file habeas corpus petitions

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<sup>4</sup> Ana Ley, *Migrant Children Removed From New York Shelter After Abuse Allegations*, THE N.Y. TIMES (Apr. 18, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/18/nyregion/migrant-children-shelter-abuse.html>.

<sup>5</sup> 45 C.F.R. § 410.1205(b); ORR Unaccompanied Alien Children Bureau Policy Guide, § 2.7.2.

on behalf of children detained an average of more than 225 days, a litigation posture that has no precedent in prior administrations.<sup>6</sup> The child I refer to above had a lawful permanent resident father ready to take custody from the first day of being separated from her mother, but ORR forced her to wait nearly five months before releasing her.<sup>7</sup> The Department's ten-day standard is not an aspirational goal, it is ORR policy, and ORR is not following it.

The one exception to this pattern of prolonged detention appears when release aligns with the administration's immigration enforcement priorities: in March 2026 alone, 176 Category 1 children were released from ORR care and custody, a sudden surge that stands in stark contrast to the months-long delays reported since this administration took office.<sup>8</sup> That surge coincides with the administration's public buildout, through the LaSalle Family Foundation and current ORR grant recipient, Compass Connections, of a new, converted military barracks, and short-term family-and-child holding facility at the Alexandria International Airport in Louisiana.<sup>9</sup> Reports describe this temporary staging as designed to hold families and unaccompanied children for three (3) to five (5) days before deportation.<sup>10</sup> This sequencing raises the concern that ORR went from delaying releases of Category 1 children to expediting only those that facilitate removal — effectively converting ORR from a child-welfare agency into a conduit for DHS enforcement.

The harm extends well beyond Category 1 delays. A different form of family separation has taken hold in which children previously released by ORR to already-vetted and approved sponsors are being re-arrested by DHS during traffic stops, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, and even immigration court appointments and either re-referred to ORR, where they languish for months while ORR disregards its own prior sponsor approval and forces the family to start the process over, or are transferred to family detention facilities under DHS's purview and removed from the country alongside their family. In practice, the only remaining "process" for many of these children is to seek voluntary departure — a "choice" made under the duress of prolonged, indefinite detention or re-detention. Diego N., a 14-year-old who had been living with his father in Texas after ORR vetted and approved the father as his sponsor, was detained in November 2025 as a passenger in a car pulled over by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP); months later, despite a completed home study and a case manager who told him his case was ready for approval, Diego remained in ORR custody until March 2026 while his father was told to submit to yet another round of DNA testing and in-person appointments.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, as of February 2026, Renesme R., a 16-year-old honors-track Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) student from Tennessee, had been detained in Texas for three months, too afraid to ask her previously approved father to reapply because she knows sponsors have been arrested by immigration enforcement at ORR appointments.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Pratheek Rebala, Jeff Ernsthansen & Perla Trevizo, "Immigrants Who Say Their Detention Is Illegal Have Filed More Than 18,000 Cases. It's a Historic High," *PROPUBLICA & THE TEXAS TRIBUNE* (Feb. 10, 2026).

<sup>7</sup> Gonzalez, *supra* note 1.

<sup>8</sup> ORR, Data: Released to Sponsors, <https://acf.gov/orr/about/ucs/facts-and-data> (last updated April 10, 2026).

<sup>9</sup> Oliver Laughland, *Trump officials set to expand migrant family detention at Louisiana airport*, *THE GUARDIAN* (March 14, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/mar/14/trump-migrant-detention-louisiana>.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Compl. ¶¶ 60-66, *Diego N. v. HHS*, No. 1:26-cv-0055-UNA (D.D.C. filed Feb. 23, 2026).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at ¶¶ 67-70.

The coercion to self-deport begins even earlier, before children reach ORR at all. I raised this issue with the administration in November 2025. In pending litigation, LSPs have documented CBP agents using the “UAC Processing Pathway Advisal” to pressure unaccompanied children from noncontiguous countries, including indigenous Guatemalan and Honduran children as young as elementary-school age, into signing expedited “voluntary return” paperwork during the 72-hour window before transfer to ORR, through threats that their sponsors will be arrested, criminally prosecuted, and deported, and that the children themselves will be “detained in the custody of the United States Government[] for a prolonged period of time” if they ask to see an immigration judge.<sup>13</sup> The accounts of how this administration is extracting “voluntary” signatures are harrowing. Children have reported being shouted at, cursed at, handcuffed, threatened with a dog and a stun gun, denied medical care while bleeding, and told to sign documents they did not understand in languages they did not speak.<sup>14</sup> The threat of “prolonged” detention is not idle, it is precisely what this administration and HHS are now delivering to facilitate mass deportation.

The data and HHS’s policy decisions confirm what the stories show. The average length of care for children discharged from ORR care and custody has climbed from 37 days in January 2025 to 194 days in March 2026 - an over five-fold increase in a single year. A central driver of these delays is ORR’s reorganization of case management through what the agency calls a vetting Federal Field Specialist (FFS) structure. Under ORR policy, Field Coordinators and Case Managers carry specific, enumerated responsibilities for sponsor communication, case progression, and timely release.<sup>15</sup> Those responsibilities existed for a reason: to ensure that a named, accountable federal agent was responsible for moving each case forward and communicating with families and their representatives. In January 2026, ORR issued a revised Field Guidance 24, restructuring the entire sponsor vetting process under a newly created Division of Sponsor Administration (DSA) and shifting authority over release determinations to DSA-Federal Field Specialists, a structure that simultaneously centralized power and eliminated transparency.<sup>16</sup> Since that restructuring, the functions assigned to case managers and field coordinators have collapsed into an information and accountability void.

LSPs, who are designated legal representatives with standing to receive case information, report that FFS staff are no longer meeting with them, no longer responding to written inquiries, and no longer willing to provide even basic status updates. Sponsors are left to glean information secondhand from case managers who themselves appear to have been sidelined from the release determination process entirely. HHS, ACF, and ORR have replaced process with opacity, and accountability with silence. When attorneys cannot learn what is happening in a case, they cannot advocate for the child, identify problems, or flag the kind of dangerous placement condition that recently led to the three-year-old child’s reported abuse in a temporary foster home while her lawful permanent resident father waited months to prove his relationship through

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<sup>13</sup> Pls.’ Mot. for Order to Show Cause at 3-4 & Ex. B, *L.G.M.L. v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-02942-TJK (D.D.C. filed Feb. 24, 2026).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 6-8 & Ex. E ¶¶ 9-13.

<sup>15</sup> ORR Unaccompanied Alien Children Bureau Policy Guide, § 2.3.

<sup>16</sup> ORR Field Guidance 24, ORR Division of Sponsor Administration Role Guidance, [https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/FG-24\\_ORR-Division-of-Sponsor-Administration-Role-Guidance.pdf](https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/FG-24_ORR-Division-of-Sponsor-Administration-Role-Guidance.pdf) (last updated Jan. 26, 2026).

fingerprinting and DNA testing. The FFS structure, as currently operating, is not a release mechanism. It is a bottleneck and delay tactic, one that is leaving Category 1 children in custody far beyond any legally or morally defensible timeline.

The problem is compounded by a cascade of new procedural requirements imposed since January 20, 2025, without adequate infrastructure, staffing, or legal foundation. ORR has added employment documentation requirements that can take months to obtain, subjected cases to policy resets that can restart processes mid-stream, and deployed a fingerprinting and DNA testing scheme that, according to multiple practitioners, went effectively offline for months before suddenly processing appointments only after demand letters were sent and federal courts became involved.<sup>17</sup> ORR is piling more requirements onto sponsors, regardless of category, while providing less of the infrastructure necessary to adjudicate them. The predictable and documented result is prolonged detention, deteriorating mental health, self-harm, and, as is now a matter of public record, physical harm to children you are charged by statute to protect.

Lastly, I am closely tracking signals that HHS is preparing to strip Category 1 children of their statutory protections by administratively treating them as “accompanied” after sweeping their parent or legal guardian into targeted immigration enforcement. Any move to treat children this way would directly contravene the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 and the *Flores* Settlement Agreement. I will not treat definitional workarounds as legitimate substitutes for compliance with the law, and I will continue to follow up on this distressing development.

I am therefore expanding my investigation of HHS’s handling of unaccompanied children in ORR care and custody and seek information related to the Department’s failure to enforce its own release timelines, its dismantling of the accountability structures Congress requires, and its tolerance of placement conditions that ORR cannot and will not adequately monitor, and in which children are being harmed. You are not operating in ignorance of these harms. You have chosen them. I request written responses and documentation on the following, no later than **June 5, 2026**.

I anticipate the Department may attempt to delay or limit its response by invoking child-privacy concerns, the Privacy Act, or the pendency of litigation. To the extent the Department wishes to redact directly identifying information about unaccompanied children in its care and custody, I do not object, and I will treat any such redactions in good faith. The request is for the policy choices, the agency conduct, and the documentary record of how those choices have been made and implemented; it is not for the personally identifiable information of the children HHS is charged to protect.

That accommodation does not extend to the names, titles, or official communications of HHS, ACF, or ORR employees, grant recipients, contractors, or detailees acting in their official capacity, who have no cognizable privacy interest in such information under federal law. Nor does it extend to documents the Department may seek to withhold on the basis of ongoing federal litigation: the requests in this letter do not seek information protected by court order, and pending, unrelated litigation is not a basis for refusing production in response to congressional

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<sup>17</sup> See ORR Unaccompanied Alien Children Bureau Policy Guide, §§ 2.2.4, 2.5; ORR Field Guidance 27, DNA Testing Expansion, [https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/FG-27\\_-\\_DNA\\_Testing\\_Expansion.pdf](https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/FG-27_-_DNA_Testing_Expansion.pdf) (last updated May 15, 2025).

oversight. If HHS contends that any specific document is shielded by a court order or another recognized privilege, the Department shall identify the document, the privilege asserted, and the specific basis, on a document-by-document privilege log.

### **The September 17, 2025 Case, Children Similarly Situated, and Post-Release Services Provided**

1. Provide a complete chronology of what ORR knew, and when, about the sexual abuse of the three-year-old child, including: (1) the date the abuse was first reported to any ORR staff member or contractor; (2) the identity and position of every individual who received that report; (3) every internal communication documenting the abuse or the response to it; (4) the date the abuse was reported to state or local law enforcement and to CPS, if at all; and (5) the date the perpetrator was separated from the child.
2. Identify by name and position every ORR, ACF, or HHS staff member who characterized the sexual abuse of this child as an “accident,” or who described the child as being “examined” rather than assaulted, in any communication with her father, his counsel, or any other party. Identify whether any personnel action or referral to the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) has been made in connection with those communications.
3. Identify every child in ORR care and custody between January 20, 2025, and the present who remained in a placement with a known perpetrator of abuse for more than 48 hours after the abuse was reported, and the reason for the continued co-placement.
4. Provide every habeas corpus petition filed on behalf of a child in ORR care and custody between January 20, 2025, and the present, including the length of care at the time of filing, the length of care at the time of release, the category of the sponsor application, and the outcome.
5. Provide the total number of children in ORR care and custody who experienced a significant incident, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, between January 20, 2025, and the present, disaggregated by placement type (e.g., licensed shelter, unlicensed facility, transitional foster care, long-term foster care), the date the incident was reported to ORR, the date the sponsor or parent was notified, and a description of the response taken, including, but not limited to referrals made to state and local law enforcement, the Department of Homeland Security, and OIG.
6. Provide the total number of children in ORR care and custody between January 20, 2025, and the present who (1) was the subject of a reported incident of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or serious neglect while in an ORR placement, and (2) had a parent or legal guardian who had submitted a Category 1 sponsor application at the time. For each, provide the length of time between the reported incident and release, whether and when the parent or guardian was notified, and the language used by ORR to describe the incident.
7. Provide all CPS referrals made involving children in unlicensed ORR placements since January 20, 2025, and the disposition of each.
8. Provide every policy, directive, decision memorandum, or operational guidance governing the use of isolation, seclusion, or physical or mechanical restraints on children in ORR care and custody from January 20, 2025, to the present. Provide the total number of instances in which a child in ORR care and custody was placed in isolation or

seclusion, or subjected to restraint, between January 20, 2025, and the present, disaggregated by facility, age of the child, duration, and reason.

9. Provide data on PRS levels 2 and 3 provided to children classified as victims of abuse or trafficking during ORR care and custody: the total number of such children released between January 20, 2025, and the present, the number enrolled in levels 2 and 3, and the average and median time between release and service commencement, disaggregated by month and reason for enrollment (by PRS type).

### **“Voluntary” Returns, Release Timelines, and Re-Referrals**

10. Provide aggregate data on the number of children transferred to ORR from DHS between January 20, 2025, and the present whose intake paperwork indicated an acceptance of “voluntary return” or a withdrawal of application for admission, and provide ORR’s policies, procedures, and informal guidance (including written or verbal directives and decision memoranda) for handling such children, including whether ORR provides access to counsel before effecting return to the child’s home country.
11. Provide all policies, decision memoranda, operational guidance, legal opinions, and internal or inter-agency communications, including communications with DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House, since January 20, 2025, concerning children requesting voluntary departure, including any policy, directive, or guidance, whether formally denominated as such or not, that reflects direct DHS, ICE, or CBP coordination with ORR grant recipients or contractors. Indicate whether any such information were provided by DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House directly to ORR grant recipients or contractors.
12. Provide aggregate data on time-to-adjudication for all Category 1 sponsor applications, disaggregated by month, from January 20, 2025, to the present. For each month in which the ten-day standard under ORR Policy Guide § 2.7.2 was not met, identify the policy basis or documented extraordinary circumstance cited to justify the deviation. Explain the rationale for keeping Category 1 children in ORR care and custody based on the length of care data.
13. For the 176 Category 1 children released in March 2026, provide: (a) a complete list, disaggregated by sponsor category and country of origin of the child, of every such release; (b) the length of time each child spent in ORR care and custody prior to release; (c) the identity and location of the sponsor to whom each child was released, including whether the sponsor held lawful immigration status; (d) for each release, whether the child has since been taken into federal custody, placed into removal proceedings, issued an expedited removal order, or removed from the United States; (e) whether any of the releases were coordinated with, requested by, or preceded by communication with DHS, ICE, or CBP personnel, and produce all such communications; and (f) all policies, decision memoranda, operational guidance, and internal or inter-agency communications, including communications with DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House, concerning the decision to release these 176 children in the month of March 2026. Indicate whether any such information were provided by DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House directly to ORR grant recipients or contractors.
14. Identify every instance since January 20, 2025 in which DHS, ICE, CBP, or any other federal agency has asked ORR, ACF, or any HHS child-welfare-related component to query, cross-reference, or match its sponsor records, applicant records, post-release

contact information, or any other case data against a list of individuals in immigration custody, in removal proceedings, or otherwise the subject of an immigration enforcement interest. For each such tasking, provide: (i) the originating request, including the date, the requesting office, the named officials involved, and the stated purpose and legal authority; (ii) the list and all data fields the requesting agency provided to ORR; (iii) every ORR, ACF, and HHS staff member, contractor, or component that received, accessed, processed, or responded to the request; (iv) the legal review, if any, conducted before ORR processed the list, and any concerns raised internally about the legality, propriety, or child-welfare implications of running immigration enforcement targets against ORR sponsor records; (v) the methodology used to perform the match and the systems queried; (vi) the response ORR provided, including any list of matched individuals, sponsor application details, child case identifiers, or other information transmitted; (vii) the subsequent disposition of the matched individuals, including whether ORR was informed that any were issued removal orders or removed from the United States, or whether ORR deprioritized such individuals in pending sponsor adjudications, or had their previously approved sponsorships revisited; and (viii) whether the matched individuals' children remained in or were re-referred to ORR care and custody. Produce all related communications, requests, methodologies, response sets, and policies.

15. Identify every instance since January 20, 2025, in which ORR released a child to a sponsor, regardless of category, where that release resulted in, was followed by, or coordinated with the transfer of the child to DHS custody, placement in another federal facility, or removal from the United States, disaggregated by month and sponsor category. Provide all policies, operational guidance, and communications, including with DHS, governing such releases, and the role of the Alexandria, Louisiana short-term holding facility for migrant families and unaccompanied children.
16. Identify, describe, and provide every contract, cooperative agreement, grant, subaward, memorandum of understanding, and programmatic arrangement between ORR (or any other HHS component) and Compass Connections, from January 20, 2025, to the present, including: (a) the total federal funding obligated and disbursed; (b) each facility or program Compass Connections operates on behalf of ORR and the number of children served at each; (c) any role Compass Connections has played, is playing, or is contemplated to play in the new Alexandria, Louisiana short-term holding facility for migrant families and unaccompanied children, including any ORR role in referring, transferring, or placing children at that site, and when that is to take effect; (d) all communications between ORR, ACF, or HHS leadership and Compass Connections concerning the Alexandria facility, the LaSalle Family Foundation, LaSalle Corrections, or any facility co-located with DHS; and (e) whether ORR has evaluated the compatibility of Compass Connections' participation in a short-term pre-deportation holding site with ORR's statutory child-welfare mission and its obligations under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act and the *Flores* Settlement Agreement.
17. Provide all policies, decision memoranda, operational guidance, legal opinions, and internal or inter-agency communications, including communications with DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House, since January 20, 2025, concerning the release posture of Category 1 children, including any policy, directive, or guidance, whether formally

denominated as such or not, that reflects or would effectuate the de-designation of Category 1 children. Indicate whether any such information were provided by DHS, ICE, CBP, or the White House directly to ORR grant recipients or contractors.

18. Provide a complete accounting of fingerprinting and DNA testing appointment capacity and scheduling data from January 20, 2025, to the present, disaggregated by month and region. Identify every written or verbal directive, policy change, or operational guidance issued after January 20, 2025, that modified (1) appointment scheduling, (2) sponsor vetting, (3) fingerprinting, (4) DNA testing, and (5) reunification timeline procedures, and produce all associated decision memoranda and communications.
19. Identify every child re-referred to ORR care and custody between January 20, 2025, and the present after having been previously released to an ORR-vetted and approved sponsor, regardless of sponsor category. For each, identify the circumstances of re-arrest by DHS, whether ORR required the previously approved sponsor to restart the application process, and the child's current custody status and length of care since re-referral. Provide all policy directives, decision memoranda, and communications governing ORR's treatment of previously approved sponsors upon a child's re-referral.

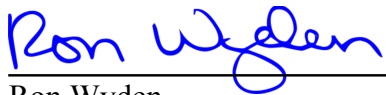
### **FFS Structure, Field Guidance, and Case Management**

20. Produce all decision memoranda, operational guidance, policy directives, and communications governing the implementation of the "vetting FFS" structure, including the overhaul of Field Guidance 24. Explain specifically how the current FFS structure satisfies the sponsor communication, case progression, and release adjudication obligations set forth in ORR Policy Guide § 2.3.
21. Provide the total number of full-time equivalent staff, vacancies, and detailees assigned to FFS functions from January 20, 2025, to present, disaggregated by month, role, and assigned region. Provide average FFS caseloads by month over the same period.
22. Identify all policies or directives, formal or informal, issued after January 20, 2025, that altered FFS or case manager obligations to communicate with or respond to designated legal service providers or legal representatives of children in ORR care and custody. Produce all associated communications.
23. Provide every instance since January 20, 2025, in which an FFS overruled, returned, or otherwise delayed a case manager's or Field Coordinator's release recommendation by sponsor category, and produce the associated documentation explaining the basis for each decision and the overall case outcome.
24. Provide all Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) compliance documentation for ORR-contracted foster care placements from January 20, 2025, to present, and identify whether PREA audits are being conducted for individual foster homes as distinct from congregate care facilities. Identify the date of the most recent PREA audit or compliance review for ORR foster placements in Texas.

The children in your care are three-year-olds being abused in temporary foster placements. They are teenagers locked alone in red rooms. They are 14-year-olds like Diego, who had a completed home study, an already-approved sponsor, and a case manager who told him he was going home—yet was only recently released as part of the March 2026 surge. They are children threatened until they sign voluntary departure paperwork they cannot read. They are children held by an

agency that calls them unaccompanied for some purposes and accompanied for others, depending on which produces faster deportation. Prolonged detention and re-detention in these circumstances is a policy choice, and you are prioritizing deportation over child welfare, producing documented harm to children you are charged to protect. Congress established clear statutory requirements and oversight mechanisms to prevent exactly this outcome, and this Department has failed to meet them. I expect complete and prompt responses to each request above, and I expect that you will treat this inquiry with the seriousness that the harm to these children demands.

Sincerely,



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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Finance

cc: Alex J. Adams, Assistant Secretary for Family Support, Administration for Children  
& Families  
Angie Salazar, Acting Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement