

Over the past 6 weeks, Americans have grown more and more alarmed by the images and voices of children who, with little or no warning or explanation, were separated from their loving parents. For weeks, both the President and the Secretary of Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen, repeatedly refused to accept responsibility for creating this humanitarian disaster.

They blamed immigration laws. They blamed the Democrats. They blamed Congress. They blamed parents for the dangerous journey north to seek safe haven for themselves and their children.

None of this was true. The lies did not fly. That dog didn't hunt.

This past weekend, several of us in the Democratic Caucus flew down to the border to see for ourselves what was happening to the families. The President, seeing the news stories of suffering children and families, succumbed to his base desire for better press and finally acknowledged what we all know: He is responsible for the family separation crisis.

The executive order he signed yesterday doubled down on zero tolerance and provides no relief to the families who have been separated. Like the executive order, H.R. 6136 does not resolve the family separation crisis. This does nothing to stop CBP's unfettered ability to separate families in various situations, including for those seeking asylum at ports of entry.

The solution H.R. 6136 offers is to detain children indefinitely with their parents while they wait to be prosecuted in facilities that do not have to comply with court-ordered requirements for clean drinking water, toilets, and medical assistance. It ignores the 2016 findings of the Department of Homeland Security's own advisory committee that studied the question of family detention. In it, the experts concluded that family detention is neither appropriate nor necessary for families, and that it is never in the best interest of children.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to take a stand against the cruel, inhumane immigration enforcement policies of the Trump administration by voting down H.R. 6136. We can send a strong message to the President to stop family separation.

Mr. Speaker, many Members came into this week expecting to consider and vote on a measure that trades border wall funding for a Dreamer fix. H.R. 6136 is not that bill.

This legislation would compel the expenditure of billions of taxpayers' dollars for decades to come on an unnecessary border wall, while maintaining the cruel zero-tolerance policy, limiting access to asylum, shrinking legal immigration, ending the diversity visa lottery program, and abolishing protections for unaccompanied children.

There is nothing profamily or prosecutory about this bill. This is a fake DACA bill. There were no hearings, no witnesses, no stakeholder en-

agement, no markup, not even a CBO score. Now we find out at this hour that we have been debating a bill that we won't even vote on tomorrow. I wonder why. It is probably because some other people have found out that this is a fake DACA bill and probably not worth the paper it is printed on. But we shall see.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I urge a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I know this is an emotional topic, and I think both sides have what they think are the best interests of the American people in their hearts. I feel that the Constitution drives me to protect the American people, and that is my most solemn, highest responsibility.

I want to close with a quote from our Secretary of Homeland Security. She said: "The only people who benefit from the immigration system right now are the smugglers, the traffickers, those who are peddling drugs, and terrorists. So let's fix the system."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with her. Let's fix the system. Let's protect the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 953, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 6136 is postponed.

CHILDREN HEADED TO MICHIGAN

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's Detroit Free Press reported that two babies were taken by the Department of Homeland Security from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border and flown in the dead of night last night to Grand Rapids, Michigan—one child is 8 months old, and another 11 months old—hundreds and hundreds of miles from home.

Fifty more immigrant children have landed in foster care by spontaneous combustion in western Michigan. A staffer at Bethany Christian Services, which is assisting these displaced children said: "Not only are they being separated from their family, they are being transported to a place that they don't know in the middle of the night."

Mr. Speaker, taking children from parents presents a deep moral crisis for our Nation. The abduction of children from their parents is a crime against humanity. The Trump administration's kidnapping of children must end.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD this important article from the Detroit Free Press entitled "Torn from Immigrant Parents, 8-Month-Old Baby Lands in Michigan."

[From Detroit Free Press, June 20, 2018]

TORN FROM IMMIGRANT PARENTS, 8-MONTH-OLD BABY LANDS IN MICHIGAN

(By Tresa Baldas)

Four days ago, a Homeland Security official proclaimed: "We are not separating babies from parents."

Yet in the middle of the night, two baby boys arrived in Grand Rapids after being separated from their immigrant parents at the southern border weeks ago.

One child is 8 months old; the other is 11 months old. Both children have become part of a bigger group of 50 immigrant children who have landed in foster care in western Michigan under the Trump administration's zero-tolerance border policy.

The average age of these children is 8, a number that has alarmed foster care employees who are struggling to comfort the growing group of kids who are turning up in Michigan at nighttime, when it's pitch-dark outside. They're younger than ever, they say. And they are petrified.

"These kids are arriving between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Not only are they being separated from their family, they are being transported to a place that they don't know in the middle of the night," said Hannah Mills, program supervisor for the transitional foster care program at Bethany Christian Services, which is currently assisting the displaced children. "We have found on many occasions that no one has explained to these children where they are going."

According to Mills, some of these displaced children got picked up right at the airport by a foster family, while others wound up at a foster care center, begging to talk to their parents. Many have gone 30 days or more without talking to their parents because their parents can't be located, she said.

Bianey Reyes, center, and others protest the separation of children from their parents in front of the El Paso Processing Center, an immigration detention facility, at the Mexican border on June 19, 2018, in El Paso, Texas. (Photo: Joe Raedle, Getty Images)

"These kids are hysterical. They're screaming out for mom and dad," said Mills, who speaks Spanish and can converse with the children, noting only a handful have learned some English.

Mills, who has worked with displaced, immigrant children for six years, said the foster agency is dealing with a new, troubling element: Getting unaccompanied children on the phone with their parents. Typically, this takes about three days, she said. But now it's taking up to a month or more because the parents are detained and the agency can't locate them.

"That's probably one of the most detrimental things," Mills said. "At least if we can get a kid to speak with their parent, they can feel safe."

Equally upsetting, Mills said, is watching children when they do finally get on the phone with a parent. For example, she recalled, a tearful 7-year-old on the phone with her mother asking her, "Are you OK? Are you hurt? Is someone hurting you?"

"All of it is incredibly upsetting," Mills said, stressing: "The difference is, we're seeing so many more younger kids."

Homeland Security officials were not available for comment on why infants and toddlers are being taken from their parents.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration has steadfastly maintained that its goal is to protect the nation's borders, enforce immigration laws and send a strong message to

immigrants that if they cross the border unlawfully, they will be prosecuted and their kids taken away.

There is no federal law that mandates children and parents be separated at the border, though the practice has led to nearly 2,000 kids being misplaced in the past six weeks—a phenomenon that has triggered a firestorm of controversy. Many religious groups, social activists and immigrant-sympathizers are calling for an end to the practice while Trump supporters are saying let him do his job.

On Tuesday, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights announced that it's assessing the impact of Trump's zero-tolerance policy on the state of Michigan and the detained immigrant children, stating it "has a duty to make sure their civil rights are protected."

"We have received reports and are very concerned that the children arriving here are much younger than those who have been transported here in the past. Some of the children are infants as young as 3 months of age and are completely unable to advocate for themselves," Agustin V. Arbulu, Executive Director of Michigan Department of Civil Rights said in a statement.

The American Association for Justice also condemned the family separation policy on Tuesday, stating: "These actions are risking the safety and well-being of innocent children. We call on the administration to immediately halt this practice and to reunite these traumatized families. This is not who we are as a nation. We can and must do better."

But the Trump administration is not backing down, stressing the policy is about preserving and protecting America's borders and upholding the law. Moreover, it insists, the policy is not new, claiming children have long been placed in foster care when their parents were criminally charged with an immigration violation.

"What has changed is that we no longer exempt entire classes of people who break the law," Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said in a White House briefing Monday. "Here is the bottom line: DHS is no longer ignoring the law."

She later added: "We are a country of compassion. We are a country of heart. . . . We must fix the system so that those who truly need asylum can in fact receive it."

President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans desperately searched Tuesday for an end game to the administration's contentious zero-tolerance immigration policy that has drawn fire from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.

Trump said Tuesday he wants the legal authority to detain the children along with the adults and "promptly remove families together as a unit."

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I remind my colleagues of the words at the base of the Statue of Liberty by Emma Lazarus:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuge of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

That is the America that I know.
That is the America of liberty for all.

THE NEW COLOSSUS
(By Emma Lazarus)

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes
command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities
frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your
poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe
free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to
me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

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IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this evening's special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, this evening the Congressional Progressive Caucus is going to be sharing some thoughts with the American people about this extremely horrible zero-tolerance policy that Mr. Trump has subjected our Nation to.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this administration's cruel and inhumane zero-tolerance policy at the border that has resulted in the separation of more than 2,000 children from their families and their loved ones.

This policy calls to mind the worst of our history, including the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, our refusal to grant safety to Jewish refugees during the Holocaust, and the treatment of Africans who were brought here as chattel slaves during and throughout the Middle Passage.

Unlike what the administration says, this policy is not required by law, and I think that has been made plain to all Americans. It is not President Obama's doing, and I think that has been made plain to all Americans. It is not in any way justified by the Bible. In fact, as a Christian and someone who grew up in the church, I know that these very same verses were falsely used to justify four centuries of chattel slavery, and that the Bible teaches us to welcome the stranger and to beware of spiritual wickedness in high places.

So don't be deceived. This policy of choice is solely the result of a racist, xenophobic, anti-immigrant, and antifamily values agenda adopted by this administration to intimidate im-

migrants of color seeking asylum from violence and persecution for their own political gain.

The Trump administration has also sought to avoid responsibility for its decisions by cowardly claiming that no such policy exists, as Secretary Nielsen claimed in a reply to my March 20 letter and then reiterated more recently via Twitter—more lies and deception.

However, when 2,000 children are separated from their families, many of whom have been dispersed across this Nation as a result of a decision made by the Trump Department of Justice, a policy of depravity indeed exists.

But that is not all. Children are now, as I have stated, being shipped all across this Nation, including to New York City where there are currently at least 239 children being detained just a few miles from my district and thousands more who are miles away from their caregivers.

Yesterday, Donald Trump finally gave way to public pressure by signing an executive order that he claims will end this horrific policy. Unfortunately, he did so by abrogating his responsibility under the Flores agreement to release children without unnecessary delay and to keep those who are in custody under the least restrictive conditions possible. This means that children will be detained with their families, which is also unacceptable.

Unfortunately, this body, too, is neglecting its responsibility to the American people by debating the most restrictive immigration bills that ignore past commitments to Dreamers and the diversity visa lottery program, and would build an unnecessary and ineffective border wall with Mexico.

To add insult to injury, Republicans, who control every branch of government, blame Democrats for their failure to legislate and offer these regressive, dead-on-arrival bills as solutions to problems that they themselves have created.

So, tonight, I call on this administration to stop playing politics with immigrant lives and on my Republican colleagues to pass meaningful, comprehensive immigration reform that not only protects Dreamers, but protects individuals who are under temporary protected status, and stop separating families.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my honor and my privilege to yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY). Representative JOE KENNEDY represents the Fourth Congressional District of Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Ms. CLARKE, for her leadership on this issue and so many others in Congress as a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Healthcare and immigration policies run through the veins of our society.

Mr. Speaker, over the course of the day today and over the course of the last several days, my colleagues have