

## United States Senate

January 27, 2021

The Honorable David Pekoske  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
246 Murray Lane SW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Pekoske:

Florida is an immigration state. We are a melting pot and our diversity helps make our state the greatest place in the nation to live, work and raise a family. I have been very clear that I am proud of the strength and diversity immigration brings to our country, and agree that we need to reform our long-broken immigration system and create permanent solutions for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). If Congress ever wants to find genuine consensus and permanent solutions, we have to start with securing the border and implementing safeguards against bad actors and those seeking to break our laws.

Unfortunately, this Administration is already pushing a radical immigration agenda of amnesty and open borders. Last week, President Biden announced a 100-day pause on deportations of most people living in the country illegally, along with a new priority system for those who will still be subject to removal. It has been reported that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was also instructed to release illegal aliens awaiting deportation from federal detention. This week, a federal judge temporarily blocked the move to halt the deportations, but these actions are still very concerning for the safety of the American people. Any plan to change our immigration system without any mention of border security makes no sense. Therefore, I write today to ask:

- Is the Biden Administration declaring that all of the illegal aliens who were released while awaiting deportation no longer qualify for deportation under the federal immigration law?
- Is the Biden Administration simply declaring it will no longer deport illegal aliens who qualify for deportation under the law?
- Has the Biden Administration communicated with state and local law enforcement about these plans? If so, when?

The Honorable David Pekoske  
January 27, 2021  
Page Two

- Will the Biden Administration provide Florida a list of all illegal aliens who are now eligible for release under this order?
- Will the Biden Administration provide the list of charges for each illegal alien that is no longer subject to removal if released?
- Did the Biden Administration notify the victims of any crimes perpetrated by illegal aliens who are now eligible for release under this order?
- Can you point me to where, in statute, the Biden Administration has the authority to make these kind of sweeping changes?

Securing our border is the most important thing we can do to protect our citizens and the thousands of individuals working their way through the legal immigration process. We can make much-needed reforms to our broken system, but it has to start with securing the border. Pursuing partisan policies that endanger American families and do nothing to improve immigration will only hurt us. Thank you for your attention to these questions, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Rick Scott  
United States Senator