

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

July 31, 2026

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
Chairman
Subcommittee on Border Security and
Immigration
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Chairman Cornyn:

I write to request a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee on the treatment of children and families detained at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas (“Dilley”), operated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contractor CoreCivic. Despite unacceptable efforts by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to prevent much-needed oversight of the facility, my staff observed children in troubling conditions that should concern all Members of this Committee.

Today, I am releasing a *fact sheet* documenting findings and observations from my staff’s visit to Dilley. I have enclosed a copy for your review. My staff visited Dilley as part of an ongoing investigation into medical and mental health care, solitary confinement, and access to counsel in immigration detention. During that visit, in an attempt to curtail oversight, DHS imposed an arbitrary two-hour time limit on visiting the facility. My staff nevertheless spoke to families detained at Dilley, documenting systemic medical neglect, including children who were denied treatment for serious medical conditions and experienced delayed emergency care. Children and their parents described a top-down culture of cruelty among Dilley staff, including guards deliberately disrupting children’s sleep at night, purposely entering rooms without knocking, and taunting children who are often provided with inedible food by eating candy and pizza in front of them. My staff also documented undrinkable water, inadequate education for school-age children, and prolonged detention that in many cases appears to violate the *Flores* Settlement Agreement.¹

We have long shared an interest in protecting children from inhumane treatment. The Senate Judiciary Committee has jurisdiction over the treatment of noncitizens in immigration detention and is the appropriate forum for a bipartisan discussion on how to end the disturbing treatment of families and children at Dilley. When I was Chair of this Committee, I held multiple hearings on the treatment of immigrant children, as requested by Republican Committee members.² Given

¹ *Stipulated Settlement Agreement, Flores v. Reno*, No. CV 85-4544-RJK(Px) (C.D. Cal. Jan. 17, 1997).

² Letter from Chair Durbin to Senator John Cornyn, S. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY (May 4, 2023); *Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of Unaccompanied Children*, S. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118th Congress, (Jun. 14, 2023); *Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of Unaccompanied Children, Part II*, S. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118th Congress, (Oct. 25, 2023).

the reported imminent expansion of family detention,³ and the mounting toll of detention on children and families detained at Dilley, I believe a Committee hearing is warranted.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member

³ Jack Brook, *A New ICE Facility Could Speed up Deportations for Families and Kids*, AP (Jul. 6, 2026), <https://apnews.com/article/ice-new-deportation-facility-louisiana-children-families-02ce99eb592b4e392b5685b11368ca58>; Tom Perkins, *ICE planning facility for children and families on Pfas-contaminated site*, THE GUARDIAN (Apr. 25, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/apr/25/pfas-chemicals-ice-family-detention>.