



March 10, 2015

Dear Senator,

We are writing to urge you to oppose Senator Inhofe's amendment 276 to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (S.178). Founded by UNHCR Special Envoy Angelina Jolie and the Microsoft Corporation, KIND is the leading national organization providing pro bono legal services to children in deportation proceedings, which we do in partnership with more than 220 major law firms, corporations, and law schools. Many of the children served by KIND are fleeing violence in their home country and/or are victims of persecution, severe forms of abuse, abandonment, neglect, or trafficking. A recent report by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) found that the majority of these children are at risk of violence in their home countries and that their plight should trigger an international protection response. Numerous other reports have found that increasing violence in Central America is the driving force behind this unprecedented migration.

KIND opposes Senator's Inhofe amendment for the following reasons:

- Eliminating access to basic due process rights for children and speeding the process of deporting children (including toddlers, preschool aged children and teens) without first giving them time to recover and tell their stories, and evaluating their eligibility for humanitarian relief in a removal proceeding, and determining whether the child will be harmed if returned to his or her country ignores all of the basic principles on how the U.S. treats children in justice systems.
- Expanding the current structure of screening by Customs and Border Protection of Mexican and Canadian children for trafficking, asylum, or ability to make an independent decision, to apply to all unaccompanied children reflects a failure to recognize that this screening structure has already been found to be flawed and not protective of children, leading to the return of girls who have been coerced into prostitution and boys who fear violence and abuse.
- Eliminating the current distinction between the way in which unaccompanied children from contiguous and noncontiguous countries are processed decreases protections for all children and is based on an erroneous presumption of immediate return of all these children to their home countries where many face risks of persecution and trafficking.
- Expanding repatriation agreements to a broad range of countries without criteria for these agreements risks the safety, dignity, and substantive protections for children.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Cory Smith, KIND's Director of Policy at (202) 361-1442, or [csmith@supportkind.org](mailto:csmith@supportkind.org).

Sincerely,

Wendy Young  
President

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