

Ex-ICE Director Says He Considered 'Beating' Latino Congressman During Hearing

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By Jason Lemon On 7/15/19 at 4:10 PM EDT

U.S. Thomas Homan Ice Fox & friends Congress

Former Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) acting director Thomas Homan said on Monday that he thought about "beating" Democratic Representative Jesús García during a congressional hearing last week.



During the Friday hearing, Homan was visibly angered as he responded to a line of questioning by García, who is Mexican-American and represents Illinois. The former ICE director, who served in the acting leadership role under President Donald Trump from January 2017 until June 2018 when he retired, discussed the interaction in a Monday morning interview with *Fox & Friends*.

"I hesitated a minute before I started yelling because I actually think about getting up and throwing that man a beating right there in the middle of the room [sic]," Homan admitted. "Because when you tell somebody that spent their career saving lives that I don't care about dying children and I'm a racist, that's where I broke and that's where I had enough," he asserted.



Thomas Homan, acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, delivers remarks during a law enforcement roundtable on sanctuary cities held by President Donald Trump at the White House on March 20, 2018 in Washington, D.C. Kevin Dietsch-Poo/Getty

Prior to Homan's angry response on Friday, Garcia had lashed out at the "zero-tolerance" migrant family separation policy implemented by the Trump administration until it was struck down by a federal judge last year. "Mr. Homan, do you understand that the consequences of separation of many children will be lifelong trauma and carried across generations?" the congressman asked. Pointing out that he himself was a father, Garcia asked if Homan had children and how he could "possibly allow this to happen" under his watch.

"Do you not care? Is it because these children do not look like children that are around you? I don't get it. Have you ever held a deceased child in your arms?" Garcia asked. At least five migrant children have died in custody since December.

"First of all," Homan responded, "your comments are disgusting."

Garcia shot back: "I find your comments disgusting as well, sir."

Homan yelled over the congressman to continue. "I've served my country 34 years and yes, I held a five-year-old boy in my arms," he said, claiming he said a prayer for that deceased child. "For you to sit there and insult my integrity and my love of my country and for children, that's why this whole thing needs to be fixed."

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As acting director of ICE, Homan served during the Trump administration's family separation policy, which tore thousands of immigrant children from their parents or guardians. That controversial policy drew national and international condemnation. [A report](#) from the Department of Health and Human Services' Inspector General found earlier this year that the Trump administration did not even know how many children had been separated from their families. Furthermore, government officials had lost track of the whereabouts of many children, making reuniting them with their parents or legal guardians, as a federal judge had ordered, even more difficult.

As Garcia pointed out, detaining minors and separating them from their parents can cause lifelong psychological trauma, according to experts. Dr. Judy Ho, a clinical psychologist, [told CNN](#) earlier this month that detained children "have higher risk of depression and suicidal thoughts as they grow older." She also warned of the possibility of them suffering from PTSD and "having functional difficulties as adults as well as worse physical outcomes."