

JIM COSTA

16TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA
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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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TRANSATLANTIC LEGISLATORS' DIALOGUE
CHAIR
NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
MEMBER

February 19, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

This letter serves to express my alarm about recent reports that the United States is negotiating with the Lao People's Democratic Republic to allow the deportation of long-time Hmong and Lao residents of the U.S. If carried out, this policy has the potential to tear apart families in my district and may also put the individuals deported at physical risk.

There are many serious questions that arise, but I would specifically like to ask:

1. What prompted the negotiation of this agreement with the Lao People's Democratic Republic?
2. Do we have agreements with any other governments to receive deported Hmong or Lao residents of the United States?
3. How many people would be subject to deportation under this agreement?
4. Has the Department of State attempted to study the impact this agreement would have on communities in the US?
5. Has the Lao government made any commitments about where deported individuals will be resettled and housed? If so, what are the details of those commitments?

As you know, the State Department's most recent Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Laos raises major concerns about conditions in the country. Deporting U.S. residents there could easily put them at risk. I strongly oppose any efforts to separate families that have been in the United States for decades by knowingly sending U.S. residents into dangerous and potentially life-threatening circumstances.

Sincerely,

JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

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February 19, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, DC 20528-0525

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

This letter serves to express my alarm about recent reports that the United States is negotiating with the Lao People's Democratic Republic to allow the deportation of long-time Hmong and Lao residents of the U.S. If carried out, this policy has the potential to tear apart families in my district and may also put the individuals deported at physical risk.

There are many serious questions that arise, but I would specifically like to ask:

1. What prompted the negotiation of this agreement with the Lao People's Democratic Republic?
2. How many people would be subject to deportation under this agreement, and how will they be chosen?
3. When are these deportations expected to begin?
4. Has DHS attempted to study the impact this agreement would have on communities in the US?
5. Has the Lao government made any commitments about where deported individuals will be resettled and housed? If so, what are the details of those commitments?

As you know, the State Department's most recent Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Laos raises major concerns about conditions in the country. Deporting U.S. residents there could easily put them at risk. I strongly oppose any efforts to separate families that have been in the United States for decades by knowingly deporting U.S. residents into dangerous and potentially life-threatening circumstances.

Sincerely,

JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

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