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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0306

COMMITTEES:

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ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

August 20, 2024

The Honorable Joesph V. Cuffari
Inspector General
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Dr. Cuffari:

I write to request that the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) conduct a comprehensive investigation into the use of federal funds by Catholic Community Services' Casa Alitas in Tucson, Arizona.

In Fiscal Year 2024 thus far, Pima County, Arizona has received \$21,827,581 through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Shelter and Services Program (SSP). It is my understanding that while Pima County is the fiscal agent, these funds go primarily to Casa Alitas migrant operations. Moreover, it is my understanding that when compared to other SSP grant recipients, the burn rate of funds used by Casa Alitas has been incredibly high.

SSP is meant to provide local communities with relief when dealing with a migrant crisis. However, recent reports¹ indicate corruption, conflicts of interest and the misuse of at least \$200,000 taxpayer dollars. Moreover, these same reports indicate that Casa Alitas did not properly follow procurement processes and may have overpaid vendors. Congress, and the American people deserve to know where our federal dollars are going, and individuals and entities who have taken advantage of these programs should be held accountable.

As such, I respectfully request a comprehensive review of these federal funds, the operations of Casa Alitas, and where applicable, a written response to the following:

1. A review and accounting of all federal dollars provided to Pima County, Arizona through SSP and its predecessor program, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program for Humanitarian relief (EFSP-H), dating back to 2020. Specifically, the dollar amount provided to Catholic Community Services' Casa Alitas.

¹ <https://newrepublic.com/article/183801/casa-alitas-arizona-shady-laundry-deal-scandalizes-migrant-shelter>

2. A review of all procurement processes documented by Catholic Community Services' Casa Alitas.
3. A review and comparison of the cost per migrant, per day, of all funds awarded under SSP to date.
4. A determination as to if Casa Alitas complied with all rules and regulations under their SSP award.
5. A review of whether or not FEMA has adequate oversight controls in place to ensure SSP funds are not misused.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. This information will help Congress in our oversight and legislative functions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juan Ciscomani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Juan Ciscomani
Member of Congress