

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 28, 2018

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**REFORMA Issues Statement on the Separation of Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants at the U.S Border Searching for the American Dream**

REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking, on behalf of its members, asserts that refugee, asylum-seeking, and immigrant families should be treated humanely, with respect and dignity, by the United States Government and its agencies.

Refugee, asylum-seeking, and immigrant families should not be criminalized for seeking refuge in the United States and therefore should not be “charged with immigration or criminal offenses relating to the seeking of asylum, or being arbitrarily detained purely on the basis of seeking asylum,” (UN General Assembly resolution 429(V) of December 14, 1950). REFORMA believes that no child should be separated from their parent(s) when entering the United States of America without authorization. We also believe that incarcerating immigrant families causes harm to the family, especially to the children. President Trump’s recent Executive Order ends the separation of children from their parents, but now forces children to sit in prisons with their parents for an uncertain length of time. This is unacceptable and in total contrast to the true values of our country.

REFORMA also reaffirms the belief that our youth, whether they be unaccompanied minors, children of deported parents, DACA recipients, recent immigrant children, or young adults at risk of losing their protection status, should be treated humanely, with respect, and dignity. No person residing in this country should live in fear of the United States Government and its agencies. No person seeking relief from persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion should be declared illegal.

**Take Action**

Many people have questions about what has been happening and what can be done to help.

On Tuesday, June 26, 2018, the American Library Association voted to pass a resolution, *Resolution to Reunite Detained Migrant Children with their Parents*, during its 2018 Annual Conference. The resolution was spearheaded by REFORMA and part of the resolves included:

- calls on federal agencies to ensure that documentation of children and families is sufficient for the seamless reunification of families or their legal guardians;
- requests that the U.S. government honor the UN General Assembly resolution 429(V) of December 14, 1950, regarding the legal status of refugees; and
- urges its members to contact their elected officials at all levels to express their continuing concern regarding the criminalization and separation of refugee families at the border.

On Saturday, June 30, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, ACLU, MoveOn, and many others will rally in Washington, D.C. and [around the country](#) to demand just immigration policies and the reunification of families detained and separated at the border. You can find a *Families Belong Together* event near you at [familiesbelongtogether.org](http://familiesbelongtogether.org).

### **Non Profit Organizations**

These organizations can provide detailed information to the public and support to those affected.

- [Immigrant Defenders Law Network](#)
- [KIND \(Kids in Need of Legal Defense\)](#)
- [The Young Center of Children's Immigrant Rights](#)
- [The Florence Project and Refugee Rights Project](#)
- [Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project](#)
- [Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services](#)
- [Pueblo Sin Fronteras](#)
- [Together Rising](#)
- [Al Otro Lado](#)
- [Border Angels](#)
- [REFORMA Children in Crisis Project](#)

### **Legislation**

The public may contact their local representatives urging support to these legislative bills.

- S. 3036 – Keep Families Together Act
  - [Keep Families Together-Read Bill Here](#)
- R. 2572 – Protect Family Values at the Border Act
  - [Protect Family Values-Read Bill Here](#)
- R. 5950/S.2937 – the HELP Separated Children Act
  - [Help Separated Children-Read Bill Here](#)
- R. 2043/S. 2468 – Fair Day in Court for Kids Act of 2018
  - [Kids Fair Day in Court-Read Bill Here](#)

## **Government Offices**

The public may direct their comments directly to government offices:

- Department of Homeland Security  
Comment Line: 202-282-8495
- [Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties](#)  
Telephone: (202) 401-1474  
Email: [crcl@dhs.gov](mailto:crcl@dhs.gov)
- [Department of Justice](#)  
Comment Line: 202-353-1555
- Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) (Health and Human Services Dept.)  
[ORR, Unaccompanied Alien Children Helpline, ORR](#)

## **Information**

- [Family Separation at Border](#)
- [How You Can Help](#)
- [Dept. of Justice, Statement on Zero Tolerance, Jeff Sessions 6/14](#)
- [Family Separation, Spanish](#)
- [Libraries Respond: Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers](#)
- [Families Belong Together Events on June 30, 2018](#)

Presented by REFORMA members Oscar Baeza, Patrick Sullivan, Mario Ascencio, Oralia Garza de Cortes, Sandra Rios Balderrama, and Madeleine Ildefonso.

Take Action resources compiled by REFORMA member Madeleine Ildefonso.

Approved by the REFORMA Executive Committee on June 27, 2018:

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