

To: All Members of Congress

It is unacceptable that there are thousands of children and families suffering right now in immigrant detention. Children are denied soap and toothbrushes, crowded into unsafe conditions, and are going hungry because they are not provided enough food to eat. Separated from their families, they are subject to cruel and inhumane treatment that leads to lasting traumas. And some are dying in custody—or dying with parents as they cross the Rio Grande.

These conditions are the product of the Trump administration's cruel agenda to terrorize immigrant communities, criminalize migration, and dismantle our asylum laws.

Today, Close the Camps protests are happening across the country to declare that members of Congress must use all of their power to stop the atrocities now.

Here are three clear ways we request you to act:

- 1) Close the Camps.
- 2) Not One Dollar for Family Detention and Deportation.
- 3) Bear Witness and Reunite the Families.

First, to close the camps, you must end the zero tolerance policy. This is the crucial Department of Justice directive used as justification for family separation and the massive increase in immigrants held in detention. Also, remember that your powers are not limited to passing legislation. As a member of Congress, you have a large microphone and can leverage your power to pressure the Trump administration to act.

Second, stop funding family for detention and deportation. Kids and families do not belong in cages, and immigrants strengthen, not harm our society. We must transform into a country that welcomes people with dignity and respect.

Lastly, we request that you go to a detention center this week, during the July Fourth recess, and connect with community organizations and direct service providers along the border or near a detention facility to get a sense of the full scope of the issues, and then become an advocate for these kids and families to be freed and reunited. Your visit is needed to add to the mounting public pressure and achieve a breakthrough.

Here are some resources to help with your visit.

- Guide to visiting an ICE Detention Facility: <https://bit.ly/2YjHXbd>
- Visit United We Dream's ICE and CBP tracker:
<https://unitedwedream.org/the-truth-about-ice-and-cbp/ice-and-cbp-abuse-tracker/>
- Contact Ana Maria at RAICES for advice on setting up a visit and which local organizations to contact. Ana Maria Rea, anamaria.rea@raicestexas.org

- Contact Heidi Altman at National Immigrant Justice Center for resources on immigrant detention and visiting ICE facilities: Heidi Altman, haltman@heartlandalliance.org
- Post about your trip on social media and national organizations will amplify your visit.

Last December, dozens of partners including the American Friends Service Committee, United We Dream, and hundreds of faith leaders from many traditions went to the border in San Diego to stand in solidarity with migrants seeking refuge. Some engaged in civil disobedience, inching across an invisible line in the sand on their knees in front of armed Border Patrol agents to draw national attention to the need for changes to U.S. immigration policy.

They were there because they could not stand by silently while migrants fleeing violence and poverty were met with tear gas, military intervention, family separation, and indefinite detention. They were there to speak to the moral imperative of respecting human rights and treating people with dignity, respect, and compassion. They were there to ask our elected officials to demilitarize our border communities and adopt more humane immigration policies.

And that is what we are asking of you today, as well.

It is on all of us to act.

Thank you,