

Gov. Tom Wolf  
Office of the Governor  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Attorney General Josh Shapiro  
Office of the Attorney General  
Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

January 11, 2022

Dear Gov. Wolf and Attorney General Shapiro:

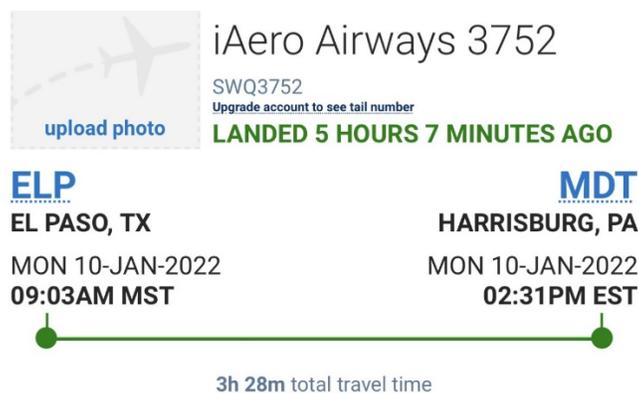
I write to follow up on my letter of December 23, 2021 regarding secret charter flights carrying illegal immigrants into Pennsylvania because I have come into possession of new information.

My earlier letter involved a number of charter flights discovered to have landed in Pennsylvania, which both your offices and representatives of the federal government subsequently characterized as carrying unaccompanied alien children (UACs) who were to be reunited with family or sponsors.

However, new information has surfaced demonstrating that a plane landed in Harrisburg yesterday carrying adults who were then transported more than 120 miles by bus to a former private prison in Clearfield County, which is now being used as an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center.

These are not children, as you had previously led the public to believe. They are adults, which present an entirely new set of issues and questions for you both.

At 2:31 p.m. yesterday, January 10, 2022, a charter flight operated by iAero Airways landed at Harrisburg International Airport after originating in El Paso, Texas. The carrier iAero Airways is a charter company known to contract with the federal government, and specifically ICE.



*FlightAware.com screenshot with charter flight confirmation*

The airplane was met on the tarmac by not fewer than four buses, which appeared to eyewitnesses to be prison buses with bars across their windows. The passengers, all of whom were visibly adults and not children, were loaded onto these buses and driven off airport property.

More than two hours and over 120 miles later, three of the buses entered the former Moshannon Valley Correctional Facility near Philipsburg, which is now an ICE detention center. The destination of the fourth bus is not known. The buses were able to be identified by witnesses as the property of the GEO Group, which is also the company that operates the ICE detention center.



*GEO Group buses transported illegal immigrants from Harrisburg International Airport to an ICE detention center near Philipsburg*

As a former mayor of Hazleton, and as a former member of Congress and the House Committee on Homeland Security, I am well familiar with immigration policy and am aware of your contention that the federal government is solely responsible for the actions that have brought these illegal immigrants to Pennsylvania.

However, what I cannot understand is your position that you are powerless to ensure that the health and safety of Pennsylvanians is safeguarded. As the chief executive of the Commonwealth and the chief law enforcement officer of the Commonwealth, respectively, you each have the duty to diligently protect our citizens and keep them informed of developments such as this.

Your responses to my first letter, conveyed through spokespeople in the media, flippantly referred me to the federal government, as immigration is primarily a federal responsibility as everyone knows. What you did not answer, however, was how you intend to protect the interests of the people of Pennsylvania, which is indeed your responsibility.

Further, it is disturbing to think that you purposely characterized all flights of illegal immigrants into Pennsylvania as carrying children, when surely you had knowledge that planes carrying adults were part of the Biden administration strategy for clearing the overflowing detention centers near the border. If you did not have knowledge of that, then it is an even more serious problem that you appear to be unconcerned about what the federal government is doing right here in our own Commonwealth.

As these flights involve adult illegal aliens and not UACs, it is most likely a part of a different federal process involving people who have illegally crossed our southern border with Mexico. Therefore, as in my first letter to you both, I have a series of questions to which I seek answers:

- 1) Were you aware of this flight of adult illegal immigrants into Harrisburg?
- 2) Were you aware that they would be transported to an ICE detention center near Philipsburg?
- 3) Why did you mislead the people of Pennsylvania into believing that such flights contained only children?
- 4) Are you aware of the COVID-19 status of the adult illegal immigrants who are now detained in Pennsylvania?
- 5) Were criminal background investigations on the adult illegal immigrants conducted and what were the results?
- 6) Have the adult illegal immigrants been assigned immigration court dates, and will they be kept in Pennsylvania until that time?
- 7) Following their court dates, will the adult illegal immigrants be released into the Pennsylvania population?
- 8) How many adult illegal immigrants have arrived in Pennsylvania in recent months?
- 9) Are you aware of any future flights already planned?
- 10) Have you at any time consulted with the federal government about any of these flights?
- 11) Have you at any time consulted with local officials in Philipsburg or Clearfield County?

I look forward to a thorough discussion of your understanding of what has occurred here. I need not remind you that as elected officials you have a duty to the people of the Commonwealth to be forthright about issues affecting their health and safety.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lou Barletta". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lou Barletta  
Former mayor and member of Congress