



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL



HARVARD  
MEDICAL SCHOOL

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July 10, 2020

Dear Mr. Gomez Perez,

I am a pediatrician who has been asked to testify at a Congressional hearing about the deaths of several children in Customs and Border Protection (CBP) custody, in hope that such tragedies may be prevented in future. In preparation for the hearing, I have reviewed witness statements, medical records, and autopsy reports regarding your son Felipe's death. I believe that you and your family deserve to learn the results of this review before they are released to the public.

As you know, your son passed away from influenza complicated by a bacterial lung infection. Patients with influenza start to show symptoms within four days of contracting the infection, and Felipe was detained for six days, so he undoubtedly caught the disease during his stay in CBP's crowded detention facilities.

Unfortunately, the medical care that Felipe received during his first visit to the hospital was inadequate. His clinicians missed important clues about the severity of his illness, and they prescribed the wrong medication to treat him. When you later asked the border patrol agents to take Felipe back to the hospital due to his worsening condition, it took nearly an hour and fifteen minutes for the transporting agent to arrive. All of these errors delayed Felipe receiving the medical care that he so urgently needed. Had he received better and more timely medical care, there is a chance that he could have survived.

I hope you know that what happened to Felipe was not your fault. The health care and law enforcement systems that should have protected him, failed him. I will do everything I can to advocate to Congress that the care provided to children at the US border must be improved, so that no other child meets a fate like Felipe's.

I am so very sorry for your loss, and for all that you and your family have been through. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide you with any additional information.

Sincerely,

Fiona Danaher, MD, MPH, FAAP  
Pediatrician, Massachusetts General Hospital Chelsea Pediatrics and Massachusetts General  
Hospital Child Protection Team  
Instructor, Harvard Medical School