



June 7, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528-0075

Re: Policy for separation of families who cross into the US from Mexico illegally

Dear Attorney General Sessions and Secretary Nielsen,

From the earliest days of American history, our nation's leaders and citizens have engaged in a running debate about who is welcome on our shores, how we treat and integrate newcomers to our country, and how we live up to our tradition as a nation of immigrants. Reasonable people have disagreed about how to answer these questions.

Yet there is no clear or compelling justification – in our past or in our laws – for taking an average of 47 kids per day away from their mothers and fathers. Such a policy is cruel. It is morally reprehensible. It is not an appropriate use of taxpayer resources, and it is utterly inconsistent with our values of decency and compassion – with our basic humanity.

For these reasons and more, we are calling on the Administration to end the policy of separating young immigrants and asylum seekers from their parents.

This strategy is flawed on every level. It has proven ineffective as a tactic to deter immigrants from crossing our southern border. It is not in accordance with the mandates of the Departments of Homeland Security or Justice; in fact, it will only add new burdens to an already overtaxed Office of Refugee Resettlement. What's more, there is virtually no available data for tracking and monitoring children taken into custody; inadequate information provided to parents about the

whereabouts of their sons and daughters; and a lack of transparency with families and legal service providers.

As Mayors, our work deals less with legislation and regulations than it does with day-to-day issues facing the people we are proud to represent and serve. And even though local governments bear little official responsibility for immigration policy, we each have front-row seats to the challenges posed by every shift in our actions toward immigrants.

We lead cities with proud and vast populations of immigrants, documented and undocumented alike, who make remarkable contributions to our cultures and our economies. We are situated in our frontier states with Mexico, serving as bridges between our two countries that are strengthened by residents, citizens, families, and friends on both sides of the border.

Though separated by a thousand miles or more, our cities are united in our conviction that your departments' activities have only weakened the fabric of our communities and the character of our country. We urge you to halt the practice of family separation immediately and work with Congress to advance rational, comprehensive immigration reform.

Sincerely,



ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor of Los Angeles, CA



SYLVESTER TURNER
Mayor of Houston, TX



JONATHAN ROTHSCHILD
Mayor of Tucson, AZ



TIM KELLER
Mayor of Albuquerque, NM