

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 27, 2023

## VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write today to express my disappointment with this administration's misplaced priorities regarding the enforcement of our laws, as well as your blatant application of two standards of justice. As millions of illegal immigrants flood across our southern border and disappear into our country, your immigration authorities have chosen to punish a family who has built their lives in Tennessee within the legal parameters of our immigration system.

Since President Biden took office, there have been millions of illegal crossings at our southern border.<sup>1</sup> The number of crossings has skyrocketed because these migrants perceive the Biden administration's border policies to be weak and ineffective. Instead of changing course, you doubled down when you visited Texas, saying that you "have confidence in our model."<sup>2</sup> The model that you expressed such confidence in has consisted entirely of refusing to enforce the laws that protect our nation's sovereignty.

Instead, you have chosen to focus your time and resources on targeting the Romeike family, who legally immigrated to Morristown, Tennessee, over 15 years ago. The Romeikes, who escaped Germany after being punished simply for homeschooling their children, have been upstanding members of the Morristown community. Additionally, they have submitted to all mandatory check-ins with immigration agents required of them when the United States government granted them "indefinite deferred action status" in 2013.<sup>3</sup> I am sure you can imagine their surprise when, during one of these routine check-ins that they have faithfully attended, they were informed that they had only four weeks to apply for German passports in advance of their deportation—with no further explanation.

This enforcement action highlights the two standards of justice that have been a constant theme of President Biden's first two and a half years in office. You are targeting a family who fled Germany in search of basic parental rights and has legally resided in the United States for years.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, CBP SOUTHWEST LAND BORDER ENCOUNTERS, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>.

<sup>2</sup> Alicia A. Caldwell, *What's Behind the Latest Migrant Surge? For Many, Impatience With a Government App*, WALL ST. J (Sept. 24, 2023), [https://www.wsj.com/us-news/migrants-texas-us-asylum-laws-3ff360df?st=33ehhkny8grw902&reflink=article\\_email\\_share](https://www.wsj.com/us-news/migrants-texas-us-asylum-laws-3ff360df?st=33ehhkny8grw902&reflink=article_email_share).

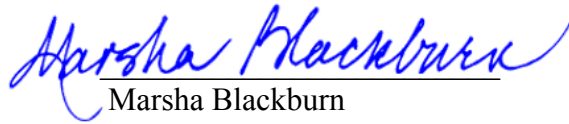
<sup>3</sup> Jason Hardy, *Department of Homeland Security Grants German Family Indefinite Asylum*, DESERETNEWS (March 7, 2014), <https://www.deseret.com/2014/3/7/20536846/departement-of-homeland-security-grants-german-family-indefinite-asylum>.

Simultaneously, you have allowed millions of illegal immigrants—some of whom have been identified as terrorists—to enter the country with abandon.

I urge this administration to reverse course and allow the Romeike family to continue their lives in Morristown, Tennessee. My staff and I are available should you need any additional information.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marsha Blackburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Marsha Blackburn  
United States Senator