



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
116TH CONGRESS

September 16, 2020

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The Hon. Joseph V. Cuffari
Inspector General
Department of Homeland Security
1100 Alabama Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20032

Dear Inspector General Cuffari:

Yesterday, several news media outlets reported on horrific conditions and practices within an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility in Irwin County, Georgia brought to a light by a recent whistleblower complaint. Most alarmingly, the complaint detailed a, "...high rate of hysterectomies among migrant women."^[1] In light of this recent reporting, we implore the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to urgently investigate this complaint and make all documentation related to medical procedures on detained migrants available to the relevant congressional committees and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus immediately.

While all of the conditions and practices in the complaint are generally troubling, we are particularly distressed by one physician's reported zealotry for conducting hysterectomies on female migrants, some of whom seemed to be unaware of the medical rationale informing – or even the nature of – the procedures they underwent. These credible allegations, which were brought forth by an experienced medical professional, suggest that, "An off-site doctor supposedly performed the surgeries on women who complained of heavy menstrual cycles, but that many women seemed to not understand what had happened. In many cases nurses obtained consent from patients by 'simply googling Spanish.'"^[2]

If true, these allegations are a gross violation of human rights, decency, and the values of our nation. Accordingly, we reiterate our appeal for the OIG to immediately provide Congress with all information related to medical procedures

^[1] Paul, K. (2020, September 15). Ice detainees faced medical neglect and hysterectomies, whistleblower alleges. Retrieved September 15, 2020, from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/sep/14/ice-detainees-hysterectomies-medical-neglect-irwin-georgia>

^[2] Lambe, J. (2020, September 15). 'Like an Experimental Concentration Camp': Whistleblower Complaint Alleges Mass Hysterectomies at ICE Detention Center. Retrieved September 15, 2020, from https://lawandcrime.com/high-profile/like-an-experimental-concentration-camp-whistleblower-complaint-alleges-mass-hysterectomies-at-ice-detention-center/?utm_source=mostpopular

on detained migrants, especially at the ICE facility in the Irwin County detention center, and on the practices followed by medical professionals in detention facilities when invasive procedures are concerned. We request that the OIG also investigate whether this is an isolated case or if this practice is implemented in other detention facilities. And we ask that OIG review when ICE and LaSalle contractors became aware of these practices, how they became aware, and what actions, if any, they took.

We thank you for your attention to this extremely urgent matter, and we look forward to your prompt response regarding this harrowing complaint.

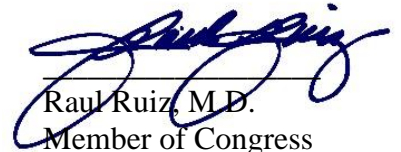
Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Whip



Veronica Escobar
Freshman Representative



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Chair



Ruben Gallego
1st Vice Chair



Nanette Diaz Barragan
2nd Vice Chair



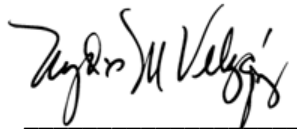
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



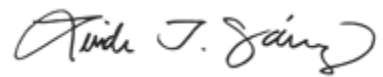
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



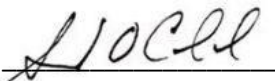
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



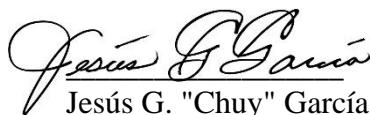
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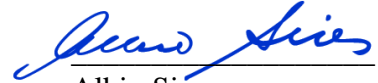
Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



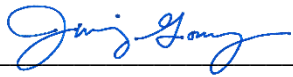
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



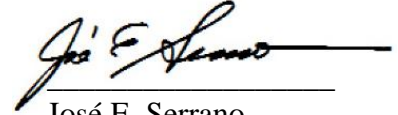
Albio Sires
Member of Congress



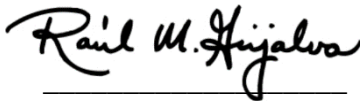
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



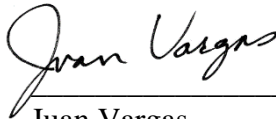
J. Luis Correa
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Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress



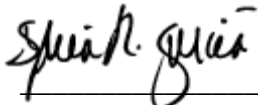
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



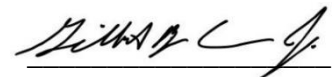
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



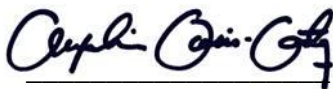
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