

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 6, 2025

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Pete Hegseth  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear President Trump and Secretary Hegseth,

We write to express our opposition to the Department of Defense (DoD) plans to use installations, including Fort Bliss and Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) in New Mexico, for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immigration-related operations.

Using our military installations for these purposes threatens to divert DoD's resources away from unit readiness and our national security enterprise. This is a direct contradiction to your Administration's statement earlier this year that one of your top priorities is to "have a ready, able, and lethal military"<sup>1</sup>. KAFB hosts numerous missions that forward deploy into the most austere environments globally and houses facilities that lead the development of emerging capabilities and technologies for the DoD and our allies. Further, KAFB is home to Sandia National Laboratories, which is integral to the maintenance and modernization of our nuclear stockpile and develops technologies that support energy resilience for civilian and military applications. KAFB also houses the Air Force Materiel Command's Nuclear Weapons Center (NWC), which is responsible for acquisition, modernization and sustainment of nuclear system programs for both the Department of Defense and Department of Energy.

Due to the sensitive nature of the facilities and missions on KAFB, housing families and children there would be highly reckless and pose significant security risks. Instead of using DoD resources in this manner, the administration should focus on border security initiatives that curb illicit activity and fentanyl trafficking.

Furthermore, detaining children on military installations goes against the principal purpose of the Flores Settlement Agreement and blatantly disregards New Mexico's Children's Code, which helps to ensure the welfare and safety of all children in the state. For over 20 years, federal law has recognized the particular and enduring vulnerability of holding children in custody. New Mexico Code Chapter 32A also governs the detention of children and includes specific provisions for when a child can be detained, the protections available to detained children, and the procedures for detention hearings.<sup>2</sup>

Leveraging legal loopholes to bypass state oversight of the well-being of detained undocumented children, who are often fleeing violence in their home countries, is entirely unacceptable. The administration's callous indifference toward federal and state law is especially concerning, given that the last time migrant children were detained at Fort Bliss staff described the facility as "filthy, overly loud, and prone to flooding and dust storms"<sup>3</sup>.

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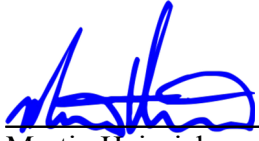
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-ensures-military-excellence-and-readiness/>

<sup>2</sup> NM Stat § 32A-2-11 (2024)

<sup>3</sup> <https://elpasomatters.org/2022/10/09/unaccompanied-minors-distressed-at-el-paso-texas-fort-bliss-migrant-shelter/>

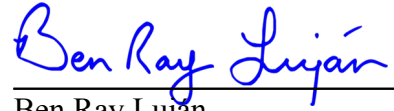
This Administration's "solution" to militarize immigration enforcement is abhorrent and inappropriately and unnecessarily creates a national security risk. We urge you to consider the consequences of these potential actions.

Sincerely,



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Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



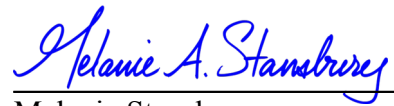
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Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



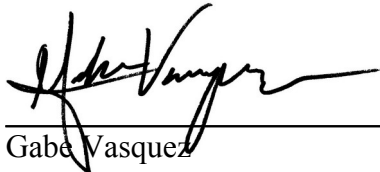
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Teresa Leger Fernandez  
Member of Congress



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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress