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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

July 9, 2014

CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
ETHICS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES AND
RISK MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Sylvia Burwell
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Johnson and Secretary Burwell:

I am deeply alarmed by the crisis on our southern border and the Administration's efforts to transfer these children to locations across the United States. These actions are detrimental to both our nation's security and the safety of these children. The citizens of 11th District of Texas should not be forced to abet the Administration in carrying out this policy.

Under your leadership, the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, have lurched forward with an ill-conceived, nation-wide relocation plan to house the tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors illegally entering the United States while refusing to clarify if the Administration's primary goal is to ultimately return these children to their home countries or simply resettle them in communities across the United States.

A policy of simply resettling these children is wrongheaded and will only exacerbate the multitude of security and health issues we face along the southern border. We must implement policies that back up our words with actions; each day that parents continue to believe the United States will take in their child, hundreds more children are entrusted to drug cartels and coyotes and put in grave danger as they attempt to cross illegally.

Halting this unfolding human tragedy requires true deterrence of further mass illegal migration by returning these children swiftly and humanely to their home countries. While difficult, I know that the officers and professionals at DHS are equipped to carry out this work with dignity and care because it will ultimately prevent a greater human tragedy from unfolding.

I am disappointed and discouraged by your lack of preparedness and failure to communicate with Congress or the American people your plans to cope with this humanitarian crisis. It is DHS's responsibility to secure our borders and protect our citizens; yet the Administration's shortcomings continue to put the public health and safety of our Texas communities in jeopardy. Without question, securing the border is a federal obligation and the current crisis demands a coherent federal response that safeguards the rights and well-being of American citizens.

Returning illegal migrants to their homes is an appropriate and humane deterrent to stem this tide and will help you regain control of the border. Should you choose not to pursue a policy of returning illegal migrants, I am writing today to make abundantly clear that **I will oppose every effort to relocate any illegal aliens to the 11th District of Texas**. I cannot support and I will not ask my constituents to bear the burdens of policy that encourages human trafficking, ignores your legal responsibilities, and fails to address the crisis at hand.

Every public official asked for the opportunity to serve and each of us was chosen to make hard choices, I implore you to step up and lead your departments in the best interests of those we serve, the citizens of the United States of America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Michael Conaway". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

K. Michael Conaway
Member of Congress