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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Mississippi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, August 8, 2019

**NUMEROUS PREVIOUSLY DETAINED ALIENS WITH SMALL CHILDREN RELEASED ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS**

Jackson, Miss. – As part of an immigration enforcement operation throughout central Mississippi yesterday, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) concluded their processing of detained aliens last night and followed their procedures by releasing many on humanitarian grounds, announced Jere Miles, HSI Special Agent in Charge in New Orleans, and Mike Hurst, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi.

Preliminarily, it appears that approximately 30 detained aliens were released yesterday on humanitarian grounds at the individual sites where they were initially encountered, and another 270 detained aliens were released after being processed by HSI at the National Guard base in Pearl and returned to the place where they were originally encountered.

Pursuant to HSI procedures as part of this operation, all those detained yesterday were asked when they arrived at the processing center whether they had any children who were at school or childcare and needed to be picked up. In order to make it possible for detained aliens to contact family members and address childcare issues, HSI made cell phones available for use by detained aliens to make arrangements for the care of their children or other dependents. In addition, HSI had liaison officers working with the school districts to facilitate this process.

As part of HSI procedures pursuant to this operation, if HSI encountered two alien parents with minor children at home, HSI released one of the parents on humanitarian grounds and returned that individual to the place from which they were arrested. HSI similarly released any single alien parent with minor children at home on humanitarian grounds and physically returned that person to the place where he or she was originally detained. Based on these procedures, it is believed that all children were with at least one of their parents as of last night.

If there are children who are without parents, individuals are required by state law to contact Mississippi Child Protective Services ("CPS") at **1-800-222-8000**. CPS will assist in taking care of that child and placing the child in a safe foster care home or licensed facility.

Family members of those detained can call ICE's toll-free detainee locator hotline for information about an individual's detention location and status, as well as information about the removal process. This hotline operates in English and Spanish. The phone number is **1-888-351-4024**.

This operation is part of multiple ongoing criminal investigations and these investigations continue.

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**Topic(s):**  
Immigration

**Component(s):**  
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