

United States Senate

July 20, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

The Honorable Daniel R. Levinson
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Inspector General Levinson:

On June 29, 2018, I along with my Senate colleagues requested a comprehensive review examining the implementation of the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" policy by the U.S. Department of Health Human Service (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). In concurrence with this investigation, I am writing to request the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) look into the allegations of child abuse at the Heartland Alliance Casa Guadalupe shelter in Chicago, IL, as reported in *The Washington Post* on July 15, 2018.

The article explains that the Heartland Alliance staff "dragged" a young boy from a soccer field and denied adequate medical treatment to a child who fractured his arm after falling on a concrete basketball court. Other children recounted that employees injected a child with an unknown medication causing him to fall ill. If true, these terrible actions have caused additional trauma to children already suffering due to their inhumane separation from their loved ones.

The Trump Administration confirmed that more than 2,500 children were forcibly separated from their parents because of the family separation policy. Although the U.S. District Court Judge Dana Sabra issued a court order mandating that all separated children under the age of five be reunited by July 10, 2018. HHS failed to meet this deadline, prolonging children's stay in HHS-contracted sites. Alarming, it is uncertain that the Administration will meet the second mandate of the court order, which required every child separated by the "zero tolerance" policy be reunited by July 26, 2018. In light of the Administration's slow reunification efforts, it is imperative to that all HHS-contracted facilities, especially Heartland Alliance, provide the best child care and uphold the existing Federal and Illinois standards of child welfare services

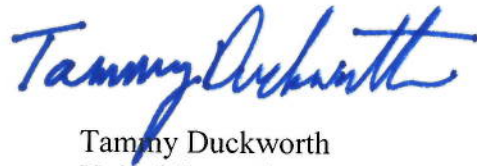
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I request that you address these allegations in your open investigation into the HHS OIG report on family separation policy. I urge you to conduct this investigation expeditiously and publish unredacted results for my office, Heartland Alliance and the American public. Thank you for your attention to this important matter, and I look forward to reviewing the findings from your investigation.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator