

**Senator Chuck Grassley**  
**135 Hart Senate Office Building**  
**Washington, D.C. 20510**

June 20, 2024

Dear Senator Grassley:

My name is Dan Moore, and I have the honor and privilege of serving as a United States Border Patrol agent assigned to protecting our Nation's front lines on the southwest border in Laredo, Texas. I love this job. Every time I go out on patrol, I give it my all, serving alongside the brothers and sisters with whom I work. I want to report to the United States Congress on what I have witnessed over the past three years. I can genuinely tell you from a frontline agent's point of view that it has been frustrating and demoralizing witnessing the lawlessness that has transpired. As we all know, hundreds of thousands of unvetted single adults, family units, and unaccompanied children (UAC) have been released all over the United States. My focus, however, will be on the UAC. Why? Because children are the most vulnerable humans and because I have had several encounters with the UAC. It breaks my heart seeing these little ones being trafficked by transnational criminal organizations. I will talk about my experience with the front end of the immigration process, from patrolling the border to making arrests. I will then talk about the back end of the immigration process I experienced while I worked in one of the processing facilities. I will explain the flaws and red flags that I have witnessed as it relates to UAC. Finally, I will offer my opinion on what should be done to correct this current system that places these UAC in such a dangerous situation where they are exploited.

In July of 2021, I reported to my assigned Border Patrol station in Laredo, Texas. For two years I patrolled the border on the Rio Grande, performing and assisting in thousands of apprehensions. Many of my apprehensions were UAC. Over time, I began to think about what the process was for these children, because if you are an agent assigned to patrolling the border, your task is to interdict and apprehend illegals, not process them.

One night in September 2022, I was patrolling my assigned area near the Rio Grande when I saw a man appear out of the Carrizo from the riverbanks holding two small children, a boy and a girl under the age of six. The oldest was the girl, she was wearing only a diaper. As I approached, the man dropped the little boy and girl and ran swiftly back to the river, returning to Mexico. As I was tending to the little boy and girl, I looked to my left and saw six adult suspected illegal aliens running up to try and get away in a smuggling vehicle. I was shocked that two young UAC were used to distract me so that these adults could attempt to evade law enforcement. But as I've learned over the past three years, that's what the cartels and/or other human smugglers and/or traffickers do. They will use any means necessary to smuggle and traffic people and children. The previous

example was an eye-opener for me. I will never forget that little boy and girl I held that night on the banks of the Rio Grande. I remember asking my supervisor what would happen to these young children. He told me they would be sent to a shelter where an investigation would be done to find the parents in their home country. None of that made sense to me at the time. I remember thinking to myself: Why in the world would a parent allow their babies to be sent alone to the United States? How could this happen? Where are the moms and dads? After that night I had a few more similar encounters with UAC, but nothing to the extent that I would soon witness a year later when Title 42 would finally come to an end.

Laredo is well-known as an area where those who have crossed illegally will attempt to evade law enforcement. However, a month after Title 42 was lifted in 2023 I noticed a change with respect to the characteristics of illegals crossing over our border. In one specific area of private land, I noticed large groups of people crossing illegally, facilitated by the cartel; But instead of evading Border Patrol, they would simply turn themselves in. Among these large groups were always UAC, mainly from Guatemala and Honduras. It looked like what you see on the news when the border crisis in Eagle Pass makes the headlines. This is still occurring here in Laredo to this day. I became concerned after witnessing these groups cross day after day for over a year. At times when the smugglers would drop the aliens off on the banks here in Laredo, they would begin recording the aliens and agents upon returning to Mexico in their raft. I was told the smugglers do this as a record of receipt or delivery of their groups of aliens. My concerns and frustration with our border crisis have only continued to escalate since this shift or change in the means and methods of illegal immigration and border crossings. Little to nothing has been done here to stop these aliens from being smuggled and trafficked across the border. I have now witnessed thousands of UAC simply dropped off here in this one specific area of private land. I even questioned the legitimacy of the aliens that claim to be family units. Ultimately there is no way we can truly determine if these children belong to the supposed parents because we do not perform DNA tests on children 13 years and younger. Common sense would lead a reasonable person to ask, why are we not taking measures to properly and adequately process and verify the biometric profiles/identities of these young children?

In August of 2023, I had the opportunity to volunteer for a four-month detail at an Enhanced Centralized Processing Center (ECPC). From August 2023 to January 2024, I volunteered at this ECPC to process the high volume of illegal aliens who had crossed the United States border illegally into Laredo, Texas, Eagle Pass, Texas and places in Arizona. I witnessed thousands of aliens that were released with a Notice to Appear/Ordered Released (NTA/OR) before immigration courts all throughout the United States. Many of these cases will not be heard until the year 2029. While there, I learned about how the UAC were processed and where they were being sent. Directives delegated down from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) mandated that we process the UAC in under 48 hours. Third-party contractors hired by DHS were the ones entrusted by DHS to conduct the data entry and verify the sponsors and addresses for the UAC. Border Patrol agents would then sign off on the paperwork. Most of the UAC were given a Warrant of

Arrest/Notice to Appear (WA/NTA) and ultimately released to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As an Agent, I am trained to perform thorough immigration investigations. To gain a better understanding of where the UAC were sent after being booked out of Border Patrol custody, I looked up the booking status of the UAC in our detention module database. In that specific database I was able to see what transportation company HHS used to move these kids. That company was MVM. I was also able to see the destination these UAC were being moved to. I was shocked to see that many of them were being sent to Non-Government Organization (NGO) shelters all over the United States. In most cases the UAC were being sent to NGO shelters in states where the purported sponsor's supposed address was indicated. There was one case I saw where a Guatemalan female UAC had a sponsor address in Alabama, however, she was sent with another Guatemalan female UAC to a shelter in the Finger Lakes Region of New York. Once booked out of Border Patrol custody we would never see these children again. We were never given a follow up on their status. This was very concerning to me as we were the law enforcement agency that had apprehended and processed these UAC. Children, especially the UAC, are the most vulnerable humans. In my opinion, this policy of rushing the processing of the UAC with a minimum time frame of 48 hours or less and booking them out into the hands of unvetted NGO's without law enforcement follow up is outrageous, extremely dangerous and irresponsible, to say the least.

During the initial intake of children aged 13 years and younger, I learned that for processing purposes, Border Patrol Agents are not permitted to take their photographs, fingerprints, or DNA samples to verify the identities and/or document their biological information. To this day I still do not understand why this is the policy. Why are we prohibited from conducting due diligence in processing these young children? Why are we inhibited from taking proper measures to ensure that these young children are accurately identified and documented to safely connect them with their families? Having the ability to verify the identity of the UAC through DNA samples, fingerprinting, and photograph is instrumental and essential in enabling law enforcement to determine whether a child has been recycled across the border for smuggling or trafficking purposes. Furthermore, we would be able to identify whether a child belongs to a mother and/or father claiming to be the child's parent.

From my experience at the processing facility, I was never able to adequately verify whether aliens claiming to be a family were in fact a family unit. The following are just two examples of the resulting risk and harm that have occurred because of the failed policies and procedures with respect to processing UAC:

- 1) I was processing a family unit for a NTA/OR. When checking the purported father's background, I saw where just one month before he had been deported as a single adult male in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Sector. He then crossed again one month later in the Eagle Pass area, except this time he crossed with another woman claiming to be his wife and two children claiming to be his kids. This was a red flag, and I didn't buy it. I could not verify whether they were a family unit because the children were too young

to understand what was happening and the adult female continued to contend that she was the man's wife. Who knows though, right?

- 2) The second example was during an instance when a fellow agent told me that when he was at the Arizona ECPC, there was a little girl who was (supposedly) a part of a family unit. She had bruises all over her legs and was complaining about stomach pain. The little girl was taken to the hospital and where it was discovered that she had been raped, and the people that were supposedly part of her family unit had no familial relationship to her. From my fellow agent's understanding, either Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) took over the investigation or the little girl was sent back to her alleged family to be released with a NTA/OR.

In January of 2024, I returned to the field to resume my duties as a line agent. I noticed there was an uptick of UAC that were being dropped off by the cartel. On March 25, 2024, I had another encounter with a UAC. At approximately 7:00 p.m., while patrolling my assigned area I noticed two adult males standing at the banks of the Rio Grande. In between them was a small nine-year-old girl carrying only a backpack. They had crossed the border from Mexico into the United States illegally without inspection. As I stopped my patrol unit and got out to pursue the men, I noticed they were recording me with their phones. I recognized the males as smugglers from previous encounters in that same area. When I ran towards the men, they ran back to the river, returning to Mexico in their raft. While paddling back, one of the men picked up the air pump for the raft and pointed it at me, acting like he was shooting at me. I then approached the little girl, who I believed was being trafficked. I asked for her name and age. She told me her name was [REDACTED] and that she was nine years old. I asked if she had family here in the United States. She provided paperwork with a name, phone number, and address of a supposed sponsor. When I called the sponsor listed on the paperwork the sponsor said she was the little girl's mother. I could hear a second person in the background, and it seemed like that person was feeding information to the purported sponsor. When I looked up the address provided by the sponsor, I found it to be in an open field in Delaware. Upon my suspicions of child trafficking and concern for the safety and well-being of [REDACTED], I contacted the duty line phone number. I was then transferred to a HSI Special Agent responsible for the Laredo area. I explained the situation to the Special Agent responsible for taking my call. The investigation involving little [REDACTED] is currently ongoing. I reached out to the Special Agent through cellular text message on June 13, 2024, asking for an update on this investigation. The Special Agent has not replied. For me, this was a difficult encounter to deal with. I wanted to cry when I first approached [REDACTED]. I could not believe an innocent nine-year-old girl was simply taken across the river by two adult male smugglers. What parent would allow this to happen? Why would the sponsor, the supposed mother, be living in Delaware and then have her young vulnerable daughter be sent across the border by two adult males who work for a transnational criminal organization? Why was the address that the sponsor provided, be located in an open field in Delaware? When I called the sponsor, why was there someone else in the background apparently assisting her on what to say? If [REDACTED] is in fact transported to the sponsor address upon completion of HSI's investigation, she will most likely

and indefinitely be lost in our country, especially if she was not photographed, fingerprinted, or if a DNA sample was not obtained in her processing. Remember, it is DHS policy that we do not record these biometrics if the child is 13 years or younger. Ladies and Gentlemen, this is just one UAC example of the thousands that I have witnessed here in Laredo alone. From my experience on the border, from serving as a line agent and in a processing facility, I can tell you that these children are being released by the thousands all throughout the United States. In my opinion, the current policy is placing these children in extremely dangerous situations.

I will close by re-emphasizing the policy flaws that place the UAC in dangerous positions, while offering solutions to these flaws. Agents have 48 hours to process the UAC. Once the child has been processed and booked out of Border Patrol custody into HHS responsibility, there is no follow up on the safety and well-being from law enforcement. For each UAC that has been booked out of Border Patrol custody there should be a mandatory follow up on the child by a law enforcement agency.

Instead of allowing the UAC to be transported all over the United States to their unvetted sponsor, many of whom are here illegally, DHS policy should require the sponsor to show up in person to the HHS location to go through further, thorough vetting. A part of that vetting process should include DNA testing.

There must be an emphasis on reporting suspected child trafficking throughout all Sectors of the Border Patrol when an Agent encounters a child, especially a UAC. Awareness emails and yearly power point training do not suffice. Urgency in reporting child trafficking should be briefed in every muster prior to the Agent going out to their assigned area. The duty hotline for reporting trafficking should be clearly outlined in stations and in patrol vehicles.

Finally, a major red flag that I saw while at the ECPC was that DHS does not allow Border Patrol Agents to take photos, DNA samples, or fingerprints for processing children ages 13 years and younger. I believe it should be a requirement for all ages to have this information recorded on file.

I would like to thank the Members of Congress for giving me this opportunity to submit a report on my experience of the past three years here at the border as it relates to the UAC. In my opinion, these children are the most vulnerable and at-risk humans. I ask that Congress take into consideration my report and more importantly take action to effectuate changes in policy and law that remove these children from harm's way and place them in a safer environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Agent Daniel T. Moore, U.S. Border Patrol