

**Prepared Statement of Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hearing on Oversight of the Obama Administration's
Criminal Alien Removal Policies
Wednesday, December 2, 2015**

Over the last several years, the Obama administration has made many public statements about focusing immigration enforcement resources on removing undocumented criminals from the United States.

In one such statement, the President promised, “we’re focusing our limited resources and people on violent offenders and people convicted of crimes – not just families.”

But, although there has been more funding for enforcement in 2015, the President’s promise goes unfulfilled and many criminals remain in our communities.

Too often we hear stories of undocumented or gang-affiliated violent criminals who are released from custody or receive protection in so called sanctuary jurisdictions.

And since our hearing on the administration’s misdirected immigration enforcement in July, unfortunately, there have been even more victims.

Recently, I sent a letter to Secretary Johnson about the murder of a teenager from Loudoun County—just beyond the beltway from where we all sit today.

Danny Centeno Miranda was 17 when he was allegedly murdered on the way to his high school bus stop by three undocumented criminals with ties to the MS-13 gang.

These gang members were in Homeland Security custody, but released and told to appear for their court date in August. They never showed up to their hearing. The murder occurred several days later.

Across the country in California, Francisco Javier Chavez was arrested for brutally beating a two year old baby girl. Although Chavez had been previously convicted three times, he was still not deemed a priority by this administration, and is currently out on bail.

When will enough be enough? Even those with violent criminal histories aren’t being removed, as promised, to the extent they should be, and American citizens are paying the price while law enforcement officers are instructed to look the other way.

The administration says it does not have the resources to enforce the law against all undocumented criminals, and as a result, must prioritize deportations.

But the Obama administration appears to be accomplishing less with more resources. There are currently about 900,000 undocumented immigrants present in the United States who have been ordered to leave the country, but have not. And despite receiving \$3.4 billion for detention and

removal operations in 2015, Homeland Security only managed to remove roughly 63,000 undocumented criminals from the United States.

However, in 2014, the department removed about 87,000 undocumented criminals with a budget of \$2.8 billion.

A lack of resources are not the problem. It's a lack of will. And the policies of this administration prove it.

When first preparing for this hearing, several administration officials informed this committee that they were unable to testify because the hearing wasn't "in response to a particular crisis."

Congressional oversight isn't contingent on a crisis. And when you listen to the testimony today, keep in mind that there are 179,027 undocumented criminals with final orders of removal at large in the United States today, thousands of victims, and many of the agency's own officers who are unable to do the job they signed up to do.

Do we still think there is no crisis?

Today, we'll hear from Assistant Secretary Saldana about the effectiveness of the Priority Enforcement Program, and the state of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's ability to remove criminals off the streets, and keep Americans safe. I look forward to hearing from all the witnesses, and will reserve the remainder of my time for Senator Sessions to speak.