

U.S. refugee resettlement office says unaccompanied migrant children could be detained indefinitely



Washington, July 24 (RHC)-- CBS News is reporting thousands of migrant children in the United States could be locked up for years at the southern border. Most of those at risk are unaccompanied.

Officials from the Office of Refugee Resettlement say Trump's hard-line immigration policies are having a chilling effect on potential sponsors, which may result in children languishing in ORR detention centers indefinitely, only to be transferred to adult migrant prisons when they turn 18 years old.

There was a dramatic decrease in the percentage of children released from ORR custody in 2018 as compared to previous years.

In Texas, authorities have released an 18-year-old U.S. citizen who had been detained by immigration agents for over three weeks after he was taken in at a Border Patrol checkpoint. Francisco Erwin Galicia

was detained with his younger brother as they traveled to a soccer event last month. He showed proof of his Texas ID -- that requires a Social Security number, which is only given to U.S. citizens or those authorized to work in the U.S.

Galicia's lawyer says she supplied multiple documents proving the teenager's citizenship, but border agents refused to release him for weeks, saying the documents were fake. Francisco Erwin's 17-year-old brother Marlon, who was not born in the U.S., signed a voluntary deportation order and is now in Mexico.

New York Congressmember Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez expressed outrage at Galicia's treatment, tweeting: "CBP is detaining American citizens. How would you feel trapped in a border camp, where guards wear face masks because the human odor is so strong? When we allow the rights of some to be violated, the rights of all are not far behind."

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