

## **Vinny deMacedo: I cannot support Governor Patrick's plan to house migrant children in Bourne.**



**Vinny deMacedo responds to Gov. Patrick's plan to house migrant children in Bourne. As an immigrant myself who came to the United States legally as a baby... I truly understand both sides of this complex issue. For this reason, I cannot support the Governor's plan.**

*Editor's note: We invited both Mr. DeMacedo and his Democratic opponent to write Op Eds on this subject.*



Last week, Governor Deval Patrick formally announced his decision to offer two Massachusetts military installations including Joint Base Cape Cod as potential locations to detain and process some of the more than 50,000 children who have illegally crossed the U.S. border in recent months.

Unfortunately, the governor made this decision without consulting or communicating with the residents or elected officials in those prospective host communities and before knowing all of the facts, some of which are just being disclosed.

It's not surprising that many people – on both sides of this emotionally charged issue – are rightfully upset and concerned. A decision was made without any open discussion and on the basis of very limited information.

At a meeting with Patrick Administration officials this week, additional details were presented. If either of the two military sites are used, there will be 1,000 beds available for processing these children ranging in age from three to seventeen. That does not mean that only a total of 1,000 children will pass through the facility – it means that the processing center will be able to process 1,000 children at a time.

As one child leaves, the bed will be available for another child. This important information is very different than what the governor had previously said. More than 50,000 children have already illegally crossed our borders. How many more will choose the same path?

Once a child has been processed, we are now being told that approximately 80% of them will be placed with host families – most often family and friends, and many in our already over-burdened Gateway communities. The remaining 20% will most likely be placed in some form of foster care, although it is not clear where there is available space for these children. What is clear is that the medical, educational and related costs for properly caring for these children will quickly be transferred to the citizens of Commonwealth.

Asking to be informed and involved in decisions that affect our lives, our communities, and our children does not indicate that we lack compassion. We are, and will always be, the most compassionate and caring nation in the world. What we need is true leadership that is committed to open dialogue, transparency, and meaningful public input at all steps of the decision-making process.

As an immigrant myself who came to the United States legally as a baby with my family, I truly understand both sides of this complex issue. My family dreamed of the promise of our nation – a nation of virtually unlimited opportunity governed by the people and rule of law.

Unfortunately, after receiving more complete information on the Governor's plan, it is evident that this is not simply a short-term humanitarian effort, as it was presented. It is a long-term and open-ended commitment that represents a fundamental change in immigration policy. For this reason, I cannot support the Governor's plan.

**By Vinny deMacedo, Massachusetts State Representative** [Republican candidate for State Senate](#)

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[Vinny deMacedo](#) is presently an eight term [State Representative from Plymouth](#) who is now running for the Plymouth and Barnstable Senate seat being vacated by Senate President Terry Murray.