



NALEO NEWS

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

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NALEO Urges Administration and Congress to Take Action to Address Influx of Unaccompanied Children Along U.S.-Mexico Border

More than 52,000 unaccompanied children have arrived at the border since October, nearly doubling last year's total and ten times the number from 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Following the meeting between President Barack Obama and Governor Rick Perry, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) issued a statement on the need for action to address the influx of unaccompanied children along the U.S.-Mexico border:

“We call on the Administration and Congress to take swift action to address the influx of unaccompanied children along the southern border of the United States in a manner that is consistent with our values as a nation. With more than 52,000 children arriving to this country without parents since October, nearly ten times the number from 2009, we can no longer afford to ignore the ongoing humanitarian crisis taking place within the nation’s border region.

“In recent months, thousands of families have sent their children off to embark on a perilous and arduous journey to the United States to provide them with the chance of living a life free from the persistent violence and threats found throughout Central America at this time. Analysis from a new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) [report](#) found that the majority (58 percent) of unaccompanied children seeking protection along the southern border of the United States are here because they experienced or were in serious risk of violence in their home country.

“With many NALEO members serving in elected office in communities along the border, we know firsthand how much towns and cities are struggling to find the resources necessary to meet the legal and moral needs of these immigrant children. The 3.8 billion dollars that the President has requested from Congress to help alleviate this humanitarian crisis should be approved before lawmakers depart for August recess. While a good first step, we know this will not address the situation entirely. In the coming weeks and months, our nation’s leaders will need to work across party lines to ensure policies are in place to offer communities the support they need to provide shelter, language assistance, and legal representation and due process, for the thousands of immigrant children who are here.

“As a nation of immigrants that prides itself on the words ‘give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses’, it is our responsibility to uphold our values and ideals as we engage with those

children who have already arrived at our door steps seeking refuge. We know our members stand ready to step up to the plate and to share their experiences on the frontlines to help shape the bipartisan policies that are developed by Congress and the Administration to tackle this crisis going forward.

“With the causes of this humanitarian situation complex and multifaceted, it will take both short and long-term policy solutions to provide the level of relief that the border communities grappling with the realities of this crisis each and every day will need. NALEO is prepared to do our part to help Congress and the Administration and to ensure our members have the information and resources necessary to be effective advocates for their communities and the thousands of immigrant children here today as we tackle this issue together as a nation.”

To view NALEO’s principles on comprehensive immigration reform, click [here](#).

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About NALEO

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials is the leadership organization of the nation’s more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials.