



# Rocket Dockets Leave Due Process in the Dust

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## Take Action to Stop ICE!

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already heavily stacked against them.

In a hasty move to speed up cases in



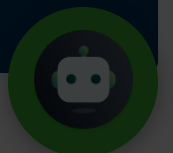
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States escaped gang violence, rape, and abuse in their home countries. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has found that [at least 58 percent of these children are eligible for refugee status](#). Many are eligible for other forms of immigration relief as well, including Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) and visas for survivors of human trafficking. But under the new expedited court system, these children could be quickly deported without getting the chance to find attorneys, apply for legal protection, or fully participate in fair hearings so judges can determine whether sending them back would put their lives at risk.



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for them to attend their court date with each state's notice. When the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) discovered this was happening, we reached out to the children; most were shocked to learn of the new



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the children did not appear for hearings on these rocket dockets because they were unaware of the hearings or had no way to travel hundreds of miles to Chicago, government attorneys began requesting that these children be ordered deported, even in the case of a child who was not even 10 years old.

[NIJC's Immigrant Children's Protection Project](#) jumped into action to work with the Chicago Immigration Court to ensure that children were not ordered deported simply because they were not aware they had to be in court or could not travel quickly enough to get here. But this response is



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...neral, they often arrive in the United States with only a family member's phone number written into the waistband of their jeans. They are shell-checked. They need time to recover and feel safe again so they can explain



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exams, and gather country condition reports, police reports, and other evidence. This is a lengthy process that takes time.

## Pro bono attorneys cannot act alone – legal service organizations need support

[Vice President Biden's recent remarks](#) suggesting that private law firms are not stepping up to assist children missed the point and proposed no useful solution. *Pro bono* attorneys **are** ready to help ensure immigrant children do not have to face immigration judges and prosecutors alone. But they



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intervene when a judicial system is riddled by an arbitrary time frame, there is no justice at all.



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immigrant children present facts that suggest eligibility for refugee protection, ensuring access to counsel for these children is truly the difference between life and death.

The current rocket docket system makes a mockery of due process. As Americans, we believe in fairness, justice, and due process. These children are fleeing unspeakable violence, seeking safety. They should be given a meaningful opportunity—including legal representation—to tell their story to an immigration judge who has sufficient time to determine if sending them back to their home countries would put their lives at risk.



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## Tags

Asylum & Refugees

Unaccompanied Children



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