

An Open Letter to America's CEOs

Saturday, April 6, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

Children were torn away from their parents and placed in cages.

It was an image the Trump administration hoped would send a message to migrant families heading north for asylum: if you come here, this could happen to you.

The cruelty of the policy was matched only by the incompetence of its execution.

Administration officials did not keep the records needed for reuniting families, nor did they properly vet employees responsible for looking after these children.

Because of their negligence, children have been physically abused.

Because of their negligence, children have been sexually assaulted.

Because of their negligence, children have died.

Their inaction and negligence did not happen in a vacuum. Senior members of the Trump administration played a role, many helping craft, implement, and defend this heinous policy. Those officials include:

- Matthew Albence, Executive Associate Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Nathalie Asher, Acting Executive Associate Director, ICE Operations
- Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Matthew Bassett, Assistant Secretary for Legislation, HHS
- Rachel Brand, former Associate Attorney General
- Joseph Edlow, Deputy Attorney General, DOJ
- Eric Hargan, Deputy Secretary, HHS
- Gene Hamilton, Counselor to Attorney General, DOJ
- Jonathan Hayes, Office of Refugee Resettlement, HHS
- Thomas Homan, Former Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Press Secretary
- Sarah Isgur Flores, Former Spokesperson, DOJ
- Lynn A. Johnson, Assistant Secretary for Family Support, HHS
- John Kelly, Former White House Chief of Staff and Secretary of Homeland Security
- Kathy Kraninger, former Associate Director for Government Programs, OMB
- Scott Lloyd, Former Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement
- Kevin McAleenan, Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- James McHenry, Director of Office of Immigration Review, DOJ
- Stephen Miller, Senior Advisor to the President

- Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of Homeland Security
- Carla Provost, Chief of U.S. Border Patrol
- Jeff Sessions, Former U.S. Attorney General
- Judy Stecker, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, HHS
- Jallyn Sualog, Deputy Director of Office of Refugee Resettlement, HHS
- Ronald Vitiello, Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Steven Wagner, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration for Children and Families, HHS
- Maggie Wynne, Counselor for Human Services Policy, HHS

See attached for details about the role these individuals played in the policy.

Some of these individuals have left the administration in recent months. Regardless of when they leave, they should not be allowed to seek refuge in your boardrooms or corner offices. Allowing them to step off of the revolving door and into your welcoming arms should be a nonstarter.

Many of you spoke out against this barbaric policy. However strong the opposition, your words are meaningless unless they are backed up with resolute action.

We call on you to make it clear that you will not hire for employment, contract for consulting, or seat on your boards, anyone involved in the development or implementation of the Trump administration's family separation immigration policy.

Furthermore, you should make it clear to the lobbying shops and consulting firms you hire and the think tanks, political committees, and candidates you fund --- that you will not work with or support them if they hire these individuals.

There are some lines that simply cannot be crossed.

We will be watching.

Sincerely,

Restore Public Trust
America's Voice
National Immigration Law Center
Center for Popular Democracy
Southern Poverty Law Center
American Bridge
Allied Progress
Bridges Faith Initiative
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Equity Forward
Faith in Public Life
Jobs with Justice
Main Street Alliance
MomsRising

People's Action
Workers Defense Project
CASA In Action
California Reinvestment Coalition
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights - CHIRLA
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Make the Road New York
AMEXCAN
North Carolina Justice Center
Raleigh Immigration
InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Transformations CDC
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
American Gateways
Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee
Fuerza Del Valle
La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE)
Mexican American Legislative Caucus
Proyecto Azteca
RAICES
Rio Grande Valley Equal Voice Network
Texas Civil Rights Project
Workers Defense Project
Youth Rise Texas
OneAmerica



Report: Chaos and Crisis: Senior Trump Admin Officials Implicated in Child Separation

How Officials Crafted and Defended the Heinous Policy and How Many Will Likely Seek Refuge in Boardrooms and Corner Offices

One year ago, the Trump administration ripped children away from their parents and placed them in cages. It was an image they hoped would send a message to migrant families heading north for asylum: if you come here, this could happen to you. The cruelty of the policy was matched only by the incompetence of its execution.

Administration officials did not keep the records needed for reuniting families, nor did they properly vet employees responsible for looking after these children. Because of their negligence, children have been physically abused. Because of their negligence, children have been sexually assaulted. Because of their negligence, children have died.

This report details how inaction and negligence did not happen in a vacuum. Senior members of the Trump administration played a role, many helping craft, implement, and defend this heinous policy.

Some of these individuals have left the administration in recent months. Regardless of when they leave, they should not be allowed to seek refuge in boardrooms or corner offices. Allowing them to step off of the revolving door and into welcoming arms should be a nonstarter.

These findings make clear that America's CEOs should deny employment, contract for consulting, or seat on corporate boards, anyone involved in the development or implementation of the Trump administration's family separation policy.

Furthermore, CEOs should make it clear to the lobbying shops and consulting firms they hire and the think tanks, political committees, and candidates they fund --- that they will not work with or support them if they hire these individuals.

There are some lines that simply cannot be crossed.

We will be watching.

Visit TrumpAdminSeparation.org for more information.

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John Kelly - Former White House Chief of Staff

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Matthew Albence - Executive Associate Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Albence Was Apparently Promoted To ICE Acting Deputy Director While Continuing Duties With Enforcement And Removal Team. “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has undergone a quiet change in leadership, which a former senior ICE official told Newsweek offered proof that the embattled agency was ‘sidelining’ its investigative unit to focus more on immigration law enforcement and removals... In his place, Matthew Albence, who had previously headed ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations team, appears to have been promoted to acting deputy director, while continuing his duties with the Enforcement and Removal team.” [Newsweek, [8/1/18](#)]

Albence Described Family Detention Centers As “Like Summer Camp.” “A top immigration official on Tuesday said family detention centers are ‘more like summer camp’ than a jail during a congressional hearing on the administration’s efforts to reunite thousands of immigrant families separated as a result of its zero-tolerance immigration policy. Asked at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing to describe the so-called family residential centers where kids and parents are held, Matthew Albence, the head of enforcement and removal operations for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, made the comparison of the detention centers to a summer camp.” [CNN, [8/1/18](#)]

Albence Later Said He “Absolutely” Stood By His Comment, Declined to Say Whether He Would Send His Children There. “Matthew Albence, who serves as ICE’s acting deputy director and oversees the agency’s Enforcement and Removal Operations unit, said he ‘absolutely’ stood by the comparison but declined to say whether he would be willing to send his own children to a family detention center.” [Newsweek, [9/19/18](#)]

Albence Clashed With Senate Judiciary Committee On Whether Deported Parents Consented To Leave Children Behind. “[Sen. Dick] Durbin, the second-highest ranking Senate Democrat, pressed Albence repeatedly on whether ICE could demonstrate that its officers consistently asked parents whether they wished to be deported with their children. But rather than address how much documentation can be found, Albence replied that ‘it has been long-standing ICE policy’ to give parents the option to be deported with their children... Durbin again asked Albence whether he could produce documentary proof that all deported parents who left without their children consented to leave those children behind. ‘We can go into each file and see the records that are there, whatever paper records are in there, as well as what’s in our electronic system of records, where they will make notes,’ Albence said. ‘The officers will make a note that the parent declined reunification, as well.’” [POLITICO, [7/31/18](#)]

Nathalie Asher - Acting Executive Associate Director on Immigration and Customs Enforcement Operations

Asher Was Apparently Appointed To ICE In August 2018, Had Previously Led Detention Center That Faced Over A Dozen Hunger Strikes Over Alleged Mistreatment. “The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency has appointed the former field office director of a detention facility that has faced more than a dozen hunger strikes in recent years over alleged mistreatment to lead its Enforcement

and Removal Operations team, which oversees the arrest and deportations of thousands of undocumented immigrants each year. While ICE did not formally announce the appointment of Nathalie Asher as ERO's new chief, the agency appears to have updated the leadership page of its website naming her as the unit's executive associate director on August 9... Asher was previously a field office director at the Tacoma Northwest Detention Center in Washington. The center has seen more than a dozen hunger strikes led by detainees in recent years, according to a recent CNN article describing the hunger and long periods of solitary confinement detainees have faced at the Tacoma facility. The facility, which holds nearly 1,500 detainees, is situated within a toxic sludge field and federal Superfund site where residential construction has been banned.” [Newsweek, [8/15/18](#)]

September 2019: Asher Testified She Had Not Raised Objections To Child Separation Policy. “ICE head of Enforcement and Removal Operations Nathalie Asher and DOJ Director of Executive Office for Immigration Review James McHenry also told lawmakers that they did not raise objections to the [family separation] policy when pressed by Rep. Sylvia Garcia.” [CNN, [2/26/19](#)]

Alex Azar - Secretary of Health and Human Services

(Jan 2018 – present)

Azar: HHS Performing “One Of The Great Acts Of American Generosity And Charity” In Care Of Immigrant Children. “Repeatedly pressed by CNN's Wolf Blitzer on ‘The Situation Room’ about why HHS won't allow media cameras into facilities housing children, Azar said, ‘We have nothing to hide about how we operate these facilities.’ ‘It is one of the great acts of American generosity and charity, what we are doing for these unaccompanied kids who are smuggled into our country or come across illegally,’ Azar added.” [CNN, [7/10/18](#)]

Azar Was Tapped For HHS As A “Fixer” After Sec. Nielsen’s “Highly Criticized Press Conference.” “Azar — an even-keeled technocrat whom the White House enlisted as the fixer after Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen’s highly criticized press conference last month — has since been attacked by dozens of lawmakers, interrupted by protesters and pilloried on cable TV. Meanwhile, he’s working through a thicket of court orders and red tape to try to reunite thousands of migrant children in his custody with their parents, including 102 under the age of 5. It’s sapped Azar’s time and pulled his agency away from other priorities, such as lowering drug costs and helping solve the opioid epidemic... While making some progress on a tight court-ordered deadline, HHS has already fallen short of the first test. After Azar pledged to reunite all the migrant children under age 5 with their parents, HHS said as many as 64 won’t be moved by a Tuesday deadline.” [POLITICO, [7/11/18](#)]

Azar Refused Request To Testify Before Congress On Family Separation Policy. “Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declined a request to testify on the Trump administration's policy of separating migrant families at the border, angering House Democrats who accused the administration of stonewalling their investigation into the controversial practice. House Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), who announced earlier this month plans to hold a hearing on the administration's separation policy, had asked Azar to testify, a committee spokesperson told POLITICO. Azar's office declined the request Tuesday afternoon, the spokesperson said.” [POLITICO, [1/22/19](#)]

HHS Documents Showed “Thousands” Of Allegations Of Sexual Abuse Against Migrant Youths In U.S. Custody. “Thousands of allegations of sexual abuse against unaccompanied minors (UAC) in the custody of the U.S. government have been reported over the past 4 years, according to Department of Health and Human Services documents given to Axios by Rep. Ted Deutch's office... From October 2014 to July 2018, the HHS' Office of Refugee Resettlement received 4,556 complaints, and the Department of Justice received 1,303 complaints. This includes 178 allegations of sexual abuse by adult staff.” [Axios, [2/26/19](#)]

Matthew Bassett - HHS Assistant Secretary for Legislation

Bassett Claimed Congressional Visits To Detention Facilities Could Slow Family Reunification Efforts. “The Department of Health and Human Services is suggesting that arrangements necessary to accommodate members of Congress who want to visit holding facilities at the border could drain resources that would otherwise be used to reunite immigrant families that were separated. In a letter dated Monday to the House and Senate chairmen of the judiciary committees, HHS Assistant Secretary for Legislation Matthew Bassett wrote that an uptick in congressional interest in the facilities has ‘created resource constraints that are threatening to impact (the Office of Refugee Resettlement's) ability to quickly reunite the children in our care with a parent or safely place them with a sponsor.’” [CNN, [7/6/18](#)]

Rachel Brand - Former U.S. Associate Attorney General

(May 2017 – Feb 2018)

Brand Served As Justice Department’s Third-Ranking Official, Departed For Walmart In February 2018. “Rachel Brand, the Justice Department's third-ranking official, is stepping down to take a job in the private sector... Walmart said in a statement that Brand would serve as executive vice president, global governance and corporate secretary and that she will report to President and CEO Doug McMillon.” [NBC News, [2/9/18](#)]

Sen. Jeff Flake Raised Issue Of “Operation Streamline” Zero Tolerance Border Policy During Brand’s Confirmation Hearing. The office of Sen. Jeff Flake posted a video of Flake’s questions to Brand and Rod Rosenstein during their confirmation hearings dealing asking if they planned to restore a “zero tolerance” to border crossings as under Operation Streamline in previous administrations. Though in the exchange itself only Rosenstein dealt with the question, Flake’s press release noted that he was pleased the Attorney General’s “senior leadership team have expressed a commitment to work with me to cut down on illegal border crossings.” [Flake Release, [3/8/17](#); YouTube, [3/7/17](#)]

Zero Tolerance Policy Was Modeled After Operation Streamline. “Republican and Democratic presidents have struggled with illegal immigration. But the Trump administration is the first to enforce a ‘zero tolerance’ policy that has separated about 2,000 children from their parents in the past several weeks... What developed into the Trump administration's current approach is modeled after Operation Streamline, a program started by the Bush administration in 2005. That program referred all illegal

immigrants for prosecution, but made exceptions for adults traveling with children. The Obama administration then used that model as well, but detained families together in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody.” [CBS, [6/18/18](#)]

Jeff Sessions Praised Brand As The “Kind Of Quality And Leadership That We Want.” “JEFF SESSIONS, U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL: Rod's had 27 years in the department. Rachel's had a number of years in the department previously. And so, they both represent the kind of quality and leadership that we want in the department.” [CNN, 2/3/18]

Joseph Edlow - Deputy Attorney General, DOJ

September 2018: Edlow Testified He Couldn't Answer If Abuse At Child Detention Facilities Was A Federal Crime. “Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, a North Dakota Democrat, focused on reports of sexual assault and abuse at child detention facilities, asking each agency's official whose responsibility it was to investigate those allegations. The representatives from ICE and the Justice Department demurred. Asked if it would be a federal crime in that it happened in a federal facility, acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Joseph Edlow said he couldn't answer that. Edlow said that in general he deferred to the Department of Homeland Security and HHS on allegations of abuse... Heitkamp called it ‘disturbing’ that the Justice Department couldn't even weigh in on whether it was a federal crime.” [CNN, [9/18/18](#)]

Edlow Urged Congress To Amend Flores Agreement Limiting Detention Time Of Migrant Children. “Trump administration officials told a Senate panel on Tuesday that a decades-old court ruling that limits the length of time migrant children can be detained hampers the government's ability to stem illegal immigration, and needs to be amended by Congress. The officials, from the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department, said the 1997 consent decree known as the Flores agreement had encouraged hundreds of thousands of migrants to illegally cross the southwestern border with their children, knowing that they will not be detained if they are traveling with minors... Joseph Edlow, an acting deputy assistant attorney general, said modifying the court agreement would ‘cut off one of the pull-factors’ for migrants coming to the United States from Central American countries.” [New York Times, [9/18/18](#)]

Gene Hamilton - DOJ, Counselor to Attorney General

(Oct 2017 - ?)

Senior Counselor to DHS Secretary (Jan 2017 - Oct 2017)

Government Official Described Hamilton As Member Of “Cabal Of Anti-Immigration Guys” Behind Zero Tolerance Push With Stephen Miller. “The family-separation policy raised questions about Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which is responsible for the treatment of parents in detention, and the Department of Health and Human Services, which is tasked with caring for the separated children. But, a former government official told me, the prime movers behind zero tolerance were members of a ‘cabal of anti-immigration guys’ at the White House, the D.H.S., and the Department of Justice. Stephen Miller and a Justice Department adviser named Gene Hamilton led the discussion, the

former official said. ‘They want to have a different America, and they’re succeeding. Now they’re doubling down—they’re making another run at lowering the number of refugees who are admitted to the United States.’” [New Yorker, [8/22/18](#)]

Hamilton A Former Jeff Sessions Aide, Led August 2017 DHS Discussions On Toughening Immigration Enforcement. “[I]n August, 2017, a group of officials at the Department of Homeland Security gathered to brainstorm new ways to toughen immigration enforcement. Among those leading the discussion was an official named Gene Hamilton, a former aide to Jeff Sessions, the Attorney General, and a close ally of Stephen Miller, the President’s chief immigration adviser. ‘Hamilton told us that over the next few days we’d need to generate paperwork laying out everything we could do to deter immigrants from coming to the U.S. illegally,’ a person who attended the meeting told me. Memos were drafted outlining a range of possible policies; one of them was separating parents from their kids at the border. ‘All the memos sucked,’ the person said. ‘The outcome was predetermined. We didn’t have time to work out any of the policy differences. Some of the ideas didn’t make sense. Some were illegal, and some, like separating kids, were just immoral.’ Many of the proposals, including the one involving family separation, ‘got bogged down in the clearance process, because of how difficult and controversial it was,’ the person said. And yet every few months the idea would resurface in discussions. ‘It would rear its head again.’” [New Yorker, [5/30/18](#)]

Eric Hargan - Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services

(Oct 2017 – present)

Acting Secretary of Health and Human Services (Oct 2017 – Jan 2018)

Hargan Called Reports HHS Had Lost 1,500 Children False, Just “Cannot Be Reached.” “A top official at the US Department of Health and Human Services on Monday called reports that the agency has lost nearly 1,500 immigrant children false and misleading. The children are not lost, HHS Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan said in a statement. Their sponsors simply have not responded to follow-up calls from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the HHS department that oversees the care of unaccompanied alien or minor children... ‘This is a classic example of the adage ‘No good deed goes unpunished,’ he said, offering a possible explanation. ‘While there are many possible reasons for this, in many cases sponsors cannot be reached because they themselves are illegal aliens and do not want to be reached by federal authorities,’ he continued.” [CNN, [5/29/18](#)]

Jonathan Hayes - Office of Refugee Resettlement, HHS

Hayes Replaced Scott Lloyd As Interim Director Of Office Of Refugee Resettlement. “Scott Lloyd, the anti-abortion crusader who headed the Office of Refugee Resettlement during the Trump administration’s monthlong experiment with family separations at the border, will no longer serve in that role. Instead, he will work at Department of Health and Human Services’ Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives, as first reported Monday by the Daily Caller. ORR’s current chief of staff Jonathan Hayes will serve as interim director, according to an agency statement.” [Huffington Post, [11/19/18](#)]

Hayes Accused Rep. Ted Deutch Of Lying About Migrant Child Abuse Claims. “The Department of Health and Human Services received more than 4,500 complaints of sexual abuse against unaccompanied minors from 2014-2018, according to internal agency documents released Tuesday by Florida Democratic Rep. Ted Deutch... ‘I am deeply concerned with documents that have been turned over by HHS that record a high number of sexual assaults on unaccompanied children in the custody of the Office of Refugee and Resettlement,’ Deutch said. ‘Together, these documents detail an environment of systemic sexual assaults by staff on unaccompanied children.’ Jonathan Hayes, acting director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, accused Deutch of lying in a statement Thursday night. ‘Congressman Deutch mischaracterized data on allegations of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or inappropriate sexual behavior made by minors at care facilities operated by HHS grantees. He even went so far as to level the unfounded assertion that members of the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) federal staff were the subjects of sexual abuse allegations. This was totally false,’ Hayes said.” [CNN, [2/26/19](#)]

Hayes Defended For-Profit Detention Center In South Florida. “Thousands of migrant children continue to arrive at the Southern border every month, without their parents, to ask for asylum. The government sends many of them to an emergency intake shelter in South Florida. That facility has come under intense scrutiny because it's the only child shelter for immigrants that's run by a for-profit corporation and the only one that isn't overseen by state regulators. The Homestead ‘temporary influx facility’ is the biggest and most controversial shelter for migrant children in the country... Jonathan Hayes is the acting director and chief of staff of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which oversees the shelter network. ‘At times due to just migration patterns,’ he explains, ‘there is a need to have temporary influx shelters such as Homestead. I'd rather have capacity available and not need it, than to need it and not have it.’” [WLRN, [2/13/19](#)]

Lynn A. Johnson - Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Family Support

(Sep 2018 – present)

Sen. Ron Wyden Opposed Johnson’s Confirmation Over Past Work Running Colorado Child Welfare Program He Said “Green-Lighted A Law Allowing Foster Kids To Be Placed In Juvenile Detention Facilities.” “A Senate committee has narrowly approved the nomination of Lynn Johnson as assistant Health and Human Services secretary for family support despite protest by the panel's senior Democrat. The position includes heading the agency that has custody over the children being held near the U.S.-Mexico border who were separated from parents seeking asylum... Earlier Thursday, Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden said he would vote against the Trump nominee. Wyden said at a Finance Committee hearing that Johnson, who headed Colorado's child welfare program, ‘green-lighted a law allowing foster kids to be placed in juvenile detention facilities.’” [Associated Press, [6/29/18](#)]

HHS Offered Johnson To Testify Before Congress Instead Of Secretary Azar. “Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declined a request to testify on the Trump administration's policy of separating migrant families at the border, angering House Democrats who accused the administration of stonewalling their investigation into the controversial practice... An HHS official said the department

offered other Trump appointees to testify, including the top two officials involved in providing care to the children: Lynn Johnson, the assistant secretary overseeing the children and families program, and Jonathan Hayes, who leads the refugee office. The committee rejected those offers. Both Johnson and Hayes joined the health department after President Donald Trump announced an end to the family separations policy in June 2018 amid public outcry.” [POLITICO, [1/22/19](#)]

Kathy Kraninger - Former Associate Director for Government Programs, Office of Management and Budget

(March 2017 – Dec 2018)

Director of Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Sen. Elizabeth Warren Questioned Kraninger Over Involvement In Family Separation Policy During Kraninger’s CFPB Confirmation Hearing. “During Kathy Kraninger’s Senate confirmation hearing Thursday, Warren asked about how Kraninger was involved in the administration’s ‘zero tolerance’ border policy that led to the separation of more than 2,000 immigrant children from their parents in recent months. Kraninger’s portfolio as the associate director for government programs at the White House’s Office Management and Budget includes oversight of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice, the agencies that carried out the policy... The exchange grew heated, and Warren became visibly angry.” [Vox, [7/19/18](#)]

Kraninger Involvement In Separation Policy “Unclear” Beyond Participation In A “Few Meetings,” Despite Her Position Requiring Her To Give Policy Guidance. “Kraninger would only say that she had nothing to do with setting the policy and that she only participated in a few meetings about it. She wouldn’t even condemn the practice of separating children, which nearly every Republican in Congress has done... It’s still unclear how involved Kraninger was in designing and implementing the policies that led to family separation. Traditionally, the Office of Management and Budget works closely with the executive branch — but the Trump White House doesn’t always follow a traditional playbook, and she hasn’t said much about her role. Still, she definitely had some role. After all, her job is to give policy guidance and move around resources around to carry out those policies.” [Vox, [7/19/18](#)]

Kraninger: “I Don’t Think It’s Appropriate For Me To Get Into The Details Of My Advice” To Agencies. “At her hearing, Kraninger declined to answer questions about the specifics of her roles in those policies. ‘I don’t think it’s appropriate for me to get into the details of my advice’ to agencies, she said.” [NPR, [12/6/18](#)]

Kraninger Refused To Condemn Practice Of Separating Children. “A second drama played Thursday out when Kraninger wouldn’t say that it was wrong to separate families — something that even Trump’s allies in Congress have done (though they say the president wasn’t to blame)... ‘It’s a simple yes-or-no question,’ Warren interrupted, growing more agitated. ‘Do you believe it is immoral to set up a plan whose deliberate intent is to inflict harm on children?’ ‘Senator, it’s not appropriate for me to provide my personal opinion and internal deliberations and discussions on this matter,’ Kraninger answered.” [Vox, [7/19/18](#)]

Kraninger Met With “Multiple Officials” From DHS, ICE, and Citizenship And Immigration Services In Months Before Zero Tolerance Announcement, Assistant Alexandra Marten Met With Private Prison Operator GEO Group. “Public records show that Kraninger and her assistant, Alexandra Marten, in the months leading up to the announcement of the Trump administration’s zero tolerance policy met with multiple officials from DHS, US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and US Citizenship and Immigration Services. Marten also met with an executive from the Geo Group, a private prison operator that has profited from Trump’s immigration policies. It’s not clear what topics were discussed in those meetings. That they took place isn’t atypical or necessarily nefarious. Kraninger’s job is to meet with various stakeholders under her umbrella at OMB.” [Vox, [6/27/18](#)]

Under Typical OMB Structure, Kraninger “Would Have, Presumably, Played Some Sort Of A Role In The Zero Tolerance Policy, Or At Least Seen What Was Going On.” “As associate director of general government programs at OMB, Kraninger would have, presumably, played some sort of a role in the zero tolerance policy, or at least seen what was going on, if the OMB is running as it has under other administrations. People in her position at the OMB are typically in constant contact about budget and policy issues in their arenas, and since her area specifically is to oversee the Justice and Homeland Security Departments, among others, she would have been aware of what was happening. She would have been involved in discussions about getting extra immigration judges in place, how the zero tolerance policy would roll out, where detained immigrants would be kept, etc... It’s not clear, though, whether the OMB is functioning in the way it typically has. The Trump administration is often rife with chaos.” [Vox, [6/27/18](#)]

Scott Lloyd - Former Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement

Reassigned to senior adviser position in HHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

February 2019: Lloyd Testified He Never Passed Along Warnings Family Separation Could Have Damaging Health Effects On Children. “The Trump administration's former refugee director Tuesday told Congress he never passed along warnings to higher-ups that separating migrant families at the border could have long-lasting damaging health effects on children. Scott Lloyd, during his first congressional testimony since the controversy over family separations blew up last summer, said he never relayed health concerns a career official raised to him long before the Trump administration began separating thousands of kids at the border.” [POLITICO, [2/26/19](#)]

Lloyd Was Named By Career HHS Official At One Of The Trump Appointees He Had Warned About Health Risks Of Separating Migrant Children, Over A Year Before Policy Was Announced. “Jonathan White, a career civil servant who helped lead efforts to reunify thousands of separated families, told a congressional oversight panel he first learned in February 2017 the administration was considering separating migrant families. He said he quickly encouraged the Department of Health and Human Services officials to intervene to stop the policy, but he said they told him the administration would not implement the policy — though it would later be formally announced in May 2018 before being scrapped amid public uproar about six weeks later... White, the career HHS official, said he had raised concerns to Scott Lloyd, then-director of the HHS refugee office; Steven Wagner, then-acting assistant secretary for children and families; and counselor Maggie Wynne.” [POLITICO, [2/7/19](#)]

Lloyd Led HHS Refugee Office As It Took Custody Of Separated Children, Was Removed From Position During Uproar. “Scott Lloyd, who led the HHS refugee office last year as it took custody of thousands of migrant kids separated from their families, will face a grilling on Tuesday before the House Judiciary Committee — one of four panels escalating probes into family separations. The hearing with Lloyd, a top target of the House Democrats’ sprawling investigation, could foreshadow his possible departure from the Trump administration amid dwindling internal support... Lloyd’s testimony, which Democrats had sought for months, comes at a tenuous time for him. HHS Secretary Alex Azar and other officials lost faith in Lloyd last summer as his office struggled to reunite migrant families, and Lloyd was effectively removed from leading the refugee office in the midst of the crisis. In November, he was formally transferred to the HHS office for faith initiatives.” [POLITICO, [2/26/19](#)]

Lloyd “Dissuaded Staff Efforts To Track Separated Families.” “Lloyd, who didn’t have previous experience overseeing care for migrants, took steps that health department officials said slowed reunification efforts. Lloyd dissuaded staff efforts to track separated families, three individuals with knowledge told POLITICO. After a federal judge in June ordered that the families be promptly reunified, Lloyd struggled to direct the effort, personally aggravating Azar and leading to Lloyd’s effective removal for the duration of the crisis, five individuals with knowledge said.” [POLITICO, [2/26/19](#)]

Lloyd “Personally Intervened To Try To Persuade Unaccompanied Minor Girls Not To Have Abortions.” “Long before he became the head of a federal office for resettling refugees, E. Scott Lloyd built a career as a champion of religious values, holding strong antiabortion views that have now thrust him into the center of a national controversy... the Trump appointee played a prominent role in impeding a detained undocumented teenager from obtaining an abortion, prompting a lawsuit in federal court... Lloyd has personally intervened to try to persuade unaccompanied minor girls not to have abortions, according to an HHS official.” [Washington Post, [10/26/17](#)]

Lloyd Denied Personally Visiting Girls In Custody, Apparently Contradicting Emails He Had Sent Regarding Trip To Texas Shelter. “Lloyd denied that he’d personally visited any teenage girls in his office’s custody to discourage them from obtaining an abortion. However, that claim appears to contradict emails Lloyd sent, which were obtained in an ACLU lawsuit that’s still pending. For instance, in a March 2017 email, Lloyd described a trip to a Texas shelter and referenced his conversation with one pregnant teenager. ‘As I’ve said, often these girls start to regret abortion,’ Lloyd wrote to colleagues.” [POLITICO, [2/26/19](#)]

Huffington Post: Lloyd Was “Single Trump Appointee... Responsible For Keeping Hundreds Of Kids Locked Up Longer.” “A Trump appointee’s decision to personally review requests to release migrant children from jail-like ‘secure facilities’ created a bureaucratic bottleneck that dramatically increased the amount of time kids spent locked up. Office of Refugee Resettlement chief E. Scott Lloyd — who first attracted national interest when a federal court slapped down his attempt to ban a teenage migrant who’d been raped from obtaining an abortion — told subordinates last year that he’d have to personally sign off before any kids could be released from ORR’s secure facilities. As a result, hundreds of kids spent extra time in the jail-like facilities, which have been associated with far more allegations of

abuse and mistreatment than the shelters and homestays that hold most of the children in ORR custody.” [Huffington Post, [7/27/18](#)]

Kevin McAleenan - Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection

(Jan 2017 – present)

April 2018: McAleenan Signed Memo To DHS Secretary Urging Detention And Prosecution Of Parents Crossing Border With Children. “The nation’s top immigration and border officials are urging Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen to detain and prosecute all parents caught crossing the Mexican border illegally with their children, a stark change in policy that would result in the separation of families that until now have mostly been kept together. If approved, the zero-tolerance measure could split up thousands of families... In a memorandum that outlines the proposal and was obtained by The Washington Post, officials say that threatening adults with criminal charges and prison time would be the ‘most effective’ way to reverse the steadily rising number of attempted crossings. Most parents now caught crossing the border illegally with their children are quickly released to await civil deportation hearings. The memo sent to Nielsen on Monday — and signed by acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Thomas Homan, Director of Citizenship and Immigration Services L. Francis Cissna and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin K. McAleenan — said attempted crossings by parents with children increased to nearly 700 a day last week, the highest level since 2016. The officials predicted that the number will continue to rise if Nielsen does not act.” [Washington Post, [4/26/18](#)]

McAleenan Did Not Express Regrets On How Family Separation Policy Was Implemented. In an August 2018 interview with the New York Times, McAleenan was asked if he had any “regrets” about how the family separation policy was implemented. McAleenan answered “I think we have a responsibility to protect families and children. In 2014, when we first started seeing significant arrivals of family units, about 14 percent of our total traffic that year was family units. This year it’s 25 percent... I think the executive order was an important recalibration. Well-intended efforts to enforce the law are not going to succeed if they lose the public trust.” [New York Times, [8/7/18](#)]

James McHenry - Director of DOJ Office of Immigration Review

McHenry Blamed Sessions Memo For Family Separation Policy. “As the President Donald Trump's administration struggles to contain the fallout from its ‘zero tolerance’ policy that saw thousands of children separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border, many have asked one simple question: Who is to blame? On Tuesday, Democrats received a definitive answer during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on migrant family reunification, with top Trump immigration officials putting the blame squarely on the shoulders of Attorney General Jeff Sessions... McHenry told the Democratic senator: ‘The zero tolerance prosecution policy, the memorandum, was issued by the Attorney General on April 6, 2018.’ [Newsweek, [8/1/18](#)]

September 2019: McHenry Testified He Had Not Raised Objections To Child Separation Policy.

“ICE head of Enforcement and Removal Operations Nathalie Asher and DOJ Director of Executive Office for Immigration Review James McHenry also told lawmakers that they did not raise objections to the [family separation] policy when pressed by Rep. Sylvia Garcia.” [CNN, [2/26/19](#)]

Stephen Miller - Senior Advisor to the Present

(Jan 2017 – present)

Miller “Instrumental” In Ramping Up Family Separation Policy. “[F]or George W. Bush and Barack Obama, the idea of crying children torn from their parents’ arms was simply too inhumane — and too politically perilous — to embrace as policy, and Mr. Trump, though he had made an immigration crackdown one of the central issues of his campaign, succumbed to the same reality, publicly dropping the idea after Mr. Kelly’s comments touched off a swift backlash. But advocates inside the administration, most prominently Stephen Miller, Mr. Trump’s senior policy adviser, never gave up on the idea. Last month, facing a sharp uptick in illegal border crossings, Mr. Trump ordered a new effort to criminally prosecute anyone who crossed the border unlawfully — with few exceptions for parents traveling with their minor children... in April, after the border numbers reached their zenith, Mr. Miller was instrumental in Mr. Trump’s decision to ratchet up the zero tolerance policy.” [New York Times, [6/16/18](#)]

Miller Played “Crucial” Role In Implementing Family Separation Policy, Along With Jeff Sessions, John Kelly. “It was an idea conceived by senior immigration enforcement officials and U.S. border agents who had confronted the migrant crisis of 2014. By ramping up criminal prosecutions and separating families who entered the country illegally, they said, the government could stop the influx. Their idea went to top Obama administration officials at the White House and the Department of Homeland Security. Then it went into a drawer, like a blueprint for a weapon too terrible to use... It took the alignment of four distinct personalities to dust off the idea and turn it into a legal, operational and message-driven system for family separation at the border. President Trump, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, White House senior policy adviser Stephen Miller and White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly played crucial roles in resurrecting the proposal and making it actionable.” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

Miller “The Architect Behind Trump’s Immigration Policies.” “Nearly ever present by the President’s side, perhaps no one is more responsible for the Trump agenda than Stephen Miller. President Donald Trump on Thursday signed an executive order aimed at keeping families together at the border, but not before several days of public outcry over the administration’s “zero-tolerance” immigration policy that had resulted in thousands of undocumented children separated from their families at the border. Some of the Trump administration’s most controversial and chaos-inducing policies can be traced back to Miller, including the travel ban and the firing of former FBI director James Comey. And the latest immigration debacle is no different.” [CNN, [6/23/18](#)]

The Atlantic Headline: “The Outrage Over Family Separation Is Exactly What Stephen Miller Wants.” “Miller’s hardline approach to immigration predates his work for Trump. In 2013, as an aide to then-Senator Jeff Sessions, Miller made his name on Capitol Hill fighting ferociously against a bipartisan

immigration-reform bill alongside populist-right media allies like Breitbart News. The effort to sink the legislation prevailed, and his credentials as a true-believing ideologue were secure. He is, by all accounts, an avowed restrictionist, and he likely believes that separating children from their parents at the border will deter future illegal immigration. But when we talked, Miller also made it clear to me that he sees immigration as a winning political issue for his boss.” [McKay Coppins, The Atlantic, [6/19/18](#)]

October 2018: Miller Believed Family Separations “Worked As An Effective Deterrent,” Pushed For Renewed Effort. “The White House is actively considering plans that could again separate parents and children at the U.S.-Mexico border, hoping to reverse soaring numbers of families attempting to cross illegally into the United States, according to several administration officials with direct knowledge of the effort... officials say senior White House adviser Stephen Miller is advocating for tougher measures because he believes the springtime separations worked as an effective deterrent to illegal crossings... While some inside the White House and DHS are concerned about the ‘optics’ and political blowback of renewed separations, Miller and others are determined to act, according to officials briefed on the deliberations.” [Washington Post, [10/12/18](#)]

Miller Insisted Separation Policy Was Supported By Public. “As the furor over the separations intensifies, Kirstjen Nielsen, Kelly’s handpicked choice to succeed him as homeland security secretary, has stepped forward to defend the policies, along with Miller, who insists that Trump’s crackdown still enjoys broad support despite polling that indicates two-thirds of Americans want the practice to stop.” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

Kirstjen Nielsen - Secretary of Homeland Security

(Dec 2017 – present)

White House Deputy Chief of Staff (Sep 2017 – Dec 2017)

Chief of Staff to Secretary of Homeland Security (Jan 2017 – Jul 2017)

Nielsen John Kelly’s “Proégée,” “Handpicked Successor” At DHS. “President Trump caved to enormous political pressure on Wednesday and signed an executive order meant to end the separation of families at the border by detaining parents and children together for an indefinite period... The president’s chief of staff, John F. Kelly, did not voice major objections, according to a White House official. The move also helped alleviate pressure on Kirstjen Nielsen, Mr. Kelly’s protégée and handpicked successor at the Department of Homeland Security.” [New York Times, [6/20/18](#)]

Trump Had Singled Out Nielsen For Blame On Increased Border Crossings In Spring 2018. “When illegal crossings along the Mexico border jumped this spring to their highest levels since Trump took office, the president fumed, reportedly telling aides, ‘This can’t happen on my watch.’ He singled out Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen for blame.” [Washington Post, [7/28/18](#)]

June 2018: Nielsen Offered “Forceful Defense” Of Family Separation Policy, “Erroneously” Insisted It Was Not New. “Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen on Monday effectively became the public face of the Trump administration’s ‘zero tolerance’ strategy that has separated more than 2,000 immigrant children from their families over six weeks, offering a forceful defense of the practice while

erroneously insisting that it was not the result of a new policy. Pressed into service amid a maelstrom of bipartisan criticism, Nielsen addressed reporters at the White House's daily briefing in an attempt to quell the mounting outrage over images of children crying after being taken away from their parents by Border Patrol agents at the southern border. Yet Nielsen's response, which at times contradicted itself, offered evidence that the administration — and perhaps Nielsen herself — was still struggling to formulate a message to counter critics who have accused the Trump White House of creating a humanitarian disaster." [Washington Post, [6/18/18](#)]

Nielsen: "We Will Not Apologize For Doing Our Job." "Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen on Monday defended her department's policies amid increasingly intense scrutiny over separating children from adults accused of illegally crossing the border. Nielsen, in a speech to the National Sheriffs' Association in New Orleans, said the children are provided food, medical attention, education and anything else they might need. 'We have to do our job. We will not apologize for doing our job,' she said. 'This administration has a simple message — If you cross the border illegally, we will prosecute you.'" [USA Today, [6/18/18](#)]

Former Homeland Security Advisory Council Member Elizabeth Holzman Urged Nielsen To Quit In Her Resignation Letter, Calling Family Separation Implementation "Child Kidnapping, Plain And Simple." "On June 28, two days after [Judge Dana] Sabraw's reunification order, DHS officials held a conference call for members of the DHS's Homeland Security Advisory Council, a group of security experts and former officials who provide recommendations and counsel to the secretary. One member, David A. Martin, said officials had few answers when dismayed members asked how they planned to bring families back together: 'They were saying, 'Well, we're working on it.' ' Two weeks later, he and three other members quit the panel in disgust... Another member who resigned, Elizabeth Holtzman, said the failure to create records to track parents and children demonstrated 'utter depravity.' 'This is child kidnapping, plain and simple,' she wrote in her resignation letter, urging Nielsen to quit." [Washington Post, [7/28/18](#)]

Memo Showed Nielson "Signed Off" On Policy "Knowing It Would Lead To Family Separations," Contradicting Her Claims There Was No Such Policy. "A memo signed by Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen contradicts statements she made at the height of the family separation crisis last spring that the administration did not have a policy of separating children from parents. Nielsen signed off on the option to prosecute all adults who crossed the border illegally, including those with kids, knowing it would lead to family separations. The administration's 'zero tolerance' policy, which sought to prosecute every adult caught crossing the border illegally, resulted in thousands of families being separated, with some parents being deported without their children." [BuzzFeed, [9/27/18](#)]

Carla Provost - Chief of U.S. Border Patrol

(April 2017 – present)

Provost Was Named Border Patrol Chief In August 2018, Had Previously Been Acting Chief. "Carla Provost, who served as acting chief of the Border Patrol for more than a year, on Thursday was named the first woman to lead the agency as chief in its 94-year history. Provost, a former police officer in Kansas,

joined the agency 23 years ago as an agent in Douglas, Ariz., rising through the ranks to become a supervisor in Yuma and El Paso.” [Los Angeles Times, [8/9/18](#)]

Provost Claimed Family Separations Began Long Before Trump Administration. “Newly appointed Customs and Border Protection chief Carla Provost, in an interview that aired on Friday, defended separating families that illegally crossed the border by saying the practice has been in place since long before President Trump took office. ‘Under all four administrations I have worked under, we have separated families for different reasons,’ Provost told Hill.TV’s Buck Sexton on Wednesday on ‘Rising.’” [The Hill, [8/10/18](#)]

Provost: “At No Time Was The Policy Of The Border Patrol... To Separate Families,” Separation “Occurred Only As A Result Of Prosecution.” In an interview with the L.A. Times, Provost said, “I want to be clear that at no time was the policy of the Border Patrol or [the Department of Homeland Security] to separate families. The separation of families occurred only as a result of prosecution of a parent for illegally crossing the border. In my experience, I know that when there is a consequence for a crime committed, that the frequency of the crime decreases. Without consequences for breaking the law, people will just continue to break the law. This is why we stress that consequences matter. We are a law enforcement agency, we enforce the law and when we are able to do that, we see decreases in those violating that law.” [Los Angeles Times, [8/9/18](#)]

Provost Supported Border Wall. In an interview with the L.A. Times, Provost said, “We do need a wall. Through my experiences, we know walls work. Where we invested in a wall system — wall, technology, infrastructure and additional agents — we have experienced significant decreases in illegal border-crossers, and it impeded the flow of illicit drugs. The president is committed to border security, and he has set a high bar for us to secure the border. What the men and women on the front lines tell me is, that in order to meet the president’s request, they must have more agents, more wall, more technology and more infrastructure to be successful in our mission.” [Los Angeles Times, [8/9/18](#)]

Washington Post Report Called Border Patrol Files Accompanying Separated Children “A Mess,” Contributing To Confusion At Office Of Refugee Resettlement. “HHS officials said they participated in White House calls and meetings after ‘zero tolerance’ was announced, but they did not address repeated questions about whether the department was involved in planning the policy. The department’s refugee office was overwhelmed with the number of children in its custody once the mass separations began. And the files arriving from the Border Patrol were a mess. In some cases, Border Patrol agents had handwritten parents’ names and alien numbers in children’s files that were sent on to ORR. But it was hit-or-miss, according to several children’s advocates familiar with the records. One HHS official said that files he reviewed typically contained parents’ names but did not say where the parents were.” [Washington Post, [7/28/18](#)]

Judy Stecker - HHS Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs

June 2018: Stecker Evaded Questions Over Whether HHS Was Still Receiving Children Separated From Parents. “Lisa Desjardins, a reporter with PBS NewsHour, asked whether HHS is ‘still receiving

children who are coming into your care because of parental detention' due to an 'implementation phase on the executive order.' 'We can get you that information as soon as possible and we appreciate your patience,' HHS Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Judy Stecker said before attempting to move on. 'Actually, it's really important,' said Desjardins. 'Excuse me. Are you still receiving children who are there because of the parental separation policy?' 'I believe we've answered,' Stecker replied. 'I didn't hear an answer,' Desjardins said. Stecker then called for a 'final question' and someone could be heard on the line expressing shock at Stecker's refusal to offer specifics. 'Oh my god,' the person said." [Yahoo News, [6/26/18](#)]

Jalyn Sualog - Deputy Director of HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement

Sualog Said In Court Filing That Reuniting Thousands Of Migrant Children Separated From Their Parents May Not Be "Within The Realm Of The Possible." "The Trump administration said in a court filing that reuniting thousands of migrant children separated from their parents or guardians at the U.S.-Mexico border may not be 'within the realm of the possible.' The filing late Friday from Jalyn Sualog, deputy director of the department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, was an ordered response in an ACLU lawsuit challenging the government's separation of thousands of children at the border since the summer of 2017. The estimate of 'thousands' comes from the HHS Office of Inspector General's January report and pertains to children separated before the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy came into effect in 2018." [NBC News, [2/2/19](#)]

Sualog Said Office Did Not Have Resources To Track Down Children. "Sualog said her office doesn't have the resources to track down the children, whose numbers could be thousands more than the official estimate. 'Even if performing the analysis Plaintiffs seek were within the realm of the possible, it would substantially imperil ORR's ability to perform its core functions without significant increases in appropriations from Congress, and a rapid, dramatic expansion of the ORR data team,' she said." [NBC News, [2/2/19](#)]

Sualog Argued Minors Could Be Damaged By Taking Them From New Guardians. "Sualog argued that taking minors from their new stateside guardians could be damaging to their psyches. 'ORR would have the authority or resources to forcibly reunify minors who are no longer in ORR custody,' she wrote in the government's response. 'Finally reunification of minors already residing with close relatives, parents or family friends could interfere with the child's routine and currently established relationships.'" [NBC News, [2/2/19](#)]

Ronald Vitiello - Acting Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Vitiello Refused To Rule Out Future Family Separations. "Ronald D. Vitiello, a veteran law enforcement official tapped by President Trump to run U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, faced criticism at his Senate confirmation hearing Thursday for refusing to rule out the possibility that the Trump administration could resort again to separating migrant parents and children at the U.S.-Mexico border... Vitiello said that, for now, the president has ordered U.S. immigration officials to keep families

together, but he said that detaining them all — or giving them the option to split up — could deter rising numbers of families seeking refuge at the Mexican border, including a caravan of mostly Hondurans that has infuriated the president.” [Washington Post, [11/15/18](#)]

Vitiello In August 2018: “We Supported What The President Did.” Asked in an August 2018 interview with Neil Cavuto if he supported the family separation policy, Vitiello said, “We supported what the president did, which was re-calibrate where we were.” [Fox News, [8/20/18](#)]

Vitiello Did Not Say Whether He Agreed With Pediatricians That Long-Term Detention Was Harmful To Minors. “Senator Maggie Hassan, Democrat of New Hampshire, pressed Mr. Vitiello on the detention of migrant children, asking if he agreed with a report by the American Academy of Pediatrics that found that long-term detention physically and emotionally harmed minors. ‘Do you agree with pediatricians?’ Ms. Hassan said. ‘Do you accept that long-term detention of children is detrimental?’ ‘I understand the report, yes,’ answered Mr. Vitiello, who was the acting deputy commissioner of Customs and Border Protection when the zero-tolerance policy was put in place. He did not say whether he agreed with the report’s findings.” [New York Times, [11/15/18](#)]

Vitiello Called Democrats “NeoKlanist” Party In 2015 Tweet. “Vitiello was questioned by Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., about a tweet Vitiello sent from a personal account in 2015. It was in reply to a message to conservative talk show host Mark Levin asking for new names for the Democratic party. Vitiello responded: ‘liberalcratic party or the NeoKlanist party.’ He told senators it was wrong to send it, though he added he thought he was sending a direct message, not a public tweet. ‘It’s important and I understand the gravity, it was meant as a joke I wasn’t trying to do anything other than make a joke. I regret it,’ he said.” [Associated Press, [11/15/18](#)]

Steven Wagner - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration for Children and Families, HHS

Former Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration for Children and Families, HHS

Wagner Disclosed HHS Could Not Account For 1,500 Migrant Children Placed With Sponsors.

“The federal government has placed thousands of unaccompanied immigrant children in the homes of sponsors, but last year it couldn’t account for nearly 1,500 of them. Steven Wagner, a top official with the Department of Health and Human Services, disclosed the number to a Senate subcommittee last month while discussing the state of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) that oversees the care of unaccompanied immigrant children.” [CNN, [5/28/18](#)]

Wagner Said Agency Was Not “Legally Responsible” For Children After Release From Custody.

“That’s more than 19% of the children that were placed by the ORR. But Wagner said HHS is not responsible for the children. ‘I understand that it has been HHS’s long-standing interpretation of the law that ORR is not legally responsible for children after they are released from ORR care,’ Wagner said. The office is ‘taking a fresh look at that question,’ he added.” [CNN, [5/28/18](#)]

Wagner Was Named By Career HHS Official At One Of The Trump Appointees He Had Warned About Health Risks Of Separating Migrant Children, Over A Year Before Policy Was Announced.

“Jonathan White, a career civil servant who helped lead efforts to reunify thousands of separated families, told a congressional oversight panel he first learned in February 2017 the administration was considering separating migrant families. He said he quickly encouraged the Department of Health and Human Services officials to intervene to stop the policy, but he said they told him the administration would not implement the policy — though it would later be formally announced in May 2018 before being scrapped amid public uproar about six weeks later... White, the career HHS official, said he had raised concerns to Scott Lloyd, then-director of the HHS refugee office; Steven Wagner, then-acting assistant secretary for children and families; and counselor Maggie Wynne.” [POLITICO, [2/7/19](#)]

Wagner Said Separation Policy Would Have “Deterrence Effect.” “A top Trump administration official confirmed Tuesday that family separations at the U.S.-Mexico border will serve to deter future illegal immigration. ‘We expect the new policy will result in a deterrence effect,’ said Steven Wagner, who is in charge of care centers for undocumented minors in federal care as the acting assistant secretary of the Administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The comment follows an exchange at the White House press briefing with Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen on Monday where she appeared to dispute whether the administration considered family separation a deterrent strategy.” [The Hill, [6/19/18](#)]

Maggie Wynne - Counselor for Human Services Policy, HHS

(Mar 2017 – present)

Wynne “Another Official Behind ORR’s Renewed Interest In Abortion Issues,” “Point Person For Any Policy Issue Before It Reaches The Head Of The Entire Department.” “Another official behind O.R.R.’s renewed interest in abortion issues is Margaret Wynne, an H.H.S. veteran who worked under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and who now serves as counsellor for human-services policy at H.H.S. One H.H.S. veteran described Wynne’s job as ‘the main trouble-shooter for all the human-services activities at H.H.S.’ and the point person for any policy issue before it reaches the head of the entire department. Several of Wynne’s former colleagues described her to me as ardently pro-life. Like [Scott] Lloyd, she once worked at the Knights of Columbus, and before joining H.H.S. she served as the director of the House of Representatives Pro-Life Caucus.” [New Yorker, [10/26/17](#)]

Wynne “Worked Closely With Lloyd To Craft ORR’s Policy Of Blocking Abortions Among Migrant Teens.” “Other political appointees sharing Lloyd’s views have helped implement them in HHS’ refugee work. Maggie Wynne, counselor to the HHS secretary, has worked closely with Lloyd to craft ORR’s policy of blocking abortions among migrant teens. Wynne, who first joined HHS during the George W. Bush administration, was formerly the director of the House Pro-Life caucus.” [POLITICO, [6/21/18](#)]

Wynne Was Named By Career HHS Official At One Of The Trump Appointees He Had Warned About Health Risks Of Separating Migrant Children, Over A Year Before Policy Was Announced.

“Jonathan White, a career civil servant who helped lead efforts to reunify thousands of separated families,

told a congressional oversight panel he first learned in February 2017 the administration was considering separating migrant families. He said he quickly encouraged the Department of Health and Human Services officials to intervene to stop the policy, but he said they told him the administration would not implement the policy — though it would later be formally announced in May 2018 before being scrapped amid public uproar about six weeks later... White, the career HHS official, said he had raised concerns to Scott Lloyd, then-director of the HHS refugee office; Steven Wagner, then-acting assistant secretary for children and families; and counselor Maggie Wynne.” [POLITICO, [2/7/19](#)]

Thomas Homan - Former Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement

(Jan 2017 – Jun 2018)

Homan Authored DHS Memo Suggesting Family Separation Policy That Made Its Way To John Kelly. “When [John] Kelly took over the agency as Trump’s first homeland security secretary, he began looking for policy options to prevent a repeat of 2014, when migrant families and underage minors overwhelmed U.S. border agents and stations. One of the initiatives that made its way to Kelly, according to current and former DHS officials, was outlined in a memo written in the aftermath of the 2014 crisis by senior Homeland Security officials, including Thomas Homan. A former Border Patrol agent, Homan is now the soon-to-retire top official at Immigration and Customs Enforcement... The memo was sent to then-Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, according to current and former officials. But their recommendations — including family separations triggered by the misdemeanor offense of entering the United States illegally — were considered excessive.” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

April 2018: Homan Signed Memo To DHS Secretary Urging Detention And Prosecution Of Parents Crossing Border With Children. “The nation’s top immigration and border officials are urging Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen to detain and prosecute all parents caught crossing the Mexican border illegally with their children, a stark change in policy that would result in the separation of families that until now have mostly been kept together. If approved, the zero-tolerance measure could split up thousands of families... In a memorandum that outlines the proposal and was obtained by The Washington Post, officials say that threatening adults with criminal charges and prison time would be the ‘most effective’ way to reverse the steadily rising number of attempted crossings. Most parents now caught crossing the border illegally with their children are quickly released to await civil deportation hearings. The memo sent to Nielsen on Monday — and signed by acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Thomas Homan, Director of Citizenship and Immigration Services L. Francis Cissna and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin K. McAleenan — said attempted crossings by parents with children increased to nearly 700 a day last week, the highest level since 2016. The officials predicted that the number will continue to rise if Nielsen does not act.” [Washington Post, [4/26/18](#)]

Homan Was A “Staunch Defender” Of Trump Immigration Policies. “Thomas Homan, acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), is set to retire this week, bringing his more than 34 years of federal service to an end, the agency has confirmed... Homan has been a staunch defender of the Trump administration's immigration practices, which have sparked widespread outrage across the country and around the world... Homan, who was President Donald Trump's pick to permanently lead

ICE, revealed his plans to step down from the helm of the embattled agency in April, saying he would be resigning by summertime in order to focus on his family.” [Newsweek, [6/26/18](#)]

Homan: Undocumented Immigrants “Should Be Afraid” Under Trump Administration. “President Donald Trump's immigration enforcer doubled down Friday on recent comments that undocumented immigrants ‘should be afraid’ under the Trump administration. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Acting Director Thomas Homan said in an interview that he has “zero regrets” about his remarks before Congress this week, expanding on them. ‘It needed to be said,’ Homan told CNN on the sidelines of a Central American prosperity and security conference.” [CNN, [6/16/17](#)]

Homan, Now Fox News Contributor, Said Trump Was “Doing The Right Thing” In Shutting Down Government Over Border Wall Funding. “Former acting ICE Director Tom Homan on Wednesday blasted House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi for calling a border wall ineffective and accusing President Trump of ‘fear mongering’ with the illegal immigration issue. ‘Every place a wall or barrier has been built, it has resulted in decreased illegal immigration, decreased drug smuggling. One hundred percent of the time, it has proven effective,’ Mr. Homan said on Fox News, where he is a contributor... Mr. Homan, a veteran of the Border Patrol agent and investigator for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said Mr. Trump was ‘doing the right thing’ in shutting down the government in a fight with Democrats over funding a wall or barrier on the border with Mexico.” [Washington Times, [12/26/18](#)]

John Kelly - Former White House Chief of Staff

(Jul 2017 – Jan 2019)

Secretary of Homeland Security (Jan 2017 – Jul 2017)

Kelly And Sessions Played “Crucial Roles” In Resurrecting And Implementing Family Separation Policy. “It was an idea conceived by senior immigration enforcement officials and U.S. border agents who had confronted the migrant crisis of 2014. By ramping up criminal prosecutions and separating families who entered the country illegally, they said, the government could stop the influx. Their idea went to top Obama administration officials at the White House and the Department of Homeland Security. Then it went into a drawer, like a blueprint for a weapon too terrible to use... It took the alignment of four distinct personalities to dust off the idea and turn it into a legal, operational and message-driven system for family separation at the border. President Trump, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, White House senior policy adviser Stephen Miller and White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly played crucial roles in resurrecting the proposal and making it actionable.” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

Kelly Said In March 2017 Family Separation Policy Was Under Consideration. “Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly confirmed that the department is considering separating children from their parents at the border. ‘We have tremendous experience of dealing with unaccompanied minors,’ he told CNN's Wolf Blitzer on ‘The Situation Room.’ ‘We turn them over to (Health and Human Services) and they do a very, very good job of putting them in foster care or linking them up with parents or family members in the United States.’ He continued: ‘Yes I'm considering (that), in order to deter more movement along this terribly dangerous network. I am considering exactly that. They will be well cared

for as we deal with their parents. ... It's more important to me, Wolf, to try to keep people off of this awful network.” [CNN, [3/7/17](#)]

April 2017: Kelly Said Children Would Only Be Separated From Families “If The Child’s Life” Was In Danger Or If Mother Was An Addict. “Kelly, testifying before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs... was also pressed on separating mothers from their children at the border, but said that they would only be separated ‘if the child’s life is in danger’ or if the mother is an addict. Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., asked Kelly whether he would put the policy in writing, but he responded saying a ‘verbal directive’ is enough.” [Fox News, [4/5/17](#)]

John Kelly Continued Defending Child Separation Policy. “President Trump's chief of staff John Kelly defended the technique of separating undocumented immigrants from their children as a necessary evil in the administration's effort to increase border security during an interview with National Public Radio Thursday. Kelly told NPR that ‘the vast majority’ of the immigrants ‘are not bad people.’ ‘They're not criminals. They're not MS-13,’ Kelly said. ‘But they're also not people that would easily assimilate into the United States into our modern society. They're overwhelmingly rural people.’ He said they are poorly educated, don't speak English — ‘obviously that's a big thing’ — and don't have skills, so they ‘don't integrate well.’” [USA Today, [5/11/18](#)]

Jeff Sessions - Former Attorney General

(Feb 2017 – Nov 2018)

April 2018: Attorney General Jeff Sessions Announced “Zero Tolerance Policy For Criminal Illegal Entry.” In April 2018, the Department of Justice announced that “Attorney General Jeff Sessions today notified all U.S. Attorney’s Offices along the Southwest Border of a new ‘zero-tolerance policy’ for offenses under 8 U.S.C. § 1325(a), which prohibits both attempted illegal entry and illegal entry into the United States by an alien... Today’s zero-tolerance policy further directs each U.S. Attorney’s Office along the Southwest Border (i.e., Southern District of California, District of Arizona, District of New Mexico, Western District of Texas, and the Southern District of Texas) to adopt a policy to prosecute all Department of Homeland Security referrals of section 1325(a) violations, to the extent practicable.” [US Department of Justice Release, [4/6/18](#)]

Sessions Had Begun Working On “Legal Implications” Of Family Separation Policy “Soon After He Started At The Justice Department.” “Sessions began working through the plan’s legal implications soon after he started at the Justice Department. In April 2017, he traveled to Nogales, Ariz., and promised to take a stand against violent cartels and gang members, as well as smuggling guides. Sessions directed all federal prosecutors across the country to make immigration cases a higher priority and look for opportunities to bring serious felony charges against anyone crossing the border illegally.” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

Sessions: “If You’re Smuggling A Child, Then We’re Going To Prosecute You, And That Child Will Be Separated From You.” “Sessions’s directive also set the stage for his announcement in May that the Justice Department would begin prosecuting every person who illegally crossed into the United

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States along the Southwest border and that federal prosecutors would ‘take on as many of those cases as humanly possible until we get to 100 percent.’ ‘If you’re smuggling a child, then we’re going to prosecute you, and that child will be separated from you, probably, as required by law,’ Sessions said then. ‘If you don’t want your child separated, then don’t bring them across the border illegally. It’s not our fault that somebody does that.’” [Washington Post, [6/19/18](#)]

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