

FLORIDA TO SUE U.S. IN REFUGEE DISPUTE

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Body

Florida is preparing a lawsuit against the Federal Government over its handling of Haitian and Cuban **refugees** in the Miami area, Gov. Bob Graham announced here today.

Mr. Graham said that the state had retained a Washington law firm and had instructed it "to file the lawsuit as soon as possible." While Mr. Graham has not disclosed details of a possible legal basis for his action, he indicated at a news conference that it would concentrate on the handling of Haitians who arrive in south **Florida** by boat illegally almost every day.

Florida's Governor Bob Graham announces plan to **sue** Federal Government over Haitian and Cuban **refugee dispute**

In a typical case, Haitians who come here by boat are detained by the local authorities and are handed over to officers of the **United States** Immigration and Naturalization Service, who take them to Krome North Detention Center in Miami. There are reports that a number of Haitians evade arrest and detention.

According to Mr. Graham, by placing about 1,500 Haitians at Krome North, the Federal Government has violated laws under which the camp can hold only about 500 persons. The number at the center yesterday was 1,483, and a new boatload was reported today.

'Dumping' Without Sponsors

Another violation of state laws, Mr. Graham said, was the release from the detention center of Haitians who did not have sponsors, "in effect dumping them on the citizens of Greater Miami."

Mr. Graham, a Democrat, said that his action against the Reagan Administration was not politically motivated. "We have been demanding solutions to the **refugee** problem for more than a year and all we have had have been glaring examples of broken promises by Washington," he said.

The Governor also said that the state had paid over \$30 million in medical and other expenses for some 15,000 Cuban **refugee** children who came here by sea last year. He said the payments had been made "without Washington recognizing that this is a national problem and not that of this area or of the State of **Florida**."

"The people of **Florida** cannot be asked to bear this onerous burden while Federal officials continue to postpone difficult decisions," he continued. "If the national Administration will not act on its own we will take legal recourse to protect the rights of the citizens."

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Immigration Report Awaited

Last March, President Reagan appointed a panel to review United States immigration laws and to recommend changes, especially regarding policy toward illegal immigrants. According to White House officials, the panel's recommendations might be made public next week.

In Florida, above all in the Miami area, illegal migration has become one of the most acute social and political problems. While no more new Cuban refugees have been arriving since last October, there has been no letup in the arrival of Haitians.

Under the current regulations, most of the undocumented Cubans and Haitians are subject to exclusion proceedings and can be deported to the country of origin. But last month a Federal judge in Miami halted exclusion proceedings of undocumented Haitians and ordered the Immigration and Naturalization Service to hear their cases individually rather than in groups and to allow them access to attorneys and competent translators.

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