

Written Testimony of Alexis Nungaray

Good morning to the members of the House of Representatives. I appreciate everyone taking the time to hear my testimony on why I support Rep. Babin on bill H.R 3179. I was a teen mom, I had Jocelyn when I was just 15 years old when my world changed for the better. Jocelyn taught me I was no longer only standing up for myself, but for my daughter as well. Me and Jocelyn grew up together, she gave me purpose to want to make it in this world, I had little eyes looking up to me. Jocelyn was incredibly bright, she had a smile that lit up a room and a smile that was always contagious. From her quirky sayings to her unique wardrobe style, she had the biggest of dreams. From wanting to be a famous actress to wishing every lost animal to have somewhere to call home. Jocelyns dreams were cut incredibly short when her life was ripped away from her by two illegal Venezuelans that were apprehended and released through our previous administration under their “catch and release” policy. Jocelyn should never have encountered these two monsters. She should’ve been safe enough in her community to be walking a short distance from her home and make it back safely. Jocelyn was sexually assaulted, strangled to death, hands and feet were bounded and she was left under a bridge in a bayou of water to rot like she was garbage. She was robbed of a future we’ll never get to see come true. It has been 11 months and 4 days since Jocelyn has physically been on this earth. It has been that long since I have even felt the warmth of her hugs, that long since I have seen her smile. Jocelyns love for all outside creatures was truly unmatched, she has taken in injured pigeons nursing them back to health. Taking care of treefrogs and toads all the way down to snakes and deers, not a care in the world what creature it was. When President Donald

Trump announced at the State of the Union Address that he had placed an executive order to rename the “Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge” to “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge” I was stunned, speechless while being filled with an enormous amount of gratitude. Having the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge be renamed to Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge is such an honor to an amazing young girl who lived and breath all things nature and wildlife creatures. It breaks my heart to know this tragedy had to happen to make some real changes happen. But it is also a beautiful reminder that there is such beauty that comes from great tragedy. Renaming the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge does not change the value or integrity that it so greatly upholds, but instead adds deeper meaning, love and peace in the memory of a brave 12-year-old young girl, named Jocelyn Lisel Nungaray.