

OFFICE CALL: [REDACTED] (b)(6)
July 23, 2021

Overview:

- You will participate in an in-person call with [REDACTED] (b)(6)
- The purpose of this engagement is to highlight that Department of Homeland Security (DHS) does not have the necessary government authorities or resources for all that needs to be accomplished to reunify families within the scope of the Family Reunification Task Force.
- You will be staffed by Royce Murray, Immigration Counselor and Michelle Brané, Executive Director, Family Reunification Task Force.

Discussion Point:

- Highlight that the Biden-Harris Administration is committed to rebuilding a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system. DHS continues to enforce immigration laws and maintain border security, while restoring access, fairness, and efficiency in the immigration system.

Background:

- The Task Force has three central tasks: identifying separated children, facilitating and enabling reunification of families, and providing services and support in their reunification.
- The Task Force is partnering with non-governmental organizations and the private sector to leverage reunification and support services, particularly when the government does not have spending authority. Support services include helping separated parents file parole requests, obtain necessary travel documents, and secure transportation to the United States.
- Currently, the U.S. government pays for behavioral health services and support to families that have been reunited and continues to work to provide additional support such as housing and medical care for families in need. However, we are facing resource constraints for all that we want to do.
- Challenges that DHS faces with family reunification efforts include:
 - DHS is currently paying for air fare, domestic travel and other preparation needs for the reunification of separated parents, their separated children, and subsequently born children. However, we are unable to cover the expenses for additional family members accompanying parents returning to reunify with their children.
 - DHS has learned that almost half of the families the Task Force has reunified so far are at risk of homelessness or are homeless. This is a grave concern. We are looking for a way to establish a model to provide temporary but holistic settlement supports, as we did for refugee resettlement, but face legal challenges.
 - The U.S. Government seeks support to ensure families have immediate housing, food, and case management upon arrival in the United States.
 - DHS is providing families paroled into the United States with the ability to remain in the United States legally for three years – and the possibility to request additional time to remain in the United States. We are exploring all options that could be available to families to seek additional legal protections on a case by case basis while we work with Congress on longer term solutions. We do not currently have the legal authority to provide a process for permanent lawful status.
 - We are concerned and anticipate that some parents may face legal custody challenges as a result of being separated from their children for more than three years.

- NGOs working with the government need a unified database of information about the families for case management and coordination purposes. However, for privacy and confidentiality reasons, this information is not requested by, or accessible to, the government.

DHS

Secretary Mayorkas
Royce Murray, Immigration Counselor
Michelle Brané, Family Reunification Task Force

Non-DHS

(b)(6)

Attachments:

- A. Biography

Staff Responsible for Briefing Memo: Anna Hinken, Office for Partnership and Engagement
OGC Reviewer: David J. Palmer, Chief of Staff