



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

December 21, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

It was recently reported that officials at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) compromised the personal information of at least 46 Cuban nationals who were scheduled to be deported to Cuba. Specifically, a DHS official revealed that these 46 ICE detainees were among the 6,252 asylum seekers whose personal data was leaked by the Department in November. The Cuban regime has now put a target on their back.

This leak is life-threatening and unacceptable. The publication of the personal information of more than 6,252 at-risk, vulnerable, asylum-seeking individuals could have a disastrous effect on their lives. As you are aware, federal law prohibits the publication of the personal information of asylum-seekers. Please take the necessary steps to make sure this never happens again. The United States cannot continue to be a beacon of freedom if we put those fleeing persecution and violence at risk for seeking refuge here.

It is dangerous to deal with totalitarian dictatorships. This incident demonstrates how dangerous and risky it is to maintain close diplomatic relations with totalitarian dictatorships like Cuba. Anything that is said in a meeting with the Cuban regime can and will be used against the political opposition, which is in constant risk of detainment and torture. The safety and well-being of refugees fleeing from the regime must be the guiding principle of our Cuban migrant policy.

You must protect these individuals at all costs. As a result of this leak, the safety of these 46 asylum seekers simply cannot be assured. Verbal assurances from the Cuban regime cannot be trusted and there is no way to accurately verify their well-being in Cuba. Considering the actions by the United States government that now puts these individuals at risk, I respectfully request that the Department of Homeland Security undertake the necessary steps to protect these individuals and reassess their asylum petitions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elvira Salazar".

María Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress