



Dave Heineman
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

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July 14, 2014

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Via U.S. Mail & Electronic Mail

Dear Secretary Burwell:

We are writing to share our concerns regarding your agency's handling of the illegal unaccompanied alien children that are surging at our nation's southern border. Last week, it was confirmed that over 200 of these children have already been relocated and placed with sponsors or family members within the State of Nebraska.

To date, neither Governor Dave Heineman nor mayors of the communities receiving these placements have received any formal notification of the ongoing large-scale relocation operation or projected future placements into our State. Respectfully, we submit that your agency's handling of this matter is lacking transparency and coordination with the states and local governments.

We are requesting that you direct your agency to immediately provide to the State of Nebraska, the names of the alien children; their alien identification numbers and dates; their sponsors' names and addresses; and the immigration status of their sponsors. Specifically, we are seeking your agency's submission of this information to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services so that safeguards may be put in place to protect the health and safety of our communities as well as to protect Nebraska taxpayers from additional financial burdens.

While we fully support the humane care and treatment of those individuals who have already been placed within our State, such care should be through private – and not taxpayer-funded – resources.

Both the adjudication and the return of these individuals to their countries of origin are the responsibility of the federal government. We expect the federal government's prompt attention to ensure this dire situation is resolved quickly.

Your immediate action on this request is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dave Heineman
Governor

Mike Johanns
U.S. Senator

Deb Fischer
U.S. Senator

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Lee Terry
U.S. Congressman

Adrian Smith
U.S. Congressman

cc: Vice-President Joseph Biden