

Testimony of Tammy Nobles
Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity, Security and Enforcement
The Biden-Harris Border Crisis: Victim Perspectives
September 10, 2024

Good morning to the members of the committee and thank you for allowing me to speak.

On July 27th, 2022, I received the worst news that a parent can ever get that my newly 20-year-old daughter Kayla Hamilton was found deceased with injuries consistent with homicide. There are no words that describe the heart wrenching soul crushing pain of losing your child so horrifically. Kayla was a happy and loving person. She loved life and God. She loved going to church and learning about Jesus and the Bible stories. She showed the world that being yourself was ok and you didn't have to follow everyone else. She was extremely ambitious and despite having autism she was determined to make her way in this world. She loved animals, especially her cat Oreo, and cared about the homeless.

At first, we knew very few details of the murder until an arrest. At the end of March of 2022 Walter Javier Martinez was apprehended by Border Patrol crossing illegally into the U.S. at the southwest border in Rio Grande City, Texas. Martinez stated that he was 16 years old and feared gang activity in his country in El Salvador. As an unaccompanied alien child Martinez was granted access into the United States with no background checks or vetting. Homeland Security did not verify the sponsor and allowed Martinez to go live in Frederick, Maryland. There were behavior issues with him living with the sponsor and he ended up staying with his half-brother who lived in the same neighborhood mobile park as Kayla. There were behavioral issues with Walter, so the half-brother called the property manager/owners of the mobile home park which I thought was a legit company. We learned that an illegal immigrant couple owned the mobile homes and took it upon themselves to allow this 16-year-old to rent a room in the same mobile home as Kayla.

Martinez was living there less than 5 days before he violently and brutally murdered my daughter. Walter Javier Martinez broke into Kayla's room while she was sleeping that morning. Kayla left a voicemail on her boyfriend's phone. According to the voicemail a struggle was going on and Kayla can be heard crying, groaning, and struggling to breathe. Martinez can be heard on the voicemail hushing her and near the end telling her "I'm sorry" in Spanish while strangling her with her phone cord. After she was deceased Martinez tied her up and sexually assaulted her. This was confirmed by the anal swabs that matched Martinez's DNA. Kayla fought for her life that day. She had bruises up and down her arms, her fingers, the left side of her face, her back and down her leg and deep wounds to her neck from the cord.

Local police knew right from the beginning he was the main suspect just by their initial investigation. It took the Aberdeen police to confirm that Martinez was a known gang member of MS-13, and that Martinez had a criminal record in El Salvador in 2020. If Homeland Security

did a background check, then they would have known this, and Martinez wouldn't have been able to be on U.S. soil. With Martinez being 16 years old Maryland Child Protective Services took custody of Martinez until the DNA results came back. The Aberdeen Police department was very transparent to CPS. The Aberdeen Police department demanded that Martinez be held in a secure location because he was a threat to society based on the murder and injuries of Kayla Hamilton. It was later learned that Child Protective Services placed Martinez in a group home with other children and then placed Martinez in a foster home which allowed him to be enrolled in High School. This was also confirmed by an investigative reporter with Fox 45 Project Baltimore who got an actual confirmation from Edgewood High School. While in jail a letter was intercepted that Martinez wrote confessing to 4 murders and 2 rapes. Martinez ended up pleading guilty and taking the plea deal of 70 years. Since he was a juvenile at the time, even tried as an adult Martinez couldn't get life without the possibility of parole.

This not a political issue this a safety issue for everyone living here in the United States. Not only was Kayla's life put at risk and taken so many other children and adults were at risk. The Biden-Harris administration is not putting the American citizens safety first.

The United States Government must secure our border. We need to properly vet and background check all border crossers. This isn't about immigration this is about protecting everyone in the United States.