

**Written Testimony of Alexis J Nungaray,
Mother of Jocelyn L Nungaray**

House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary
The Biden-Harris Border Crisis: Victim Perspectives
September 10, 2024

Good morning members of the committee. I wanted to extend my gratitude and say thank you all for having me here and being able to share my daughter's story on how the current administration's open border policy has affected us in Texas.

I was 14 years old when I found out I was going to be a mother. I knew I was still a child myself and wasn't really sure how I was going to do it but I knew I was going to give it everything I had. Everyone in my family was terrified that I was going to ruin my life by being a teen mom. They tried to throw every option at me as a way out because I still had my whole life ahead of me. Regardless of my young age, I needed to do what was right, which was be the best mom I could be to my daughter. I fought for her.

December 27, 2011, was the day the rest of my life changed for the better. Jocelyn Lisel Nungaray was born. She was so beautiful. I couldn't stop staring at her. I was just in awe that I was able to create something so beautiful. She was the sweetest, happiest and chunkiest little baby. She grew up to be this spunky, quirky, funny and still so beautiful little 12 year old young lady. She had a personality like no other. She was so caring, loving, thoughtful, and one of the greatest friends you could ask for. She made everyone in a room laugh. She had the most creative mind, so very talented. She had the biggest dream to be an actress and swore she was going to be famous one day.

It has been 2 months and 25 days since my daughter has gained her wings. On Monday, June 17, 2024, I received the worst news any parent can receive. My daughter, Jocelyn Nungaray was murdered and thrown in a bayou of water underneath a creek like she was garbage.

On the Sunday night before that, I went to bed. I told my daughter Jocelyn "good night" and told her I loved her. She was there when I closed my eyes that night. Then that Monday morning when I opened my eyes, she was gone. She was a preteen, months away from becoming a teenager, out doing what teenagers do. Going to the corner store to get a soda, she was being preyed on by two illegal Venezuelan immigrants. They saw an innocent young girl and made her a target for their horrendous actions. That Monday morning, June 17, 2024, was absolutely terrifying, waking up to know your child is missing and frantically searching the area her phone was pinging, just 2 minutes away from our home. Driving up to my daughter's pinged location to see crime scene

tape and officers by the bridge, my heart sank even deeper. I ran out of my car right to the officers but they wouldn't let me get too close. I explained that I woke up to my daughter missing and her phone was pinging just feet away from where we were standing, frantically asking if they had seen her. The officer said he hadn't and didn't really have any news to give me. He took down all the description I could give him about my daughter Jocelyn and he told me to keep my phone nearby. Within 45 minutes, I received a phone call from Sergeant Oliver, asking me to come downtown to discuss my daughter's whereabouts. I'm still hanging onto hope that my 12 year old daughter Jocelyn Nungaray is still out there somewhere. Then, they brought me up to the floor labeled "Homicide Division." My heart sank even more. I didn't know what to think, still hanging onto hope. After being taken to a room and speaking for half an hour about every minute I remember leading up to my last moments with her, to finally being told that they did find a body where my daughter Jocelyn's phone was pinging, followed by seeing the photo I showed Sergeant Oliver, that confirmed their suspicions and they did believe the Jane Doe body that was found under the bridge matches the picture I showed of my daughter, Jocelyn Nungaray. My heart shattered in that exact moment. I felt like I was placed in an alternate universe, like reality wasn't real. I couldn't believe what was just told to me.

There weren't very many details he was able to give me at that moment, so I had to do the waiting game while I was told they endlessly were trying to find who did this to my daughter, Jocelyn Nungaray. Even though Sergeant Oliver told me they believed who they found was indeed my daughter Jocelyn, I still was hanging on to hope it really wasn't Jocelyn and it was unfortunately another little girl who just so happened to look just like my daughter. A day after being told about my daughter, I was told they were going to need to release pictures of the illegal immigrants and my daughter from surveillance footage to the local news stations to help find the ones who murdered my daughter, Jocelyn. They proceeded to tell me how my daughter was murdered, she was strangled to death, no clothing from the waist down, hands and ankles each tied together and thrown under the bridge in the shallow creek water left like she was nothing but garbage. I was devastated to hear how they left her. The community of Houston gave me and my family the biggest support. It took a matter of just 24 hours for there to be suspects and for them to be found, arrested, and both charged with capital murder. Within those same hours, I received a phone call from the medical forensics office confirming by dental records that the body was in fact my daughter Jocelyn. My heart shattered in that moment.

A couple of days went by before we learned more about these illegal immigrants and what happened that night. The illegal immigrants were Johan Jose Martinez Rangel, 22 years old, and Franklin Pena Ramos, 26 years old. Both are from Venezuela. Border Patrol apprehended Johan Martinez near El Paso on March 14 but he was released that same day on an order of recognizance with a notice to appear. Border Patrol also apprehended Franklin Pena on May 28 also near El Paso. On that same day he was apprehended, a judge also ordered Franklin Pena to

appear in court at a later date. There were over 300 detention center beds available they could have had them detained until their immigration court hearings, but no. Because of the Biden-Harris administration's open borders, "catch and release" policies, they were enrolled in an "Alternatives to Detention" program. This meant they were released into the interior of the United States. It was not even a full 3 weeks later that they would take my daughter Jocelyn Nungaray's life. They saw a young girl, my daughter Jocelyn, and placed a target on her without her even knowing. They asked her for directions and being the helpful young girl she was, she was trying to help them. They were seen on videos at 12:57 am on June 17 walking across the street walking down by the bayou under the bridge. At 3:04 am, only the two illegal immigrants emerged. They were down there for 2 whole hours. I can't even fathom what was going through Jocelyn's mind knowing she was never coming back home, the amount of fear she was feeling in the last moments of her life being through that awful pain.

Franklin Pena confessed they did something bad. The fact they knew their faces were exposed all over the news, they were trying to ask their boss for money so they could leave town. It was told one of the illegal immigrants told the other one after they were finished to throw Jocelyn down in the bayou under the bridge to "get rid of any DNA." Individuals like that do not have a heart, they are nothing but monsters who are predators and those are the kind of individuals we so openly let in this country.

I believe the Biden-Harris Administration's open border policies are responsible for the death of my 12 year old daughter. The program the two illegal immigrants were enrolled in failed my daughter, Jocelyn. I'm here to use my voice and raise awareness of how broken our country has become with our open border policies. As a U.S citizen it shouldn't be a privilege to have safety in this country, it should be a requirement. My daughter should have been able to safely walk to the store without having to wonder if she was going to make it home or not.

In regard to our failed open border policies, I have been working closely with Senator Ted Cruz to push the Justice for Jocelyn Act of 2024, which would require ICE to fill every single open detention center bed before releasing immigrants who entered the country illegally and to have GPS monitoring tracking of certain immigrants with strict curfew hours restricting them from being able to be out at all hours of the night where it has been proven majority of when crime happens in the late hours of the night and immediately deport those who violate the terms of their release.

My daughter, Jocelyn Nungaray was only 12 years old. She was an innocent kid doing kid things. She did not deserve to have her life ripped away from her and our family. She had her entire life ahead of her. Because of these open border policies, I will never get to see my daughter start high school, never get to see her go off to prom, never get to see her walk down the aisle to get

married, never get to see her have her own kids and never get to see her reach her dreams.... all of it, gone. I now and forever will continuously be her voice and I will not stop fighting for Jocelyn. I come to you all as a grieving mother, to please help make this country change for the greater good. This country needs to make a change. We need to properly secure our borders. We need to be able to have that security knowing we are safe in our own country, and most importantly we need to protect our children. They are the future.