



The National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) condemns the current U.S. Border policy that has led to the forced separation of approximately 2,000 immigrant children from their parents. As an organization whose mission is to enhance and promote language access in health care, our members – many who are immigrants themselves -- work on a daily basis with newcomers. We see the devastating effects these policies have on the health, and the mental health, of all involved, and we stand with our colleagues at the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, and the American Psychiatric Association in opposition to this practice.

Children forcibly removed from their parent's arms, children held in cages, and a parent so distraught that he took his own life are all an outrage and a national disgrace. As former First Lady Laura Bush stated, "These images are eerily reminiscent of the internment camps for U.S. citizens and noncitizens of Japanese descent during World War II, now considered to have been one of the most shameful episodes in U.S. history."

Some may feel that this is a political issue and far removed from interpreting in healthcare. But these are *our* patients and the interpreter's code of Ethics includes "When the patient's health, well-being, or dignity is at risk, the interpreter may be justified in acting as an advocate." We feel justified in our choice to speak out in protest based on the health, well-being and dignity of these children and their parents, and on the inhumanity of these acts. We will not be silent; we will not be complicit. By a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors, the NCIHC has decided to join in the protest.

We urge you to consider joining us, and offer the following ways in which you can do so:

- Contact your Congressional representatives and let them know how you feel! Urge your members of Congress to stop separating families:
 - Calls** -- The ACLU has a call tool for [senators](#); the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) has a call tool that directs calls, tweets, Facebook posts, and emails to all [members of Congress](#).
 - Letters** -- [Herd on the Hill](#) has a fact-sheet and website to compose individual letters to members of Congress.
- **Petitions:**
 - The [ACLU](#), [MomsRising](#), [MoveOn](#), and [CREDO](#) have petitions to DHS Secretary Nielsen;
 - [Kids in Need of Defense \(KIND\)](#) and [Change.org](#) also have a new petition out to the Department of Homeland Security;
 - The [Women's March](#) has a petition to Ivanka Trump;
 - [Define American](#) has a petition to Attorney General Sessions;
 - The [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#) has a petition to President Trump;
 - The [Women's Refugee Commission](#) also has a petition that is easy to sign and share.

- **Contribute!** These organizations are specifically mobilizing to help children separated from their parents at the Texas/Mexico and California/Mexico borders:
 - [Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project](#) works to prevent the deportation of asylum-seeking families fleeing violence. The group accepts donations and asks people to sign up for volunteer opportunities [here](#).
 - [South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project](#) is providing free legal services to asylum seekers detained in South Texas.
 - [RAICES](#) is a nonprofit that provides free and low-cost legal services to immigrant children, families and refugees in Texas. It's accepting donations and volunteers at its website.
 - The [CARA Project](#) is currently recruiting attorneys, law students and paralegals with experience in asylum work. The group asks [volunteers](#) to be fluent in Spanish or willing to work with an interpreter.
 - [Kids In Need of Defense](#) partners with major law firms, corporations and bar associations to create a nationwide pro bono network to represent unaccompanied children through their immigration proceedings. Volunteers [don't need to have immigration law experience](#).
 - The El Paso-based [Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center](#) provides legal representation to immigrants who might not be able to afford it otherwise. It's accepting [volunteers](#) and [donations](#).
 - The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights advocates for the safety and well-being of unaccompanied kids arriving in the United States. The organization works to protect children from harsh immigration laws and [recently announced a project](#) specifically dedicated to helping children separated from their parents at the border. You can learn more about the program's efforts and [how to donate here](#).
 - [Border Angels](#) is a California-based volunteer organization. Its primary efforts focus on tackling immigration reform and promoting social justice at the US-Mexican border. [Donations](#) are used to fund educational programs, free immigration services, and events to support those in need.
 - **Donate via ActBlue** - Can't decide which organization to donate to? Why not choose eight? ActBlue provides a simple and convenient way for people to distribute a single donation to eight different charities in need. Using [this link](#) you can help kids being separated from their families at the border by donating to [We Belong Together](#), [United We Dream](#), [Women's Refugee Commission](#), [ACLU](#), [Kids In Need of Defense \(KIND\)](#), [Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project](#), [Human Rights First](#), and [La Union del Pueblo Entero](#).
- **Offer your translation and/or interpreting assistance!**

Language barriers are critical for many of these families, and organizations helping immigrants detained at the border are also in dire need of volunteers with language skills who can bridge communication. If you're qualified and able to offer interpreting services between parties, consider working with charities and individuals in need of such assistance. Assure any documents you might come in contact with are quality translations that are accurate and do not cause further confusion.

The NCIHC is a multidisciplinary organization whose mission is to promote and enhance language access in health care in the United States. For more information about NCIHC, please see our website at www.ncihc.org.