

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2703 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20593

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

As we have expressed several times, we are profoundly concerned by the Biden Administration's apparent shift in U.S.-Cuba policy, including the agreement with the Cuban regime to increase repatriations of Cuban nationals to totalitarianism.

One unfortunate consequence of the administration's increase in repatriations has been a corresponding increase in family members seeking information regarding their loved ones interdicted at sea. Currently, there is no efficient and timely way for family members or their legal representatives to verify their location and basic details of their cases.

This is a fixable problem. The United States government has addressed this issue for individuals in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody through the Online Detainee Locator System (ODLS). ODLS is a publicly available online system that allows the public to search for persons to determine whether they are detained by ICE and if so, at which facility they are located. By making the information available in this way, family members and legal representatives are able to find basic information without draining crucial resources or manpower from already strained and overworked agencies.

The administration's apparent agreement with the Cuban regime to ramp up deportations of Cuban nationals seeking freedom has many unfortunate repercussions. At the very least, as interdictions and repatriations increase, we believe that it would be beneficial to those fleeing Cubans, their family members, and their legal representatives to have timely, accurate information as to whether these individuals have been interdicted, their location, and other basic facts of their case.

For these reasons we request, within all applicable rules and regulations, that you consider implementing a system similar to ODLS for Cuban nationals interdicted at sea, or otherwise in U.S. custody through situations not currently covered by the ODLS.

Thank you for your attention to this matter of utmost importance.

Sincerely,



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



María Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress



Carlos A. Gimenez
Member of Congress