



**One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515**

May 25, 2018

The Honorable Kevin McAleenan
Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Commissioner McAleenan:

We write to reiterate our serious concerns regarding the increased separation of families at our southern border, especially as a result of the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" policy toward border crossers.

Federal law and policy clearly underscore the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) responsibilities to safeguard the best interests of children in its custody and to protect the family unit. Forcibly separating children from their adult family members is cruel and incompatible with the values we cherish as a country.

According to a report published by the *New York Times*, more than 700 children have been separated from adults claiming to be their parents since October 2017, including more than 100 children under the age of four.¹ On May 23, 2018, at a hearing before members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) testified that from May 6-19, 638 adults traveling with 658 children were prosecuted for improper entry. The number of families separated at ports of entry remains unclear.

The zero-tolerance policy is undoubtedly the formalization of family separation by CBP. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule X and Rule XI of the House of Representatives, please respond to the following questions in writing by June 8, 2018:

1. How many children has CBP separated from adult family members and referred to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) as "unaccompanied" in Fiscal Years (FY) 2017 and 2018, by month?
2. What is the age and gender of children referred to ORR by CBP in FY 2017 and FY 2018?

¹ Dickerson, Caitlin. "Hundreds of Immigrant Children Have Been Taken from Parents at U.S. Border," *The New York Times*, 23 April 2018. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/20/us/immigrant-children-separation-ice.html>.

3. How long were these children in CBP custody before being transferred into ORR custody?
4. How many of these separations were made at ports of entry? How many were due to referral for prosecution of adult family members?
5. How many of the separations have led to trafficking charges?

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Alison Northrop, Chief Director for Oversight, at (202) 226-2616. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member



Filemon Vela
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security