

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 28, 2014

The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Johnson and Secretary Burwell:

We are very concerned about the crisis at our South-West border and the number of unaccompanied alien children (UACs) who are crossing illegally into our country. The number of UACs has increased dramatically this year, and testimony from Secretary Johnson before the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 10, 2014 indicates your agencies, collectively, are preparing for up to 90,000 apprehended UACs by September 30<sup>th</sup> of this year.

It is our understanding that the UACs are currently being housed at military installations and HHS-contracted shelters throughout the United States. Many of these facilities are at or near capacity.

We understand that FEMA is coordinating the effort to find adequate shelter for the UACs. We have learned that HHS has entered into contracts with private groups to site and secure additional facilities at which to house the UACs, including some vacant hotel properties. We know that during removal proceedings many UACs stay in the custody of a relative or sponsor, but have recently learned some of those relatives are not lawfully present within our country.

Just last week, on July 24<sup>th</sup>, HHS released data about the number of UACs placed with relatives or sponsors within each state. According to that data, 350 children have been placed in South Carolina between January 1, 2014 and July 7, 2014. We are troubled that this data is just coming to light and was not provided to Congress or our delegation in a timely and regular fashion.

To that end, we would like to know:

1. Other than the 350 children placed with relatives or sponsors, have any UACs been housed at any military installation or HHS-contracted shelters within South Carolina? If so, how many and at what facilities?

2. Does DHS or HHS have any plans to move any UACs to military installations or HHS-contracted shelters within South Carolina? If so, how many, what facilities, and when?
3. Does DHS or HHS have any plans to contract for additional facilities or space to house UACs within South Carolina? If so, how many, where, and during what time period?
4. What is the policy of DHS and HHS with respect to notifying states when UACs will be housed within their state? Do your agencies also provide notification to the Congressional Delegations?
5. Will you commit to notify us not less than 14 days before any UACs will be housed at any military installation or HHS-contracted shelter in South Carolina, and provide information about the number of UACs, the locations to which they are transferred, and the anticipated duration of their custody within our state?
6. Will you commit to notify us regularly, but not less than once per month, of the number of UACs placed with a relative or sponsor in South Carolina?

We look forward to your prompt response to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,



Lindsey Graham  
U.S. Senator



Tim Scott  
U.S. Senator



Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



Mark Sanford  
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress



Trey Gowdy  
Member of Congress



Mick Mulvaney  
Member of Congress



Tom Rice  
Member of Congress