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## **From Border, AG Balderas Meets with Mexican & New Mexican Law Enforcement along the Border; Files New Action Demanding Trump Focus on Prosecuting Violent Criminals, not Separating Families**

*Sunland Park, NM* – Yesterday, New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas urged the federal government to focus its efforts at the Mexican/American border on violent international criminal organizations, instead of on caging children and families in cold jail cells. Balderas met with law enforcement leaders from southern New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico to discuss ongoing efforts to battle international crime and keep it from flowing into New Mexico. While touring 12 miles of the international border in Sunland Park, Balderas discussed with local law enforcement how Sunland Park, one of the safest cities in the entire borderland, is a national model for how to keep out dangerous, violent criminals. Also Monday, Attorney General Hector Balderas joined attorneys general from around the nation in filing a motion that demands changes in the Trump Administration's unfair and un-American prosecution of vulnerable children and families at the United States' southern border.

“The Trump administration should be targeting these violent criminals that are attacking our communities through Human Trafficking, the drug trade, auto theft, and violent crime,” said Attorney General Hector Balderas. “Instead they are caging children, and tearing apart families who are seeking asylum at our southern border, which can impede efforts to prosecute human trafficking and other international crimes. The federal government should learn something from Sunland Park, a New Mexico border community, which is one of the safest towns in New Mexico.”

Monday's filings include a motion that would prevent the federal government from refusing to process asylum seekers who arrive at the Southern U.S. border; would declare family separation for deterrence illegal; requires prompt family reunification for those already separated; prevents immigration officials from basing reunification on withdrawal of asylum claims, agreement to leave the country, or monetary payment; and confirms that detention of families by the federal government is illegal.

AG Balderas also recently led the charge among 21 other AG's within the US to tell President Trump and AG Sessions that ripping families apart is not American. AG Balderas joined those attorneys general in filing a lawsuit against the federal government, and fighting for the human rights of families fleeing violence and persecution. That lawsuit demands that the practice of family separations be made illegal, and that all children that have been separated from their families be returned immediately.

Please see attached for copies of yesterday's filings and some photos from yesterday's border visit.

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