



June 27, 2018

The Honorable Borris L. Miles  
State Senator  
State Capitol Building, Room 3S.3  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Senator Miles:

Thank you for your letter concerning Southwest Key Programs' application to operate a residential child care operation in Houston. The Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) Child Care Licensing (CCL) program is responsible for the application process, licensing, and continued inspection and oversight of these operations to ensure they comply with all state standards and safely meet the needs of the children in their care.

CCL is reviewing Southwest Key's license application for this operation, which would be located at 419 Emancipation Avenue in Houston. You expressed concern that CCL has cited Southwest Key's other facilities for 246 deficiencies. While this total number across all of its operations could raise questions, Southwest Key has been correcting all deficiencies at its individual operations within required timeframes. The application process also requires CCL to evaluate each operation independently in determining whether or not to grant a license.

Additionally, the enforcement framework provided in the Texas Administrative Code dictates what actions CCL can take when an operation is cited. The deficiencies cited at individual Southwest Key operations do not show a pattern of more serious issues that would merit enforcement action at those facilities or prohibit Southwest Key from applying for additional licenses.

Federal policy on placement of migrant children is not within our purview to regulate. CCL's authority requires any child care operation to be assessed solely on whether it meets all state standards to safely serve children.

Our licensure and regulation of these operations protects child health and safety, and we take this responsibility seriously. Please know we will continue to closely monitor all of these operations, and we greatly appreciate your advocacy for the children in their care.

If you have additional questions or need additional information, Amanda Martin, Director of Government and Stakeholder Relations, serves as the lead staff on this matter and she can be reached by email at [Amanda.Martin04@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Amanda.Martin04@hhsc.state.tx.us) or by telephone at (512)487-3300.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kara Crawford for".

Cecile Young  
Acting Executive Commissioner