

Hello Friends,

As Donald Trump's zero tolerance immigration policy continues to affect thousands of families at the border, we must stay informed of this humanitarian crisis and do everything in our power to ensure that migrants are protected, families are kept together, and congress acts quickly to bring this horror to an end.

Within recent weeks, Trump's policy of separating families at the border has sparked the outrage of Americans across the country. Our indignation towards the cruel treatment of these migrants at the hands of Trump pressured the president to issue an executive order ensuring that families would no longer be separated at the border. While the actions of millions did bring about this change, the unfortunate truth is that this executive order is effectively a smokescreen intended to reduce the heat on Trump without providing for the change the order supposedly entails.

Despite the president's order, his administration made no attempts to quickly and efficiently coordinate with border patrol to ensure that this is actually feasible. The current state of things finds border patrol scrambling to keep newly processed families together with limited success due to ineffective means to do so (in part due to insufficient space in shelters to house entire families and a federal law that prohibits children from detention in federal facilities acceptable for detention of parents).

The Trump Administration has also stressed that the order is only temporary; being in effect for twenty days as of June 20th. During this period, the administration has deferred all responsibility to congress to implement a permanent fix to the immigration crisis (with Trump's administration claiming that the law "ties their hands" in putting a permanent end to family separation, despite the fact that the policy was their doing in the first place). With congress taking a July 4th recess, it seems unlikely that anything will change before the executive order expires and family separation presumably resumes in full effect.

On top of these issues, families separated before the executive order have not been reunited. It seems that ICE does not have a reliable system in place to reunite separated families. In many cases, no effort has been made to reunite detained families, as hundreds of parents have been quickly processed and deported while their children continue to be detained with no way to find them upon release.

Finally, detained children in select detention facilities report rampant abuse at the hands of facility staff. Child detainees and attorneys campaigning for them have reported such inhumane abuse as handcuffing and physical restraint of children, belittling of migrant children by staffers using racist derogatory terms, holding of migrant children in cells and denying them access to bathrooms at a regular interval, regular administration of psychotropic drugs and sedatives (sometimes administered via forcible injection) to migrant children without their or their parents' expressed consent, and beating and physical abuse of migrant children by staffers resulting in

bruising and lasting physical trauma. The biggest offenders of these atrocities seem to be the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center, in Verona Virginia, and the Shiloh Treatment Center in Manvel, Texas.

Thousands of families continue to suffer from the crisis at the border, and despite the claims of President Trump and his administration, there is as of yet no substantial reform to end the suffering and bring a permanent fix to this situation. We must continue to make our voices heard and urge the Trump Administration and Republicans in congress to bring an end to the crisis. This past weekend, thousands took to the streets in protest at the Families Belong Together March. It is imperative that we continue to put pressure on those in power power until they have no choice but to right their wrongs.

We can show Trump and congress that the abuse must stop and that families belong together.