

# Baldwin campaign: Leah Vukmir's false attacks on Tammy Baldwin's push to keep families together

Posted on Monday, Oct 8, 2018

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

**RECAP:** When pressed on her support of the Trump Administration's family separation policy, Leah Vukmir tried to point fingers and misled voters on Tammy Baldwin's record of supporting comprehensive immigration reform that strengthens our borders while keeping families together.

**THE TRUTH:** In an interview this summer, Leah Vukmir supported the Trump administration family separation policy, saying "There is a process that has to be upheld."

Tammy Baldwin has consistently spoken out against family separation — a policy that did not exist in the Obama White House — and has urged both Democratic and Republican administrations to act on comprehensive immigration reform and keep families together.

- In 2014, Baldwin said it was "critical" that migrant children were "treated humanely", raised concerns over the migrant children "crisis" at the southern border, and voted for increased funding to humanely address the problem.
- In 2015, Baldwin twice urged DHS to end the presumptive detention of families and questioned Obama administration officials on the surge of immigrant minors.
- In 2016, Baldwin called for the release of detained mothers and children seeking asylum from Central America's Northern Triangle, called to fully fund the program that ensures children are released to family members, and called for an end to deportation raids that targeted families, unaccompanied minors fleeing violence in Central America.

## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Leah Vukmir Supported The Trump Administration Family Separation Policy**

**Vukmir: “People Are Taking Advantage Of Our Generosity In This Country [...] There Is A Process That Has To Be Upheld”** “Obviously, and I’m going to have to watch that very closely, but people are taking advantage of our generosity in this country. I believe we are a nation of laws. We have to stand up and uphold those laws. As I said, I’m a daughter of Greek immigrants. I watched my family come over to this country. My father came here. My aunts and uncles and I would sit around the table helping them study for their naturalization and citizenship test. There is a process that has to be upheld.” [UpFront with Mike Gousha, WISN Milwaukee TV, [06/10/2018](#)]

### **2014: Baldwin Said It Was “Critical” That Migrant Children Were “Treated Humanely”**

**Baldwin: “It Is Critical That We Respond Both To Aggressively Stem The Flow Of Migrants And Ensure Those Children Already Here Are Treated Humanely.”** “Sen. Tammy Baldwin: D-Madison: ‘It is critical that we respond both to aggressively stem the flow of migrants and ensure those children already here are treated humanely. We need to provide the resources necessary to respond to this crisis by strengthening enforcement of our laws, increasing our capacity to evaluate these childrens’ cases promptly, and appropriately caring for them while judges determine whether they can remain in the U.S. consistent with our laws. One year ago, the Senate found common ground on comprehensive immigration reform and passed legislation that earned broad bipartisan support. I believe immigration reform will bolster security at our borders, strengthen businesses, boost our economy, and keep more Wisconsin families together.” [Beloit Daily News, [11/13/2014](#)]

### **2014: Baldwin Voted For Increased Funding To Ease Migrant Children Crisis At Southern Border**

**2014: Baldwin Voted For Increased Funding To Ease Migrant Crisis At Southern Border.** “Funds To Ease Border Crisis: Voting 50 for and 44 against, the Senate on July 31 failed to reach the 60 votes needed to advance a bill (S 2648) providing emergency appropriations to help agencies deal with tens of thousands of

unaccompanied child immigrants from Central America who have illegally entered the U.S. The bill would appropriate \$2.7 billion, mainly for border security and resources to care for the children while immigration judges determine whether they qualify for asylum or refugee status or face deportation. In addition, the bill provides \$615 million for fighting wildfires in eight western states and \$225 million to bolster Israel's Iron Dome missile-defense system. A yes vote supported the bill despite GOP arguments that the spending should be offset by increased revenue or cuts elsewhere rather than added to federal debt. Voting yes: Baldwin. Voting no: Johnson." ["How they voted," Oshkosh Northwestern, 08/25/2014]

**2015: In Letter To Homeland Security Secretary Johnson, Baldwin Joined Senators In Calling To "End The Practice Of Presumptive Detention Of Families And Return To The Policy Of Utilizing Detention Only As A Last Resort."**

**2015: Baldwin Joined Senators In Calling On The Department Of Homeland Security To "End The Practice Of Presumptive Detention Of Families And Return To The Policy Of Utilizing Detention Only As A Last Resort."** "We appreciate all that you have done to improve conditions at family detention facilities, however we do not believe there is any system of mass family detention that will work or is consistent with our moral values and historic commitment to provide safe and humane refuge to those fleeing persecution. We urge you to end the practice of presumptive detention of families and return to the policy of utilizing detention only as a last resort, when there is a serious public safety or flight risk that cannot be mitigated by alternatives to detention." [Letter from Senators to The Honorable Jeh Johnson, [6/1/2015](#)]

**2015: Baldwin Question Obama Administration Officials On Immigrant Minor Surge**

**Baldwin Questioned Immigration And Customs Enforcement Official On Child Immigration Surge.** BALDWIN: "Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you and ranking member Carper for holding this hearing, and thank our witnesses for your insight and time. When we held a hearing about a year ago, I was very interested in the discussions that the committee and the witness panel had about root causes of the surge that we experienced in 2014. And it was clear to me that violence and instability in a number of Central American countries were key factors that pushed children to make a very perilous journey to our border. It's critical that we continue to understand the causes so that we can ensure that we don't see

another surge as we did last year.” [CSPAN, [07/05/2015](#)] (VIDEO)

- **Baldwin Questioned U.S. Citizenship And Immigration Services Official On Training Requirements For Child Asylum Cases.** BALDWIN: “Mr. Langlois, you did a great job of sort of outlining the two tracks of asylum proceedings, adversarial and non-adversarial, as a result of Congress’ passing the TVPRA in 2008. You talked quite a bit about some of the training required to conduct child-appropriate interviews, to make sure that asylum officers get that type of specialized knowledge both in asylum cases, and dealing with children. I wonder if you could talk a little bit more in detail about the training, was that initiated in 2009, or was that in response to last year’s surge, or both.” [CSPAN, [07/05/2015](#)] (VIDEO)
- **Baldwin Questioned U.S. Citizenship And Immigration Services Official On Resources Available To Immigrant Minors.** BALDWIN: “And in terms of the resources available to minors who go through your non-adversarial process, tell me about the translation services that are available to minors, and also it’s nonadversarial, but do minors get legal assistance in negotiating that process?” [CSPAN, [07/05/2015](#)] (VIDEO)

### **2016: In Letter To Homeland Security Secretary Johnson, Baldwin Joined Senators In Calling For The Release Of Detained Mothers And Children Seeking Asylum From Central America’s Northern Triangle**

**2016: In Letter To Homeland Security Secretary Johnson, Baldwin Joined Other Senators In Calling For The Release Of Detained Mothers And Children Seeking Asylum From Central America’s Northern Triangle.** “The ongoing use of family detention is wrong. The prolonged detention of the mothers and children in Berks is taking a significant toll on their mental and physical wellbeing. We urge you to review these cases immediately and use your authority to release these children with their mothers unless there is compelling evidence that they pose a specific safety or flight risk that cannot be mitigated through alternatives to detention.” [Letter from Senators to The Honorable Jeh Johnson, [9/27/2016](#)]

- **“We Write To Reiterate Our Strong Belief That The Policy Of Family Detention Is Wrong And Should Be Ended Immediately.”** “We write to reiterate our strong belief that the policy of family detention is wrong and should be ended immediately. Although we were encouraged to hear your announcement in August tha the average length of detention for asylum-

seeking mothers and children from Central America's Northern Triangle has been reduced to 20 days or less, the ongoing use of family detention remains unacceptable." [Letter from Senators to The Honorable Jeh Johnson, [9/27/2016](#)]

**2016: In Letter To The Senate Appropriations Committee, Baldwin Joined Senators In Urging The Committee To Fully Fund The Office Of Refugee Resettlement, To Ensure That While Children "Await Their Immigration Court Hearings, They Are Released To Family Members"**

**2016: Baldwin Joined Senators In Urging The Senate Appropriations Committee To Fully Fund the Office Of Refugee Resettlement.** "We write to strongly urge you to fund the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORJR.) at the administration's requested level of \$3.8 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. ORR provides critical support to local communities that serve refugees, unaccompanied children, torture and trafficking survivors." [Letter by Senators to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairmen, [12/5/2016](#)]

- **The Letter Called For "Ensuring That, While They [Children] Await Their Immigration Court Hearings, They Are Released To Family Members And Receive Post-Release Services That Ensure Their Safety And Wellbeing."** "In addition, unaccompanied children from Central America are seeking safety in significant and rising numbers due to continued violence and danger in their home countries perpetrated by gangs, narco-traffickers^ human traffickers and other criminal groups. These children face unprecedented violence in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, which are among the top five most violent countries in the world and have some of the highest rates of female homicides globally. It is critical that these children are allowed to seek asylum in the United States. This includes ensuring that, while they await their immigration court hearings, they are released to family members and receive post-release services that ensure their safety and wellbemg. An increase in ORR funding is important to ensure that shortcuts are not taken that would place children in danger." [Letter by Senators to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairmen, [12/5/2016](#)]

**2016: In Letter To President Obama, Baldwin Joined 22 Senators And Called For An End To Deportation Raids Targeting Families And Unaccompanied Minors Fleeing Violence In Central America**

**2016: In Letter To President Obama, Baldwin Joined 22 Senators And**

**Called For An End To Deportation Raids On Families And Unaccompanied Minors Fleeing Violence In Central America.** “Senators Edward J. Markey joined his colleagues Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and 22 Senate Democrats in calling for an end to deportation raids targeting families and unaccompanied minors who have fled the rampant violence in Central America’s Northern Triangle. In a letter to President Obama, the senators also urged the Administration to designate Guatemala and re-designate El Salvador and Honduras for temporary protected status, allowing individuals from those countries to legally remain in the United States. ‘The solution to this regional humanitarian crisis is to address its root causes. Deploying immigration raids upon this vulnerable population for the purpose of deterrence is an ineffective and unacceptable strategy,’ the senators wrote. ‘Immigration raids create fear and insecurity among immigrant communities in the United States. They will deter students from attending school and parents from seeking medical care, but they will not deter terrified mothers and children from fleeing life-threatening violence in their homelands.’ Senators Markey, Durbin and Leahy were joined by Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Christopher Murphy (D-CT) Tom Udall (D-NM), Al Franken (D-MN), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), Patty Murray (D-WA), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Tammy Baldwin (WI), Ron Wyden (OR), Chris Coons (D-DE), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Brian Schatz (HI), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Ben Cardin (D-MD), and Maria Cantwell (D-WA).” [Ed Markey: United States Senator for Massachusetts, Press Release, [06/09/2016](#)]