



NEWS RELEASE
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U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Issues Letters to US Department of Justice and the State of Texas Expressing Concern about Alleged Denial of Birth Certificates to Children of Undocumented Immigrants

Washington, DC – A majority of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has written a [letter](#) to Attorney General Loretta Lynch asking for an investigation into the possible refusal of the Texas Department of Health Services' Vital Statistics Unit to issue birth certificates to children born in the U.S. to undocumented immigrants.

A majority of the Commission has also [written](#) to Interim Commissioner Kirk Cole of the Texas Department of State Health Services whether or not allegations of such denials are true and for Texas to cease and desist the practice because it violates the constitutional rights of U.S.-born children under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.¹ If such denials are taking place, a federal court could hold that the State of Texas violated the constitutional rights of these children, regardless of the nature of their parent's immigration status.

Additionally, if the allegations are true and the practice continues, the Commission will examine whether a formal investigation by the Commission is warranted to scrutinize the State of Texas's practice of such denials. Both letters are available at the hyperlinks above and on the Commission's website at www.usccr.gov.

Commission Chairman Martin R. Castro on behalf of a majority of the Commission stated, "Denial of this basic constitutional right to these most vulnerable of U.S. citizens is a further example of intolerance and xenophobia that must not be allowed to stand."

¹ *Lawsuit: U.S. Citizen Children Denied Birth Certificates in Texas*, by Juan Castillo, NBCNews website, May 28, 2015, <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/suit-alleges-undocumented-parents-denied-birth-certificates-citizen-children-n366111>; *Texas Denies Certificates to Children of Undocumented Immigrants*, by Cedar Attansio, Latin News website, June 2, 2015, <http://www.latintimes.com/texas-denies-birth-certificates-children-undocumented-immigrants-320139>

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing a federal civil rights enforcement report. For information about Commission's reports and meetings, visit <http://www.usccr.gov>.