

# Inaccurate claims from Mr. Sessions

The Oct. 13 news article “Citing ‘rampant abuse and fraud,’ Sessions urges tighter asylum rules” quoted Attorney General Jeff Sessions as saying that many asylum claims “lacked merit” and are “simply a ruse to enter the country illegally.” As one of the “dirty immigration lawyers” who has represented hundreds of asylum seekers, I find these claims wildly inaccurate and dangerous. When I ask my clients, the majority of them children, why they came to the United States, they invariably

tell me the same thing: I had no choice — I was running for my life. Indeed, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 58 percent of Northern Triangle and Mexican children displaced in the United States suffered or faced harms that indicated need for international protection. These children are not gaming the system; they are seeking refuge from rampant genderbased violence, MS-13 death threats and child abuse.


While I like to think I am a “smart” attorney, even immigrants represented by the smartest attorneys do not stand a chance in places such as At-

lanta, where the asylum grant rate is as low as 2 percent. Yes, reform is needed, but the only reform we should consider is one that provides more robust protections and recognizes our moral and legal obligation to protect asylum seekers. Nickole Miller, Baltimore The writer is a lawyer with the Immigrant Rights Clinic at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Listen

Page View

Share

Save



More

