



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

JB PRITZKER
GOVERNOR

January 12, 2024

Governor Abbott,

The ongoing international migration crisis that our nation faces demands a strong, compassionate, and humane response. We agree that our nation needs immigration reform, but instead of advocating for that, you have chosen to sow chaos in an attempt to score political points. You are now sending asylum seekers from Texas to the Upper Midwest in the middle of winter — many without coats, without shoes to protect them from the snow — to a city whose shelters are already overfilled with migrants you sent here. Chicago's temperatures this weekend are forecast to drop below zero. Your callousness, sending buses and planes full of migrants in this weather, is now life-threatening to every one of the arrivals. Hundreds of children's and families' health and survival are at risk due to your actions.

We refuse to play your political game of exploiting the most vulnerable for the sake of culture wars and talking points. You seem to have no interest in working on bipartisan solutions to the border crisis because that would put an end to your cruel political game, but I am writing to you today hoping to appeal to your humanity. Over the coming days, Illinois will experience a dangerous winter storm and subzero temperatures. I strongly urge you to stop sending people to Illinois in these conditions. You are dropping off asylum seekers without alerting us to their arrivals, at improper locations at all hours of the night. As we grapple with the existing challenges of your ongoing manufactured crisis, the next few days are a threat to the families and children you are sending here. I am pleading with you to at least pause these transports in order to save lives.

There is much more that needs to be done by the federal government to provide aid to asylum seekers and to secure the border. I understand that the border crisis is untenable for border states. Illinois, and all other states, especially Texas, ought to lobby Congress immediately to vote for bipartisan immigration reform.

While action is pending at the federal level, I plead with you for mercy for the thousands of people who are powerless to speak for themselves. Please, while winter is threatening vulnerable people's lives, suspend your transports and do not send more people to our state. We are asking you to help prevent additional deaths. We should be able to come together in a bipartisan fashion to urge Congress to act. But right now, we are talking about human beings and their survival. I hope we can at least agree on saving lives right now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JB Pritzker".

Governor JB Pritzker
State of Illinois