



Cynthia A. Rice

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To: Jose Cerda III/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Border initiative child support angle

The Texas child support director tells me that there's a child support angle to the border initiative. He's on one of Reno's task forces, and Justice and HHS have apparently developed a plan to increase child support collections along the Texas-Mexican border. It sounds like it has announcement possibilities.

Does this ring any bells to you? Forgive my ignorance , but have we announced the border initiative yet? If not, what's the timetable?



Office of the Attorney General

State of Texas

DAN MORALES
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January 29, 1998

Ms. Cynthia A. Rice
Special Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Ms. Rice:

I want to thank you for your gracious hospitality that you extended to me and my wife (Melissa) during our luncheon at the White House on January 27, 1998. I thoroughly enjoyed our discussion and opportunity to visit with you and Judge Ross.

As we discussed, under Texas Attorney General Dan Morales, we have pursued a variety of new initiatives designed to increase child support collections and paternity establishments in our state. Since we implemented our federally mandated automated computer system on September 8, 1997, we have distributed over \$200 million dollars for Texas children. Using various law enforcement strategies (i.e. Child Support Evader Program on the Internet, increased criminal enforcement efforts at the state and federal level, and our recently proposed "Border Initiative") are getting the attention of non-custodial parents and providing financial resources for needy children.

For example, our proposed "Border Initiative," would bring the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement and U.S. Justice Department together to increase enforcement and collections for children along the U.S. and Mexico border. We have thousands of cases that generate no financial resources due to the flight of non-custodial parents across our border to avoid meeting their court ordered obligations. Working together with our Mexican colleagues and federal partners should produce positive outcomes for needy children residing along our border.

As I indicated during our visit, Judge Ross has made a profound difference through his leadership of our nation's IV-D program. Approximately 4 years ago, while I was driving him to an event in San Antonio, he described his vision for the nation's Child Support Enforcement program.

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I remember commenting to him that he was preaching a revolution of new ideas and outcomes that I had never heard before from a high ranking government official and while having served as a former federal employee.

Four years later, he has accomplished those novel ideas and many more, which has lead to record collections and paternity establishments for our nation's children! Also, his style of management allows for differing opinions and opportunities to look "beyond the box" to address the operational challenges and opportunities facing our respective programs. Adequately funding IV-D operations, timely and successful implementation of welfare reform provisions, on-going automated systems challenges, increasing interstate and international collections, and furthering state and federal partnerships, are but a few examples.

Unfortunately, General Morales has announced that he will not be seeking a third term as Texas Attorney General. With this in mind, my tenure as IV-D Director may soon come to an end. However, should you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to give me a call. Also, should your travels ever bring you to the Lone Star State, feel free to give me a holler.

Thanks again for your commitment and interest in our nation's Child Support Enforcement program!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Vela".

David Vela
IV-D Director