

## S 959

Secure and Protect Act of 2021

**Congress:** 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Immigration

**Introduced:** Mar 24, 2021

**Current Status:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

**Latest Action:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Mar 24, 2021)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/959>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Graham, Lindsey [R-SC]

**Party:** Republican • **State:** SC • **Chamber:** Senate

### Cosponsors (2 total)

| Cosponsor                  | Party / State | Role | Date Joined  |
|----------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Barrasso, John [R-WY] | R · WY        |      | Mar 24, 2021 |
| Sen. Tillis, Thomas [R-NC] | R · NC        |      | Mar 24, 2021 |

### Committee Activity

| Committee           | Chamber | Activity    | Date         |
|---------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Judiciary Committee | Senate  | Referred To | Mar 24, 2021 |

### Subjects & Policy Tags

#### Policy Area:

Immigration

### Related Bills

*No related bills are listed.*

## **Secure and Protect Act of 2021**

This bill makes changes to the handling of unaccompanied alien children and asylum applications.

The *Flores* settlement (a court settlement imposing conditions on the treatment of detained alien minors) shall not restrict any activities. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) shall have sole discretion as to detention standards of alien minors.

Statutory provisions governing the handling of unaccompanied alien children from U.S.-bordering countries shall now govern all unaccompanied alien children. The bill provides for requirements relating to the handling of such alien children. Certain immigration officer determinations relating to unaccompanied alien children shall be unreviewable.

DHS may detain accompanied alien children pending the completion of removal proceedings (some courts have ruled that *Flores* limits the detention of certain alien children to 20 days). States may not impose licensing requirements for family detention facilities.

An unaccompanied alien child shall not be released from custody while immigration or removal proceedings are pending, with some exceptions.

The bill limits asylum eligibility to aliens entering the United States at a designated port of entry and provides for additional grounds for asylum ineligibility. A *credible fear of persecution* is redefined to mean that it is more likely than not that the alien would be able to establish eligibility for asylum.

The Department of State shall establish refugee application and processing centers in Mexico and Central America. The bill requires the hiring of additional immigration judges, support staff, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement attorneys.

## **Actions Timeline**

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- **Mar 24, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 24, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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