

Testimony of Tammy Nobles
Committee on Homeland Security
Voices for the Victims: The Heartbreaking Reality of the Mayorkas Border Crisis
January 18th, 2024

Good morning and thank you for having me here today. My name is Tammy Nobles. I am the mother of Kayla Hamilton.

July 24th, 2002, was one of the best days of my life. I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and named her Kayla Marie. She loved to smile and laugh. She always kept her friends close and never forgot anyone. She was kind, caring, thoughtful and funny. She loved life and God. She showed the world that being yourself was ok and you didn't have to follow everyone else. But sadly, on July 27th, 2022, I received the worst news that a parent doesn't want to hear that my newly 20-year-old daughter Kayla Hamilton was murdered in her own room and left on the floor like trash.

The illegal MS-13 known gang member brutally raped and murdered my daughter by strangling her with a cord and robbed her of \$6.00. During the attack Kayla called her boyfriend for help but went to voicemail. The voicemail of the murderer strangling Kayla was 2 minutes and 30 seconds long.

DHS employees failed to visually inspect the assailant by lifting his shirt to check for gang related tattoos. Had DHS employees performed a visual inspection of the assailant's body, they would have seen MS-13 gang related tattoos on his body, disqualifying him from entering the U.S. DHS employees failed to make a simple phone call to the El Salvador government to verify if assailant was on an MS-13 gang affiliation list. Had they done so, El Salvador government officials would have confirmed that the assailant was a known MS-13 gang member with a prior criminal history. DHS supervisors had failed to train and supervise DHS employees to properly screen minors attempting to enter US soil from El Salvador.

The operational neglect committed by DHS carried over into DHHS whose operational neglect further sealed my daughter's fate. DHHS's operational neglect included its employees violating clearly articulated protocol requiring a minor to be placed with a "verified" relative before entering the US. DHHS employees neglected and recklessly failed to verify a legitimate family member of the assailant or sponsor before allowing him to enter U.S. soil. There were clear inconsistencies in the DHS and DHHS records regarding the identity of the relative to whom the assailant was released. Ultimately, DHHS's failures allowed the MS-13 gang member, as a minor, to rent a room in a trailer park from another individual who was also an illegal immigrant. There was also a lack of transparency by DHS and DHHS, including but not limited to DHHS failure to provide House of Representative Chairman Jim Jordan a copy of its audit report.

Let's take a moment and think about how Kayla felt that day. How scared she must have been that day knowing that she was dying. And if she was going to see her mommy again, her baby sister, her brother or her cat Oreo. Kayla fought for her life that day with all that she had and in the end she lost to an individual that wasn't even supposed to be allowed in the country.

For me this not a political issue this a safety issue for everyone living in the United States. This could have been anyone's daughter. I don't want any other parent to live the nightmare that I am living. I am her voice now and I am going to fight with everything I have to get her story told and bring awareness of the issue at the border.

If we had stricter border policies my daughter would still be alive today. Nothing will bring my daughter back nor fix the pain of not having her here, but I want to prevent this from happening to someone else's child. This isn't about immigration this is about protecting everyone in the United States.