



Board of Directors

July 10, 2018

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Secretary

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Madame Secretary,

Magaly Abrahante, Ph.D.  
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Rep. Nicholas Duran  
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Mark Trowbridge  
Rita Vega

The Children's Trust and its board of directors strenuously supports Resolution No. R-656-18, passed by the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, that urged President Donald Trump and the Department of Homeland Security to review the asylum requests of refugees traveling with minors within 15 days and to end the separation of asylum-seeking families as part of the enforcement of federal immigration law.

We are vehemently opposed to any policies that separate families, which we view as a humanitarian and nonpartisan issue due to the toxic stress and risk of permanent trauma children may suffer when separated from their parents, that decades of academic studies show. While our immediate concerns have been greatly allayed by President Trump's executive order ending family separation at the border, delays in reunification are unacceptable as permanent trauma in children increases with each passing day.

Further, all children, in this country and across the globe, are deserving of a safe, caring and nurturing environment. So it is our duty and responsibility as a nation to ensure that any and every child being housed in a U.S. government facility is guaranteed safety, security, humane treatment and comfort during what is inarguably a disquieting and harrowing experience.

As the father of three young children, a son of immigrants and someone who has spent an entire career in service to children and families, I absolutely believe we must treat these defenseless, exposed and frightened children with the compassion and dignity that is their right as human beings. I urge this administration to sensitively address their immediate needs, and to reunite them with their families as quickly as possible.

David Lawrence Jr.  
Founding Chair

Sincerely,

James R. Haj  
President & CEO

James R. Haj  
President and CEO

County Attorney's Office  
Legal Counsel

cc: Members, Board of County Commissioners  
Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County  
Members, The Children's Trust Board of Directors