



June 27, 2018

Speaker Paul Ryan

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Leader Charles Schumer

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Leader Mitch McConnell

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Leader Nancy Pelosi

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515



Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader Pelosi:

We, the undersigned faith, business, civic, immigration advocacy and other organizations, urge Congress to act immediately and pass a permanent legislative solution protecting against the separation of families at the border and the indefinite detention of families. These policies do not advance our national security interest, nor do they promote the rule of law.

For decades, enforcement officials had the authority to prioritize certain groups of immigrants for criminal prosecutions. Eliminating this discretion in favor of a one-size-fits-all approach under the “zero tolerance” policy resulted in the separation of families, which does not make America safer and does not make children safer.

Family separation, particularly the separation of very young children from their parents, is an affront to the decency of the American people, antithetical to American principles, and unjustified in deterring illegal immigration. Widespread condemnation of the policy is evidenced in the filing of numerous [legal](#) challenges to the practice, as well as by the American public. The President of the United States called the family separation “[horrible](#),” joining dozens of Republican and Democratic lawmakers in condemning the practice. Similarly, detention of children – especially for extended periods - serves no good public policy purpose, and can cause significant trauma for kids involved.

Considering the limits this policy imposes on the discretion of law enforcement, and the overwhelming backlash against it, Congress should step in to ensure it is not reinstated, and to focus resources on genuine threats. We believe America’s immigration system can be improved to welcome those that wish to contribute while keeping our borders safe – without breaking up families or indefinitely detaining them. We request that concerned lawmakers work together to permanently end the practice of family separation now, without delay.

Respectfully,

Daniel Garza

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The LIBRE Initiative*

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*Director of Immigration & Senior Counsel
Niskanen Center*



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