



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

July 24, 2014

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

Secretary Johnson:

Recently, Wisconsin officials and residents have been made aware that the federal government is attempting to locate facilities to temporarily provide shelter to hundreds of unaccompanied minors who have crossed our southern border. We urge that you discontinue your search to locate temporary placement in Wisconsin and begin communicating with states in a more transparent manner. While we understand this situation requires compassion, we believe it is in the best interest of the minors to be relocated near our nation's southern border, allowing for prompt reunification of families.


Wisconsin is a generous state with citizens who are willing to assist one another in times of emergency. We pride ourselves in having excellent schools as well as programs that assist those in need, while encouraging self-reliance. The federal government should not prioritize the needs of others over our own residents. As elected officials in Wisconsin, we are beyond frustrated that the administration is neglecting its obligation to uphold the law while failing to provide adequate information to state officials. That is unfair to those who you are attempting to relocate.

The health of Wisconsin residents is of the utmost importance, and high volumes of illegal immigrants pose a concern as to whether the federal government will be able to adequately provide basic medical screenings prior to the placement of minors in holding facilities. Is the federal government taking additional steps to ensure that health screenings are being properly conducted prior to placement? In the event that placement occurs, will the Wisconsin Department of Health Services be notified? Wisconsin residents have a right to know if they are being exposed to potential health risks. Regarding placement, is there a limit on the number of possible illegal immigrants that will be housed in Wisconsin? What is likelihood that these unaccompanied minors will be deemed refugees, which will undeniably require public assistance programs? The public and their elected officials deserve answers to these questions.

The potential for these minors to permanently reside in Wisconsin is a legitimate concern. The Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review indicates that many illegal immigrants fail to attend deportation hearings. Consequently, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status may be granted, permitting them to remain in the U.S. Failure to acknowledge this potential reality is to discount the collective intelligence of Wisconsinites. This situation is quite simply a symptom of a much larger immigration crisis that demands a permanent solution.

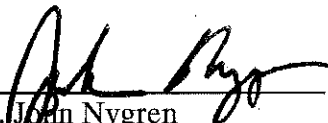
As representatives of the people of Wisconsin we are obligated to be good stewards of state tax dollars. Undoubtedly, housing these minors will result in a significant strain on local and state budgets impacting both public education and public health systems. Given that this is a time sensitive matter, we trust that you will reconsider your decision to relocate the unaccompanied minors to Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



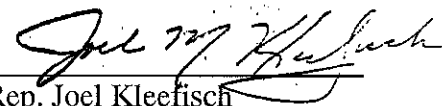
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Speaker Robin J. Vos  
63<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District



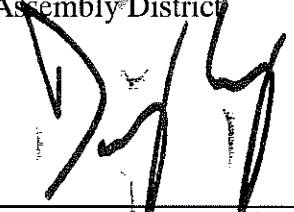
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Rep. John Nygren  
89<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



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Rep. Joel Kleefisch  
38<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



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Rep. David Craig  
83<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

cc: Kathleen Falk, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services