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July 30, 2014

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the nation's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization in the country, I write to express our organization's strong opposition to border funding legislation that attempts to rewrite the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 or include any language that would enable the mass deportation of the innocent, migrant children currently incarcerated at detention centers across the country. In addition, I express our organization's disappointment with the extremely inadequate appropriation figures in H.R. 5230 to address the current humanitarian crisis at the border.

For decades we have known about the dangerous conditions and life threatening situations migrants are exposed to as they try to reach our country, fleeing poverty, wars, and political instability abroad. Today, there is a renewed sense of urgency to take action to address the immigration situation as countless of young and innocent children are becoming the new wave of migrants being detained at the border. As news outlets are reporting, there is a humanitarian crisis at the border: over 90,000 unaccompanied minors are expected to cross the U.S.-Mexico border this year alone. These children, are desperately fleeing parts of Latin America, including areas beyond Mexico, such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, and are found locked up in detention centers.

While LULAC appreciates the House's attempt to move legislation to address the humanitarian crisis, adding any language that would have the effect of deporting innocent, migrant refugee children is unacceptable to our organization. In addition, any language that attempts to zero out funding or prohibit funds from being used to administer the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 is also unacceptable. Finally, LULAC also opposes any attempts to provide agencies with discretionary authority to shift funds slated for humanitarian purposes to enforcement actions.

With regards to appropriation numbers, LULAC is also disappointed with the tepid amounts being considered by the House in H.R. 5230, the emergency border appropriation legislation. More robust funding is needed and our organization urges the House to amend those numbers so that funding more closely resembles the amounts requested by President Obama to adequately and effectively address this humanitarian crisis at the border.

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Critical funding is needed for the Department of Health Human Services to support their unaccompanied minor program, the United States Agency for International Development to expand social services and emergency shelters in countries currently sending migrant children, as well as funds for more judges and advocates to provide these migrant children with the fair and just treatment they deserve.

As the House moves forward with supplemental appropriation legislation to address the humanitarian crisis at the border, LULAC asks the House to proceed with the interests of the child refugees in mind. The 135,000 members of LULAC will carefully monitor movement related to this topic and urges Members of the House to reject any attempts to dilute or weaken this bill with any poison pills that would enable the mass deportation of our innocent Latino children.

We look forward to working with you on critical issues. Please feel free to have your staff reach out to Luis Torres, LULAC Director of Policy at latorres@lulac.org should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Margaret Moran". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Margaret" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Moran".

Margaret Moran
LULAC National President