

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3817

July 29, 2026

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20201

Angie Salazar
Acting Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy and Acting Director Salazar:

We write today about the end of the Unaccompanied Children Legal Services contract between Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and Acacia Center for Justice on July 31, 2026. This contract provides legal services for unaccompanied immigrant children.

Our offices have heard concerns from an organization in our region that provides legal services to unaccompanied children about the continuity of children's legal cases and their clients' overall wellbeing in the absence of guidance from the government about how the cases will be transferred or managed. Our understanding is that Acacia Center has made multiple efforts to maintain this contract, including several requests for proposal (RFP) that the administration has pulled down and reissued in response to numerous protests on their feasibility. Our offices have also learned that the government has refused to pay the current contractor and its network of providers for representation service since November of 2025, totaling more than \$65 million. The Acacia Center's understanding is that the Administration is refusing to release funds after repeated attempts to negotiate unless the agency is provided with sensitive attorney-client privileged information about these minors, which as you should know would violate ethical standards for attorneys, like ABA Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.6(a).¹

If this organization (and others operating across the country) are unable to continue their work, approximately 20,000 unaccompanied children in federal custody and living in our communities will lose federally funded representation they are to receive under the law. Equally troubling, if the agency does not take action to continue these services, new children that enter ORR custody

¹https://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/publications/model_rules_of_professional_conduct/rule_1_6_confidentiality_of_information/

will be stripped of access to critical legal information and a trusted adult to help them understand their rights starting on August 1, 2026.

Children, many of which have fled violence and exploitation, should not be forced to appear in court alone without representation.

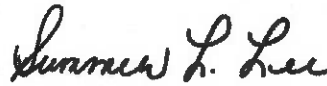
Please provide responses to the following questions by August 10, 2026:

1. Why has ORR failed to present the Acacia center with guidance on case continuity?
2. How will the government ensure its compliance with statutory language and court order requiring that unaccompanied children receive legal services?
3. What plans are in place to ensure these unaccompanied minors' cases receive due process according to the law?
4. What is the Administration's plan to transfer or transition these cases and the work of these organizations?
5. When will the Administration release the payments owed to legal services providers?

Very respectfully,



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



Summer Lee
Member of Congress