



Illegal Migrants Turning to More Dangerous Border Crossings

Kevin McAleenan, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner, speaking with reporters on December 31, refuted charges by immigrant rights advocates that the Trump administration's stricter border control enforcement was driving illegal border crossers to take more dangerous paths, though increasing numbers of Guatemalan families attempting to enter the United States illegally are avoiding border areas where enforcement is high and choosing more dangerous crossings in remote deserts.



"When you start interfering with a migration pattern, you better be prepared to deal with the consequences," the San Diego *Union-Tribune* quoted Ruben Garcia, director of a migrant shelter in El Paso, as saying.

However McAleenan blamed the risk posed to migrants on smugglers, not government enforcement efforts. He said smugglers are taking families into "new and remote areas" to avoid paying crossing fees to the cartels that control the more heavily traveled routes.

Because of the harsh conditions during the remote desert border crossings, some children have become ill. The mass media and immigrant rights groups have blamed Customs and Border Protection for the deaths of two young migrant children from Guatemala who allegedly died in CBP custody during the past three weeks. When Martha Raddatz, co-anchor of NBC's *This Week with George Stephanopoulos* asked McAleenan during a December 30 interview about this, he said: "It's been over a decade since we've had a child die anywhere in our processes." As for the two children who died, McAleenan said: "Our agents did everything they could as soon as these children manifested symptoms of illness to save their lives."

McAleenan said that one girl started to vomit on a bus ride to the nearest Border Patrol station. When she arrived, an agent who's a paramedic got her into emergency medical service and got a life flight to mover her to a children's hospital in El Paso. In the other case, a Border Patrol agent noticed Felipe Alonzo-Gomez's symptoms and took him and his father to the emergency room, where he was treated by doctors in Almagorda, New Mexico, but died afterward.

A [report in *The New American*](#) on December 29 revealed that an autopsy showed that the boy died of the flu, but that hospital staff gave him amoxicillin, an antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections. Unfortunately amoxicillin does not help the flu because antibiotics don't work on viruses.

As tragic as young Felipe's death was, it was the result of misdiagnosis at the hospital, as well as his parents' unfortunate decision to take him on a long, arduous journey because they believed that immigration judges won't deport illegal aliens with children in tow.



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on January 2, 2019

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