

Congressman Cuellar's FY18 Homeland Appropriations Language

Family Separation – CBP Transparency

“The Committee is concerned by reports of the separation of some family units after apprehension by CBP or prior to crossing the border. CBP should ensure that processing decisions consider family unity as a primary factor and, to the greatest extent possible, that separated family units are reunited prior to removal, release from CBP custody, or transfer to ICE or Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody.

The Committee is aware of concerns that CBP activities and policies may sometimes lack public transparency and may be subject to inadequate data collection and reporting. The Committee directs CBP to reiterate its commitment to a policy of “maximum disclosure, minimum delay” in releasing information to the media and public; continue to post all policies and guidelines that may be of interest to the public on the agency’s website; and continue—or expand as practicable—data collection that more effectively detects and deters abuse, strengthens accountability, and ensures effective use of limited resources.

Beginning within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, CBP shall report to the Committee on the numbers of detainees currently held by CBP for more than 48 and 72 hours, respectively. This reporting should be updated monthly and include a list of all CBP facilities used for holding detainees, including the average daily population and daily population at the time of publication.”