



BORRIS L. MILES

STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 13

COMMITTEES: CRIMINAL JUSTICE • HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES • NATURAL RESOURCES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • NOMINATIONS

March 11, 2022

Governor Greg Abbott
State of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott:

Today, I was appointed to the Texas Senate Special Committee on Child Protective Services by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick. I am grateful for the appointment and thank the lieutenant governor for understanding that the safety and protection of our children is one of my most important priorities since becoming a member of the Texas Legislature. But, more action is necessary in light of the most recent failures of the foster care system.

As you know, the reports coming out of Bastrop regarding The Refuge and their contract with the Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) are an absolute nightmare. For victims of sex trafficking to be victimized a second time at a state-contracted facility is unbelievable. To say that the state failed these children is a gross understatement. Texas is currently in a decade-long lawsuit over its treatment of foster children and somehow things are getting worse for these children, not better.

How could the Department of Family and Protective Services wait seven weeks to remove children from a facility where a credible report of abuse had been made and followed up by more credible reports? The decision by DFPS not to remove all the children from the facility because they "*thought*" the person responsible for the abuse had been fired shows a clear lack of concern for the children's well-being.

It took DFPS seven weeks to notify the federal court about abuse occurring at The Refuge. But what is most striking is that when DFPS was asked in open court by the federal judge whether you had received the letter DFPS presented to the court informing the court of the situation, DFPS remained silent. No one answered the judge. When did you find out about this situation?

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Governor, our children must be our top priority in Texas. When you called three special sessions last year to address your priority issues, you left out the foster care crisis. I ask that you prioritize the issues facing the Department of Family and Protective Services and call a special session to fix this agency. We must do all we can to keep our most vulnerable children safe.

Keep the Faith, Keep the Fight,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Borris L. Miles', written in a cursive style.

Borris L. Miles
Senator, District 13