

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
WHA/CEN Office Director Joe Salazar by
Senator Lindsey O. Graham(No.1, 2, 3 to No.3)
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
October 25, 2023**

Question 1:

What efforts is Department of State making with countries to prevent UAC from making the treacherous journey to the U.S.?

Answer 1:

We work to address the root causes of irregular migration and prioritize messaging through public diplomacy efforts at our embassies in the region, utilizing radio, television, print interviews, market public address systems, and social media. We specifically target messaging campaigns toward families in high out-migration countries, focused on increasing awareness of the threats that irregularly migrating families may face and delivering testimonials of families who used lawful, safe, and orderly pathways.

Question 2:

2. It has been reported that UAC are sometimes placed with unrelated adults, thus forming a fake family unit, prior to illegally crossing into the U.S. in what has been called a “rent-a-kid” scheme. What efforts is the State Department making with home countries to identify these children and to stop their exploitation?

Answer 2:

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons provides more than \$80 million in funding throughout the Western Hemisphere, including a robust portfolio of grants to reduce the vulnerability of unaccompanied children. For example, we support a civil society organization to strengthen protection and prevention services for migrants, trafficking survivors, and at-risk youth in Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. Through this grant, specialized comprehensive care services, including reintegration, were provided to 566 children and adolescent victims of trafficking since the project’s start in 2021.

Question 3:

3. What measures is the State Department employing to communicate effectively with HSI and ORR when children want to contact their parents?

Answer 3:

The Department of State is rarely involved in outreach from HSI and ORR for unaccompanied children in their custody. We refer you to the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services for more information regarding communication between unaccompanied migrant children and their parents while in U.S. custody.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
WHA Office Director Joe Salazar by
Senator Amy Klobuchar (No. 1 to No. 1)
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
October 25, 2023**

Question 1:

Can you tell me more about trainings that the State Department has offered to law enforcement, journalists, and civil society organizations and why this is important to addressing the unaccompanied minor crisis in the U.S.?

Answer 1:

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons supports a civil society organization to improve capacity to identify victims of trafficking and enhanced protocols, processes, and strategies to protect migrants and likely migrants. Through this support, in August, 379 frontline actors in Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico have been trained on the detection and identification, referral, and protection of victims of trafficking and those vulnerable to trafficking, including migrants. Seventy-nine staff from migrant centers in Omoa, San Pedro Sula, Belén, and Cortés, have been trained to provide services to returned migrants in Honduras. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, through its implementing partner the International Organization for Migration, funded training for journalists on evidenced-based and ethical coverage of migrant issues.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
WHA/CEN Office Director Joe Salazar by
Senator Charles Grassley (No.1 to No.1)
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
October 25, 2023**

Question 1:

In 2014, President Obama requested Congress close the loophole that treats children from contiguous countries differently from children from non-contiguous countries. Closing this loophole would allow unaccompanied children from all countries to be quickly returned home without having to find sponsors in the United States. It would also help stem the tide of migrant children from non-contiguous countries. Does the Biden administration and the Department of State agree with President Obama that this loophole needs to be closed? If not, why not?

Answer 1:

I refer you to DHS and its components for information regarding the processing of unaccompanied children encountered at the U.S. southwest border.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
WHA/CEN Office Director Joe Salazar by
Senator Mike Lee (No.1 to No.9)
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
October 25, 2023**

Question 1:

Mr. Salazar, when asked in the hearing about your efforts to negotiate Safe Third Country agreements with countries other than Mexico and Canada, you responded, “We are working to expand legal pathways.”

1A. What efforts are being made by the State Department to negotiate Safe Third Country Agreements?

Answer 1:

We are committed to promoting safe, orderly, humane, and regular migration across the Western Hemisphere and providing lawful pathways as an alternative to irregular migration. Currently, the United States only has one Safe Third Country Agreement, signed with Canada in 2004. We do not have plans to establish additional Safe Third Country Agreements at this time.

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Question 2:

1B. With which countries is the State Department engaging in negotiations to establish Safe Third Country Agreements?

Answer 2:

We do not have plans to establish additional Safe Third Country Agreements at this time.

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Question 3:

1C. Will continued efforts by the State Department to expand legal pathways stop the unprecedented flow of irregular immigration across our borders? Or will it simply serve as a gating mechanism for getting people across the border?

Answer 3:

Hundreds of thousands of persons in the Western Hemisphere use lawful pathways to come to the United States instead of undertaking the dangerous irregular journey. We also support host governments and communities so migrants can find safety and opportunity where they are. Individuals who attempt to unlawfully enter the United States may be subject to removal as well as a bar on re-entry and potential criminal prosecution for repeated attempts to unlawfully enter.

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Question 4:

1D. What specific efforts are being made by the State Department to further expand legal pathways?

Answer 4:

The Safe Mobility initiative complements the wide range of existing services available for refugees and migrants in Safe Mobility Office (SMO) host countries. SMOs facilitate expedited refugee processing via the U.S. Refugee Assistance Program and provide information and/or referrals to humanitarian parole, family reunification, and labor pathways to the United States. One of the most innovative concepts of the Safe Mobility initiative is while not everyone will qualify for resettlement, there are other lawful pathways made available to many individuals that may cater to their skills and needs. Eligible individuals may enter the United States through lawful labor pathways such as seasonal or temporary employment pathways. I refer you to DHS and its components for information regarding labor and other lawful pathways under DHS authorities.

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Question 5:

In the hearing you appeared completely unaware of how many people have entered this country illegally or under the guise of a questionable parole program, or under the questionable CB1 app since the start of the Biden Administration.

2A. Is it important for someone in your position to understand what is happening at our borders?

Answer 5:

In my role as Office Director in the Department of State's Office of Central American Affairs, I engage with Central American countries to promote safe and orderly migration, as well as to address the root causes of irregular migration. The United States' close cooperation with countries in Central America has delivered concrete measures to reduce the flow of migrants to the U.S. southwest border that transit or originate from Central America. For example, thanks to our efforts, our partners have increased their efforts to safely and expeditiously receive back their citizens, developed public messaging that warns of the perils and consequences of

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irregular migration, and promoted lawful pathways for migrants in their own countries.

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Question 6:

2B. How many people have come into our country since the start of the Biden Administration through a parole program?

Answer 6:

I refer you to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for the most up-to-date statistics on parole processes.

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Question 7:

2C. How many people have come into our country by means of the CB1 App since its introduction?

Answer 7:

I refer you to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for the most up-to-date statistics regarding the CBP One app.

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Question 8:

2D. Are all of these alternative routes to entry encouraging more or less movement into our country which has already received more than 8 million irregular immigrants in the last three years?

Answer 8:

Our efforts mobilized partner governments, international organizations, and civil society groups to take collaborative action and implement effective policies to address the complex challenges of irregular migration. We must continue to address the root causes of irregular migration, advance our efforts to strengthen protections for migrants, and promote safe, orderly, and humane migration management throughout the hemisphere.

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Question 9:

In the hearing, you seemed unwilling to acknowledge any “pull-factors” resulting from the Biden Administration’s border policies. Instead, you focused on the “push-factors” which existed prior to the 2021 mass immigration into our country. In your opinion, have any pull-factors been created by the Biden Administration’s policies? If you believe so, please identify those policies and the resulting pull-factors.

Answer9:

We observe similar “pull factors” to the United States across administrations: individuals often migrate to the United States seeking safety, economic prosperity, and family reunification. The Biden Administration is committed to supporting host governments and communities so migrants can feel safe and have economic opportunity where they are. The Administration humanely manages our border through deterrence, diplomacy, and enforcement while also expanding lawful pathways to the United States as an alternative to irregular migration.