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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, WESTERN DIVISION

JENNY LISETTE FLORES, <i>et al.</i> ,	)	Case No. CV 85-4544 DMG (AGRx)
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	PLAINTIFFS' OPPOSITION TO
- vs -	)	DEFENDANTS' EX PARTE APPLICATION
	)	FOR LIMITED RELIEF FROM FLORES
JEFFERSON B. SESSIONS, ATTORNEY	)	SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
GENERAL, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF	)	
JUSTICE, <i>et al.</i> ,	)	Hearing: N/A
	)	
Defendants.	)	

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>I. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. LEGAL STANDARD .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III. ARGUMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. DEFENDANTS’ “DETERRENCE” ARGUMENT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED         AND REJECTED BY THIS COURT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. DEFENDANTS’ “INFLUX” ARGUMENT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED AND         REJECTED BY THIS COURT AND THE COURT OF APPEALS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3. AVAILABLE EVIDENCE SHOWS DEFENDANTS ARE NOT FACING AN         UNANTICIPATED SURGE IN FAMILY APPREHENSIONS WARRANTING         MODIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENT.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. DEFENDANTS’ PROPOSED “NARROW MODIFICATION[ ]” TO ELIMINATE         ACCOMPANIED CLASS MEMBER’S RIGHT TO PROMPT RELEASE IS NOT A         “NARROW” MODIFICATION NOR IS IT NECESSARY TO ALLOW FAMILIES TO STAY         TOGETHER.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5. DEFENDANTS’ PROPOSED “NARROW MODIFICATION[ ]” TO ELIMINATE THE         OPTION OF CLASS MEMBERS TO BE HOUSED IN LICENSED FACILITIES IS NOT A         “NARROW” MODIFICATION NOR IS IT NECESSARY TO ALLOW FAMILIES TO STAY         TOGETHER.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IV. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>17</b>

**TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**

**Cases**

<i>Flores v. Johnson</i> , 212 F. Supp. 3d 864 (C.D. Cal. 2015) .....	7
<i>Flores v. Lynch</i> , 828 F.3d 898 (9th Cir. 2016) .....	4, 6, 7, 10, 14
<i>Kansas v. Crane</i> , 534 U.S. 407 (2002) .....	8
<i>Kansas v. Hendricks</i> , 521 U.S. 346 (1997) .....	8
<i>L. v. United States Immigration &amp; Customs Enf't ("ICE")</i> , No. 18cv0428 DMS (MDD), 2018 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 107365 (S.D. Cal. June 26, 2018) .....	3, 16
<i>Orantes-Hernandez v. Gonzales</i> , 504 F. Supp. 2d 825 (C.D. Cal. 2007) .....	5
<i>Orantes-Hernandez v. Holder</i> , 321 F. App'x 625 (9th Cir. 2009) .....	5
<i>Rufo v. Inmates of Suffolk Cty. Jail</i> , 502 U.S. 367 (1992) .....	4, 9, 10, 12

**Statutes**

8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5) .....	16
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**Other Authorities**

Exec. Order No. 13841, Affording Congress an Opportunity to Address Family Separation, 83 FR 29435 (June 20, 2018) .....	2, 3
Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 60(b) .....	4
INA § 212(d)(5) .....	16

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Defendants’ *Ex Parte* Application for Limited Relief from the Flores Settlement Agreement (“Defs’ App.”) [Dkt. #435], asks this Court on an emergency basis to eliminate the rights of accompanied class members under the court-approved 1997 *Flores* settlement (“Agreement”) to prompt and continuous efforts on the part of Defendants to release class members to a list of custodians (including parents, relatives, other responsible adults or licensed group homes), and if not released to be housed in facilities properly licensed to safeguard children’s health, mental and emotional well-being, and physical safety.<sup>1</sup>

The ground on which Defendants seek relief from these previously agreed-upon safeguards – an inaccurate claim of an influx of families crossing the border, and the purported deterrent effect that indefinite detention of children in remote unlicensed facilities might have on parents contemplating coming to the U.S. with their children to seek asylum – was considered and rejected by this Court three years ago. Defendants have provided the Court with no legitimate basis on which to depart from that sound and subsequently affirmed ruling.

Defendants’ *ex parte* application acknowledges that only previously unforeseeable material changes in circumstances may provide a basis for modifying the

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<sup>1</sup> Defendants’ Notice of Compliance (“Notice of Compliance”) [Dkt. #447] adds nothing of substance to the arguments in Defendants’ *Ex Parte* Application for Limited Relief from the Flores Settlement Agreement.

1 Agreement, but concedes – by omission and obfuscation among other means – that no  
2 such circumstances truly exist today.

3  
4 At bottom, Defendants bring their emergency application not because of their  
5 inability to house and process a new “surge” of apprehended families – as we discuss  
6 below there is no new surge and Defendants’ family detention sites today operate far  
7 from capacity – but because last week President Trump ordered them to do so. *See*  
8 Exec. Order No. 13841, Affording Congress an Opportunity to Address Family  
9 Separation, 83 FR 29435 (June 20, 2018) (“Executive Order”).  
10

11  
12 The President ordered the Attorney General to “promptly” file a request with  
13 this Court to modify the *Flores* Agreement to “permit the Secretary ... to detain alien  
14 families together throughout the pendency of criminal proceedings for improper entry  
15 or any removal or other immigration proceedings.” Executive Order, paragraph 3(e).  
16

17 President Trump’s Executive Order also announces: “It is ... the policy of this  
18 Administration to maintain family unity, including by detaining alien families together  
19 where appropriate and consistent with law and available resources.” *Id.* at Section 1.  
20 Just weeks earlier the Administration initiated its policy of separating class members  
21 from their parents. When the President cancelled his own policy, he blamed Congress  
22 and the courts for separating children from their parents: “It is unfortunate that  
23 Congress’s failure to act and court orders have put the Administration in the position of  
24 separating alien families to effectively enforce the law.” *Id.*  
25  
26  
27  
28

1 Defendants now seek emergency relief supposedly to eliminate restrictions in  
2 the Agreement and this Court's Orders that force Defendants to "separate[e] alien  
3 families ..." *Nothing in the Agreement or this Court's Orders require that Defendants*  
4 *separate families*. Even assuming, *arguendo*, that anything in the Agreement or this  
5 Court's Orders required Defendants to separate immigrant families – which they do not  
6 – modifying the agreement to strip accompanied class members of the right to  
7 reasonably prompt release would not improve Defendants' ability to keep families  
8 together. It would permit Defendants to *force* families to stay together in unlicensed  
9 facilities by eliminating class members' right – subject to opt out by a parent – to be  
10 released or placed under the terms of the Agreement.<sup>2</sup>

11 Defendants' *ex parte* application should be summarily denied.

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16  
17 2 . The President directed that "The Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary), shall,  
18 *to the extent permitted by law* ... maintain custody of alien families during the  
19 pendency of any criminal improper entry or immigration proceedings involving their  
20 members." Executive Order ¶ 3(a). Plaintiffs read the "to the extent permitted by law"  
21 language to include compliance with the Agreement whether or not Defendants'  
22 application to modify is granted. However, Defendants' Notice of Compliance appears  
23 to state that Defendants will now unilaterally violate the Agreement regardless how  
24 this Court rules on the *ex parte* application to modify the Agreement. Defendants state  
25 that to comply with the injunction issued in *L. v. United States Immigration & Customs*  
26 *Enf't ("ICE")*, No. 18cv0428 DMS (MDD), 2018 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 107365 (S.D. Cal.  
27 June 26, 2018), "the Government will not separate families but detain families together  
28 *during the pendency of immigration proceedings* ..." Notice of Compliance at 1  
(emphasis supplied). Nothing in the *Ms. L* injunction requires that result. While not  
clearly written, Defendants' Notice of Compliance seems to indicate that Defendants  
will now detain class members without regard to Paragraphs 14 and 18 of the  
Agreement, and without waiting for this Court to issue a ruling on Defendants' *ex parte*  
application.

## II. BACKGROUND

### 1. LEGAL STANDARD

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 60(b)(5) provides that the Court may relieve a party from a final judgment, order or proceeding if “the judgment has been satisfied, released, or discharged; it is based on an earlier judgment that has been reversed or vacated; or applying it prospectively is no longer equitable.” Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 60(b)(5). The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure permit relief for “any other reason that justifies relief.” Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 60(b)(6).

The party seeking to alter the terms of a consent decree “bears the burden of establishing that a *significant* change in circumstances warrants revision of the decree.” *Flores v. Lynch*, 828 F.3d 898, 909 (9th Cir. 2016) (quoting *Rufo v. Inmates of Suffolk Cty. Jail*, 502 U.S. 367, 383 (1992)) (emphasis added). The test for a “significant change” is exacting: Defendants must establish that the Settlement no longer “effectively addresses the problem it was designed to remedy.” *Orantes-Hernandez v. Gonzales*, 504 F. Supp. 2d 825, 831 (C.D. Cal. 2007), *aff’d sub nom.*, *Orantes-Hernandez v. Holder*, 321 F. App’x 625 (9th Cir. 2009). “The question in this case, therefore, is whether ... evolving circumstances have resolved the underlying problems, thereby rendering the [agreement] unnecessary.” *Id.*

### 2. RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT

The Agreement establishes a series of standards for the treatment of class members in Defendants’ custody. Defendants’ application seeks relief from two



1 primary provisions of the Agreement. First, the Agreement establishes a general  
2 policy favoring release of children. It provides that Defendants “shall release a minor  
3 from [their] custody without unnecessary delay” where they determine that the  
4 detention of the class member is not required “either to secure his or her timely  
5 appearance before the INS [now Immigration and Customs Enforcement] or the  
6 immigration court, or to ensure the minor’s safety or that of others.” Agreement, ¶ 14.  
7  
8 Second, in situations in which a class member is not released pursuant to Paragraph 14,  
9 the Agreement requires that the minor be “placed temporarily in a licensed program  
10 until such time as release can be effected in accordance with Paragraph 14 [ ] or until  
11 the minor’s immigration proceedings are concluded, whichever occurs earlier.” *Id.* ¶  
12  
13 19.

14  
15 As discussed *infra*, Defendants have entirely failed to meet their burden of  
16 establishing a legitimate basis to eliminate the protections of these terms of the  
17 Agreement for accompanied class members.  
18

### 19 **III. ARGUMENT**

20  
21 Over three years ago, Defendants moved to modify the Agreement by arguing,  
22 in part, that a modification was necessary because a “surge” in unauthorized family  
23 units then entering the United States was not anticipated at the time the parties  
24 executed the Agreement. *See* Defendants’ Motion to Modify Settlement Agreement,  
25 [Dkt. # 120] (Feb. 27, 2015). This Court denied Defendants’ motion, and in affirming  
26 that decision the Ninth Circuit explained that paragraph 12 of the Agreement  
27  
28

1 “expressly anticipated an influx, and provided that, if one occurred, the government  
2 would be given more time to release minors or place them in licensed programs.”

3 *Flores v. Lynch*, 828 F.3d 898, 910 (9th Cir. 2016).  
4

5 With even less evidence than they offered three years ago, Defendants now  
6 resurrect their “surge” argument. Defendants use selected statistics to claim there is a  
7 “worsening influx of families unlawfully entering the United States at the southwest  
8 border.” Defs’ Memo [Dkt # 435-1] at 12. The evidence in fact shows Defendants have  
9 hundreds of empty beds at their largest family detention site and there is no significant  
10 change in factual circumstances warranting modification of the Agreement. The only  
11 real change was President Trump’s Executive Order requiring Defendants to file the  
12 instant application.<sup>3</sup>  
13  
14  
15

16 1. DEFENDANTS’ “DETERRENCE” ARGUMENT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN  
17 CONSIDERED AND REJECTED BY THIS COURT

18 Defendants claim, as they did in 2015, that “detaining these individuals ‘deters  
19 others from unlawfully coming to the United States.’” Defs’ Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at  
20 13, *quoting* Declaration of Tae D. Johnson, [Dkt. #120-1] at 4 ¶ 8 (Feb. 27, 2015).  
21

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22  
23 <sup>3</sup> Defendants also resurrect their previously unsuccessful argument that this Court  
24 should modify the Agreement because it “arose from litigation solely about  
25 *unaccompanied* minors,” and there is currently a purported increase in accompanied  
26 minors entering the United States. Defs. Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at 13. Both this Court  
27 and the Court of Appeals have considered and rejected that argument. *See Flores*, 828  
28 F.3d at 910; *Flores v. Johnson*, 212 F. Supp. 3d 864, 885 (C.D. Cal. 2015). Defendants  
offer this Court no reason to change its prior ruling on the inclusion of accompanied  
minors in the class definition.

1 Plaintiffs previously responded to this argument: “[T]here is simply no competent  
2 evidence that ICE’s detaining a minority of class members [those who are  
3 accompanied] in secure, unlicensed facilities has discouraged or will discourage others  
4 from fleeing crushing poverty and rampant lawlessness in Central America. Even were  
5 there such evidence, as a matter of law ICE simply may not detain children to deter  
6 others.” Plaintiff’s Opposition to Motion to Modify [Dkt. # 122] at 2.  
7  
8

9 The Settlement has been in effect since 1997, yet Defendants offer no evidence  
10 establishing that its enforcement now encourages others to enter the United States  
11 without authorization. In any event, deterring others is simply not a lawful basis to  
12 refuse anyone release, much less vulnerable children. The Supreme Court has declared  
13 such “general deterrence” justifications impermissible. *See Kansas v. Crane*, 534 U.S.  
14 407, 412 (2002) (warning that civil detention may not “become a ‘mechanism for  
15 retribution or general deterrence’ – functions properly those of criminal law, not civil  
16 commitment”) (*quoting Kansas v. Hendricks*, 521 U.S. 346, 372-74 (1997) (Kennedy,  
17 J., concurring)).<sup>4</sup>  
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24  
25 <sup>4</sup> In 2015 the Court “considered in detail the evidence Defendants presented of the  
26 deterrent effect of the detention policy and [found] the evidence distinctly lacking in  
27 scientific rigor.” Order [Dkt. #177] at 23. However, because Defendants failed to  
28 present any evidence that the policy they implemented either caused or addressed the  
alleged 2014 change in factual circumstances, the Court decided it “need not rule on the  
issue of whether deterrence is a lawful criterion for denying release.” *Id.* at 24, n. 11.

1                   2. DEFENDANTS’ “INFLUX” ARGUMENT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED  
2                   AND REJECTED BY THIS COURT AND THE COURT OF APPEALS

3                   The government also argues that “the number of family units crossing the border  
4 illegally has increased dramatically since the Government sought relief in 2015—by  
5 30% since the 2014 influx that led the Government to seek relief from this Court.”  
6  
7 Defs Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at 14.

8                   The identical argument has already been considered and rejected by this Court.<sup>5</sup>  
9  
10 As this Court stated in its Order re Response to Order to Show Cause: “what  
11 Defendants characterize as an immigration ‘surge’ constitutes an ‘influx’ under the  
12 consent decree ... assuming the existence of an ‘influx of minors into the united  
13 states,’ paragraph 12A gives defendants some flexibility to reasonably exceed the  
14 standard five-day requirement so long as the minor is placed with an authorized adult  
15 or in a non-secure licensed facility, in order of preference under paragraph 14, ‘as  
16 expeditiously as possible.’” Order re Response to Order to Show Cause [Dkt. # 189] at  
17  
18 10.

19  
20                   The Court of Appeals also rejected Defendants’ surge argument:  
21  
22 \_\_\_\_\_

23  
24 5 “With respect to whether the Agreement’s provisions caused the surge [in 2014],  
25 Defendants do not satisfactorily explain why the Agreement, after being in effect since  
26 1997, should only now encourage others to enter the United States without  
27 authorization ... Defendants are effectively proposing that the Court unilaterally  
28 modify the Agreement because enforcement of the Agreement without modification  
would be detrimental to the public interest.” Order [Dkt. #177] at 23, citing *Rufo*, 502  
U.S. at 383.

1 The government first argues that the settlement should be modified because of  
2 the surge in family units crossing the southwest border. “Ordinarily, however,  
3 modification should not be granted where a party relies upon events that actually  
4 were anticipated at the time it entered into a decree” ... The settlement expressly  
5 anticipated an influx, and provided that, if one occurred, the government would  
6 be given more time to release minors or place them in licensed programs.  
7

8  
9 *Flores v. Lynch*, 828 F.3d 898, 910 (9th Cir. 2016), *quoting Rufo*, 502 U.S. at 385.<sup>6</sup>  
10

11 3. AVAILABLE EVIDENCE SHOWS DEFENDANTS ARE NOT FACING AN  
12 UNANTICIPATED SURGE IN FAMILY APPREHENSIONS WARRANTING  
13 MODIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENT.

14 The government argues that “the number of family units crossing the border  
15 illegally has increased dramatically since the Government sought relief in 2015—by  
16 30% since the 2014 influx that led the Government to seek relief from this Court.”  
17 Defs’ Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at 14. Defendants claim that the projection for FY18 is “a  
18 17% increase over” the number of unauthorized family apprehensions for 2017. *Id.* at  
19 7. Nothing in Defendants’ statistics shows that this Court’s 2015 decision resulted in a  
20 “sharp rise” in family apprehensions.<sup>7</sup>  
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25 <sup>6</sup> “And, even if the parties did not anticipate an influx of this size, we cannot fathom  
26 how a ‘suitably tailored’ response to the change in circumstances would be to exempt  
27 an entire category of migrants from the Settlement ...” *Id.*

28 <sup>7</sup> Defendants selectively rely on 2015 data – which had the lowest number of  
apprehensions in the last four years – to show a “sharp rise” in family apprehensions  
following this Court’s 2015 decision. *See* Defs Memo [Dkt. #. 435-1] at 9. In fact,

1 Defendants' motion indicates that there were 59,113 family apprehensions  
2 during 8 months in FY18, and that the 12-month projection of 88,670 apprehensions is  
3 based on the "assumption that illegal crossers for the remaining four months will arrive  
4 at the same rate as in the prior eight months, a projection that *does not account for*  
5 *seasonal variations.*" *Id.* at 8 (emphasis supplied). Defendants' projection of 88,670 is  
6 artificially high since it fails to reflect seasonal fluctuations in migration.  
7

8  
9 The only year-over-year trend that Defendants' motion actually reflects is a  
10 decrease in family apprehensions from 77,674 in FY16 to 75,622 in FY17, or a decline  
11 of 2.64 percent.<sup>8</sup> *Id.* These figures are not significantly higher than the 68,445  
12 apprehensions during FY14, which prompted Defendants' 2015 motion. *See id.*  
13

14 Statistics show that from March to September 2017 there was a range of 1,000-  
15 4,200 family apprehensions across all Border Patrol sectors, a significant decrease in  
16  
17

18  
19  
20 Defendants' statistics demonstrates that the 2015 month-to-month figures reflect  
21 unremarkable fluctuations within longer-term trends. *See*  
22 [https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-border-unaccompanied-children/fy-](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-border-unaccompanied-children/fy-2016)  
23 [2016](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-border-unaccompanied-children/fy-2016) (last checked June 29, 2018). The December 2015 high of 8,973 family  
24 apprehensions was followed by a steep decrease in January 2016 to 3,143  
25 apprehensions – a level that remained consistent for the subsequent few months.  
26 Similarly, the January 2015 low of 1,622 apprehensions was preceded by months of  
27 much higher numbers, including a four-year high in June 2014 of 16,330  
28 apprehensions. Overall this data in no way indicates this Court's 2015 decision  
impacted migration of families one way or the other.

<sup>8</sup> Available at [https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-](https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-FY17.pdf)  
Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-  
FY17.pdf (last checked June 28, 2018).

1 the total number of family apprehensions compared to March-September 2016 when  
2 total family apprehensions ranged from 4,400 to 9,600.<sup>9</sup>

3  
4 Although there was an increase in family apprehensions in fiscal year 2016 with  
5 77,857 families being apprehended across all sectors, there has been a decrease in the  
6 total number of apprehensions from FY 2016 to FY 2017 by 2.64 percent.

7  
8 Furthermore, CBP published a secondary chart comparing Southwest border  
9 family unit apprehensions from FY 2017 (October 1, 2016 – May 31, 2018) to FY  
10 2018 (October 1, 2017 - May 31, 2018). The chart provides evidence of a 19% - 48%  
11 decrease in family unit apprehensions over 6 sectors and a 3% decrease in family unit  
12 apprehensions overall.<sup>10</sup>

13  
14 Finally, class counsel monitoring conducted this week at Defendants' largest  
15 facility used to detain family units shows that of 2,400 available beds, only 1,514 are  
16 currently occupied. *See* Declaration of Warren Binford, attached as Exhibit 1. In short,  
17 modification of the Agreement is not necessary because compliance has become  
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25 <sup>9</sup> Available at [https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-](https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-FY17.pdf)  
26 [Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-](https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-FY17.pdf)  
27 [FY17.pdf](https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2017-Dec/BP%20Total%20Monthly%20Family%20Units%20by%20Sector%2C%20FY13-FY17.pdf) (last checked June 28, 2018).

28 <sup>10</sup> Available at <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/usbw-sw-border-apprehensions> (last  
checked June 28, 2018).

1 “substantially more onerous,” or “unworkable because of unforeseen obstacles ...”

2 *Rufo*, *supra*, 502 U.S. at 383.<sup>11</sup>

3  
4 Nevertheless, President Trump’s lawyers now argue “[t]he current situation is  
5 untenable,” Defs’ Memo [Dkt. # 435-1] at 12, and illegal entries are “increas[ing]  
6 dramatically ...” *Id.* at 14. These claims stand in stark contrast to the President’s recent  
7 public statements that his immigration policies had greatly *lowered* the number of  
8 apprehensions along the southern border: “I’m very proud to say that we’re way down  
9 in the people coming across the border. We have fewer people trying to come across  
10 because they know it’s not going to happen. But we do need the wall ... anyway.”

11  
12 Remarks by President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence and Bipartisan  
13 Members of Congress at Signing of H.R. 2142, INTERDICT Act (January 10,  
14 2018).<sup>12</sup> The President made clear the numbers were not only down, in fact they were  
15  
16 “way, way down ...” *Id.*

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25 <sup>11</sup> Defendants make no effort to argue that continued compliance with the Agreement  
26 “would be detrimental to the public interest.” *Rufo*, 502 U.S. at 383.

27 <sup>12</sup> *Available at* [https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-donald-trump-vice-president-mike-pence-bipartisan-members-congress-signing-h-r-2142-interdict-act/)  
28 [donald-trump-vice-president-mike-pence-bipartisan-members-congress-signing-h-r-](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-donald-trump-vice-president-mike-pence-bipartisan-members-congress-signing-h-r-2142-interdict-act/)  
[2142-interdict-act/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-donald-trump-vice-president-mike-pence-bipartisan-members-congress-signing-h-r-2142-interdict-act/) (last checked June 28, 2018).



1           4. DEFENDANTS’ PROPOSED “NARROW MODIFICATION[ ]” TO ELIMINATE  
2           ACCOMPANIED CLASS MEMBER’S RIGHT TO PROMPT RELEASE IS NOT A  
3           “NARROW” MODIFICATION NOR IS IT NECESSARY TO ALLOW FAMILIES TO  
4           STAY TOGETHER

5           Defendants argue that given the circumstances discussed above, two “tailored”  
6           modifications to the Agreement are warranted at this time. Defs’ Memo [Dkt. # 4235-  
7           1] at 16.

8           First, Defendants ask the Court to provide the Government an “exemption” from  
9           Paragraph 14 of the Agreement “so that children may be placed in ICE custody with  
10          their parent or guardian, rather than be released to another individual or placed into  
11          HHS custody.” *Id.* at 16-17.

12          Defendants claim that “[s]o long as paragraph 14 of the Agreement is applied as  
13          written to accompanied children, ICE is required to separate parents or guardians from  
14          their children in situations where the law requires detention or ICE or an immigration  
15          judge determines that a parent or guardian should be detained to prevent flight or  
16          danger to the community during removal proceedings.” *Id.* at 17.<sup>13</sup> Defendants remind  
17          us that “family detention ... has been a continuing goal of DHS for a considerable time  
18          ...” *Id.* at 19.

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26       <sup>13</sup> Defendants’ Notice of Compliance similarly states in error that “one impact of the  
27       *Flores* requirement[s] [of Paragraph 14] if applied to minors that come into DHS  
28       custody accompanied by their parents, would be the separation of parents from their  
      children.” Notice of Compliance [Dkt. #447] at 2.

1 Nothing in Paragraph 14 of the Agreement states or implies that ICE is “required  
2 to separate parents or guardians from their children” in *any* circumstance. 14

3  
4 Paragraph 14 requires that when the Defendants determine that the detention of a  
5 minor class member is not required either to secure his or her timely appearance before  
6 DHS or the immigration court, or to ensure the minor’s safety or the safety of others,  
7 the Defendants shall release a minor from their custody without unnecessary delay, in a  
8 prescribed order of preference, to a parent, legal guardian, an adult relative, an adult  
9 designated by a parent, a licensed program willing to accept legal custody, or an adult  
10 individual. *Id.*

13 For minors detained with a parent or legal guardian, Paragraph 14 provides an  
14 alternative to detention for a child (who is not a flight risk or danger) if the parent  
15 decides it is in his or her child’s best interest to be released under Paragraph 14.<sup>15</sup>

17 Indeed, in their Notice of Compliance filed today, Defendants concede:  
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21 <sup>14</sup> Defendants incorrectly assert that the Ninth Circuit in this case “understood that the  
22 separation of parents from children was a direct consequence of its holding” affirming  
23 this Court’s earlier Orders. Notice of Compliance [Dkt. #447] at 3 *citing Flores v.*  
24 *Lynch*, 828 F.3d 898, 908-09 (9th Cir. 2016). All the Court of Appeals held was that  
25 parents were not plaintiffs in the *Flores* action, nor are they members of the certified  
26 classes, and the Agreement “therefore provides no affirmative release rights for  
27 parents.” *Id.* at 909. Nowhere does the Court of Appeals say or imply that the  
28 separation of parents from children was or would ever be a consequence of its holding.

<sup>15</sup> A parent may at any time decide that her or his child should be released under  
Paragraph 14 even if the parent initially decided to opt the child out of the release  
terms.

1 Relying on a parent's consent in these circumstances where the family is  
2 together makes sense, particularly because plaintiffs in this case have always  
3 agreed that detention of the family together is permissible if the parent  
4 consents. *See Flores*, Transcript at 37-38 (April 24, 2015) (in response to  
5 question whether the "agreement allows[s] for an accommodation to . . . a  
6 parent who wishes to remain in the [family residential] facility," "the  
7 plaintiffs' positions is . . . a class member is entitled to waive those rights"  
8 and that waiver may "parents speak for children all the time.")

9 Notice of Compliance [Dkt. #447] at 9.

10 In short, nothing Plaintiffs have ever argued or this Court has ever ruled  
11 prevents a parent from knowingly and voluntarily waiving her or his child's right  
12 to release under Paragraph 14 and therefore no modification of the Agreement is  
13 required to accommodate Defendants' desire to maintain their "continuing goal" of  
14 not separating families subject to removal proceedings. *Id.* At 19.<sup>16</sup> Nothing

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22 <sup>16</sup> Defendants now also claim the preliminary injunction issued in *Ms. L* prohibits  
23 DHS from releasing class members consistent with the terms of Paragraphs 14 and 18.  
24 Notice re Compliance [Dkt. #447] at 5. Defendants' reading of the injunction is  
25 ludicrous. Nowhere does the injunction issued in *Ms. L* prevent Defendants from  
26 releasing a minor under Paragraph 14 when the class member's parent wants her or his  
27 child released under that paragraph and the child is otherwise eligible for release (is not  
28 a flight risk or a danger). *See L. v. United States Immigration & Customs Enf't*  
(*"ICE"*), No. 18cv0428 DMS (MDD), 2018 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 107365 (S.D. Cal. June  
26, 2018). After several pages of arguing that the *Ms. L* injunction prohibits  
Defendants from releasing *Flores* class members, Defendants finally concede that

1 prevents Defendants from releasing parents with their children on other bases,  
2 including pursuant to humanitarian parole or upon a positive credible fear  
3 determination, if they exercise their discretion to do so. *See* INA § 212(d)(5); 8  
4 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5).  
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6 5. DEFENDANTS’ PROPOSED “NARROW MODIFICATION[ ]” TO ELIMINATE THE  
7 OPTION OF CLASS MEMBERS TO BE HOUSED IN LICENSED FACILITIES IS NOT A  
8 “NARROW” MODIFICATION NOR IS IT NECESSARY TO ALLOW FAMILIES TO  
9 STAY TOGETHER

10 Defendants urge the Court to provide an “exemption” for ICE family residential  
11 centers from the licensing provisions of the Agreement. Defs’ Memo [Dkt. # 435-1] at  
12 19. The licensing provisions require that minors not released under Paragraph 14 “be  
13 placed temporarily in a licensed program.” Agreement ¶ 19; *see also* Agreement  
14 Exhibit 1 (laying out the minimum standards for conditions in facilities holding  
15 minors).<sup>17</sup> Defendants argue that an exemption is necessary because of ongoing and  
16 unresolved disputes over the ability of States to license these types of facilities that  
17 house both adults and children. *Id.* at 17-18.  
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24 “[t]he *Ms. L* decree ... provides that the parent [of a *Flores* class member] *may consent*  
25 to the release of the child without the parent.” Notice re Compliance [Dkt. #447] at 8  
26 (emphasis supplied). This authority “permits the continued operation of the provisions  
of the Flores Agreement governing release of the child ...” *Id.*

27 <sup>17</sup> A “licensed program” is one “that is licensed by an appropriate State agency to  
28 provide residential, group, or foster care services for dependent children.” Agreement ¶  
6.

1 This Court has previously ruled: “The purpose of the licensing provision is to  
2 provide class members the essential protection of regular and comprehensive oversight  
3 by an independent child welfare agency.” Chambers Order [Dkt. # 177] at 14.  
4

5 Defendants assert, as they did before, that an exemption is necessary because of  
6 disputes over the ability of States to license facilities that house both adults and  
7 children. Defs’ Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at 17-18. This Court has previously responded to  
8 this argument: “The fact that the family residential centers cannot be licensed by an  
9 appropriate state agency simply means that, under the Agreement, class members  
10 cannot be housed in these facilities except as permitted by the Agreement.” Chambers  
11 Order [Dkt. # 177] at 12-13.  
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14 Defendants have offered no significant change in circumstances warranting  
15 revision of Paragraph 19 of the Agreement so that it’s terms would no longer apply to  
16 accompanied children.  
17

#### 18 **IV. CONCLUSION**

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20 Defendants argue that the “equities” and “human considerations” support the  
21 “narrow” relief they seek. Def. Memo [Dkt. #435-1] at 19. Revoking the right of  
22 accompanied class members to prompt release from custody or placement in a facility  
23 properly licensed for their care, is hardly a “narrow” matter, and the “equities” and  
24 “human considerations” hardly suggest that detained accompanied minors should now  
25 be stripped of the protections they possess under the Agreement for no other reason  
26 than President Trump’s ordering the Attorney General to move this Court to modify  
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1 the Agreement as part of his attempt to remedy the chaos his decision to separate  
2 children from their parents caused in the first place.

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4 Defendants have failed entirely to meet their burden of establishing a significant  
5 change in circumstances meriting modification of the Agreement.

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1 Accordingly, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court summarily deny  
2 Defendants' *ex parte* application.

3  
4 Dated: June 29, 2018

Respectfully submitted

5 CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS &  
6 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW  
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8 Carlos Holguín

9 LA RAZA CENTRO LEGAL, INC.  
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16 Of counsel:

17 YOUTH LAW CENTER  
18 Virginia Corrigan

19 /s/ Peter Schey  
20 *Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

21  
22 ///

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Peter Schey, declare and say as follows:

I am over the age of eighteen years of age and am a party to this action. I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. My business address is 256 S. Occidental Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90057, in said county and state.

On June 29, 2018 I electronically filed the following document(s):

- **Plaintiffs' Opposition to Defendant's Ex Parte Application for Limited Relief from the Flores Settlement Agreement**

with the United States District Court, Central District of California by using the CM/ECF system. Participants in the case who are registered CM/ECF users will be served by the CM/ECF system.

/s/ Peter Schey  
*Attorney for Plaintiffs*