

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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July 2, 2019

The Honorable Kevin K. McAleenan
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Acting Secretary McAleenan:

I am writing to reiterate in the strongest terms the Committee's request for your voluntary testimony on July 12, 2019, to address the Trump Administration's separation and treatment of immigrant children at the southern border. The Committee first requested your appearance on June 28, 2019.¹ Yesterday, your staff sent a letter requesting a separate panel at the hearing, but suggesting that you may not be able to "accommodate" the July 12 date.²

To address your staff's request on panel structure, the Committee will allow you and Acting Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Mark Morgan to testify on your own panel for this hearing. However, over the past several weeks, there have been a number of troubling revelations, including:

- Reports of unaccompanied children in overcrowded and filthy conditions at Clint, Texas, and other facilities³;
- Racist, sexist, and xenophobic posts by Border Patrol employees⁴; and

¹ Letter from Chairman Elijah E. Cummings, Committee on Oversight and Reform, to Acting Secretary Kevin K. McAleenan, Department of Homeland Security (June 28, 2019) (online at oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2019-06-28.EEC%20to%20McAleenan-DHS%20re%20Witness%20Invite_0.pdf).

² Letter from Christine M. Ciccone, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, to Chairman Elijah E. Cummings, Committee on Oversight and Reform (July 1, 2019) (online at oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/DHS%20Signed%20Response%20to%20Chairman%20Cummings%20%20-%201182739.pdf).

³ *Attorneys: Texas Border Facility is Neglecting Migrant Kids*, Associated Press (June 21, 2019) (online at www.apnews.com/46da2dbe04f54adbb875cfbc06bbc615); *Inside a Texas Building Where the Government is Holding Immigrant Children*, New Yorker (June 22, 2019) (online at www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/inside-a-texas-building-where-the-government-is-holding-immigrant-children).

⁴ *Inside the Secret Border Patrol Facebook Group Where Agents Joke About Migrant Deaths and Post Sexist Memes*, ProPublica (July 1, 2019) (online at www.propublica.org/article/secret-border-patrol-facebook-group).

- A report issued just this morning by the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General on “dangerous overcrowding” and “prolonged detention of children.”⁵

In light of these disturbing developments, the Committee will not postpone its hearing on these matters until a later date. As Acting Secretary, you lead the agency responsible for these actions and these conditions, and your testimony is critical to the Committee’s review.

Please have your office contact our staff at (202) 225-5051 by July 3, 2019, to inform the Committee whether you will appear voluntarily or whether the Committee should consider alternative means to obtain your testimony.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Ranking Member

agents-joke-about-migrant-deaths-post-sexist-memes).

⁵ Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, *Management Alert—DHS Needs to Address Dangerous Overcrowding and Prolonged Detention of Children and Adults in the Rio Grande Valley* (July 2, 2019).