

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
Commerce, Justice, Science and Related  
Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace Meng  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
Commerce, Justice, Science and Related  
Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng:

As your committee considers appropriations for Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, we urge you to direct the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) to submit a report to Congress detailing the status of unaccompanied children's immigration proceedings.

The immigration courts have a critical role to play in administering justice efficiently while maintaining standards that ensure due process, which can be especially difficult in proceedings where children are the sole or principal respondent. The immigration courts are also an important element of creating a system that ensures unaccompanied children are protected from dangers like human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse. Utilization of specialized juvenile dockets with robust anti-trafficking safeguards and child-appropriate accommodations can both help protect children from dangers and achieve much needed efficiency benefits for the backlogged immigration courts, all while improving due process in children's cases.

In December 2023, EOIR clarified in the *Director's Memorandum on Children's Cases in Immigration Court* that each immigration court would have a specialized juvenile docket for cases where the sole or principal respondent was under 21 years old.<sup>1</sup> These dockets would be held separately from adult cases and would be overseen by judges who receive specialized training. The Memorandum also outlined certain procedures and practices that immigration judges should follow to create a system where children could better comprehend their proceedings; where indicators of trafficking would be identified; and through which the courts could work towards streamlining benefits.

Unfortunately, EOIR rescinded the Director's Memorandum this year and reinstated 2017 guidance that offers fewer trafficking safeguards, efficiency benefits, and pragmatic processes.<sup>2</sup> This change threatens to create unnecessary delays which further exacerbate the severe

<sup>1</sup> Children's Cases in Immigration Court, Off. of the Dir., Dep't of Just. DM 24-01 (December 21, 2023), <https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-12/dm-24-01.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Cancellation of Director's Memorandum 23-01 and Reinstatement of Policy Memorandum 19-13, Off. of the Dir., Dep't of Just. PM 25-27 (March 21, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/media/1394086/dl?inline#:~:text=2%20In%20short%2C%20DM%2023,PM%2019%2D13%20is%20reinstated.>

immigration court backlog. It also diminishes critical safeguards designed to ensure that children can seek relief for which they may be eligible and that they comply with their immigration responsibilities, including updating their address with government agencies.

Given the important role of Congress in overseeing the immigration courts' handling of juvenile proceedings, we ask the Committee to include the following language in its report:

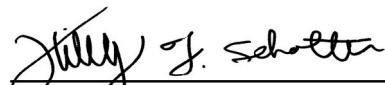
*The Committee encourages EOIR to continue using specialized juvenile dockets across the immigration courts to improve the fairness and efficiency of immigration adjudications involving unaccompanied children, better protect those children against trafficking and exploitation, and connect children with legal assistance. The Committee directs EOIR to submit a report to the Committee, within 180 days of enactment of this act, detailing the status of unaccompanied children's immigration proceedings. This report shall address: the name and number of immigration courts implementing juvenile dockets; training that has been provided to juvenile docket judges; any restrictions imposed on judges' ability to use docket management tools for children's proceedings; methods that courts are using to facilitate legal representation for children; and other relevant matters, as appropriate.*

We appreciate your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress



Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



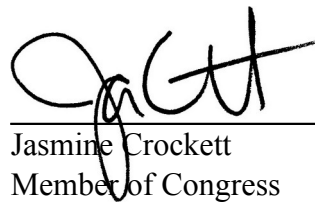
Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



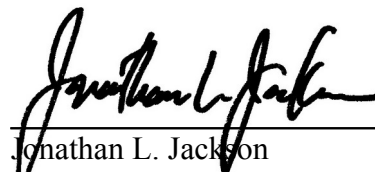
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



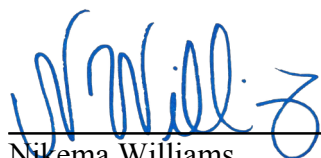
Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



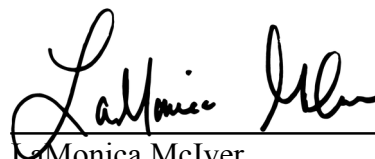
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



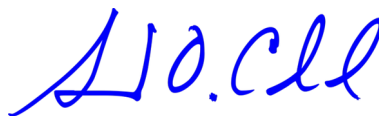
Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



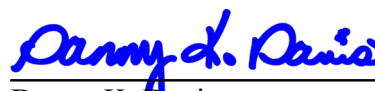
Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



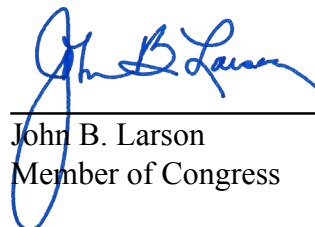
Salud Carbajal  
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Danny K. Davis  
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Jan Schakowsky  
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John B. Larson  
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Rick Larsen  
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Nydia M. Velázquez  
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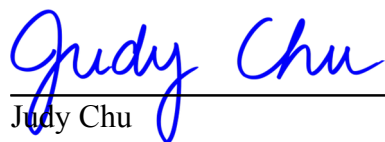
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



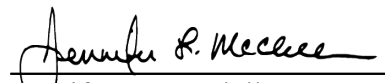
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Jennifer L. McClellan  
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
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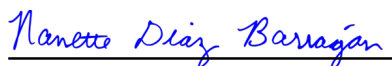
Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



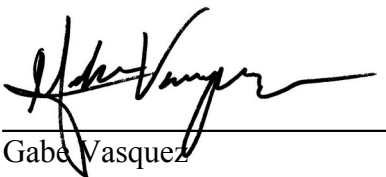
Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

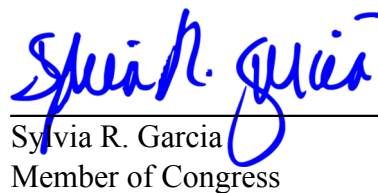


Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



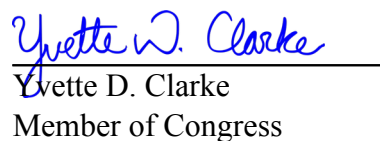
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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



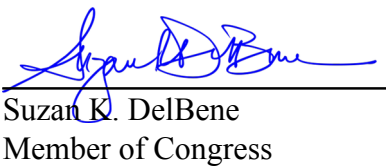
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Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



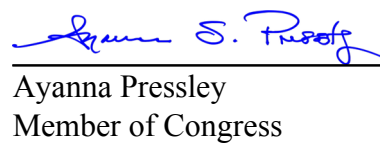
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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



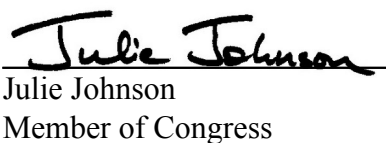
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Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



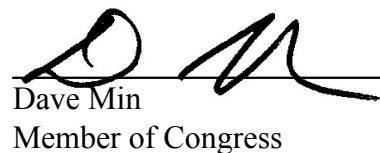
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Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress



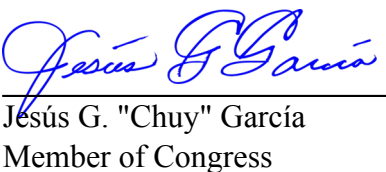
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Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



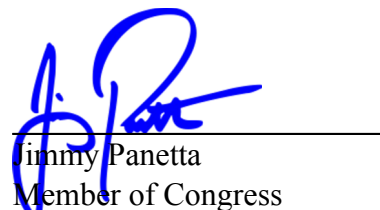
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Dave Min  
Member of Congress



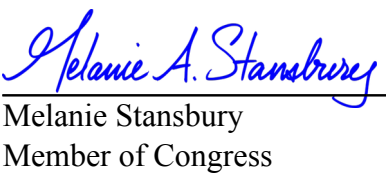
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



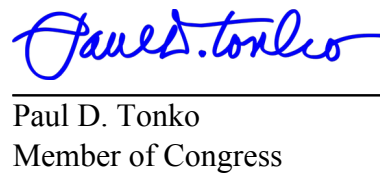
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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



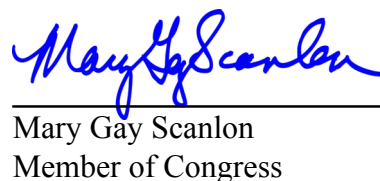
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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress

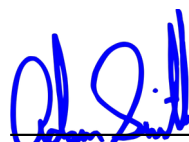


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Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
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Robert Garcia  
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Sarah McBride  
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar  
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George Latimer  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



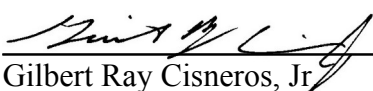
Laura Friedman  
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



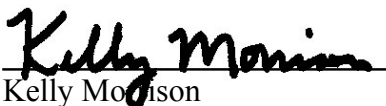
Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress




Kelly Morrison  
Member of Congress



Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



Andre Carson  
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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



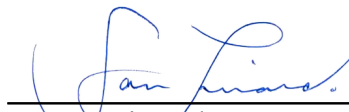
Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



Luz M. Rivas  
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo  
Member of Congress



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Ritchie Torres in black ink, featuring a stylized 'R' and a long horizontal flourish.

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Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Andrea Salinas in black ink, with a cursive 'A' and 'S' and a horizontal flourish.

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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress