



WAVE STATEMENT ON CHILD DETENTION CAMPS

(July 3, 2019)

We, the members of Women for American Values and Ethics (WAVE), denounce in the strongest possible terms the inhumane and illegal child detention camps created by the Trump administration at our southern border. The administration's zero tolerance policy enacted last year led to cruel family separations and the forcible detention of children in these camps. While the law stipulates that children may be held there for no more than 72 hours, many are reported to have been kept there for weeks, without information on their parents and oftentimes, without any legal assistance. The administration has worked to deny reporters, politicians and investigators access to these camps, but this past week two lawyers who visited the El Paso center came forward about the appalling conditions inside.

Their reports reinforce mounting evidence that these camps are dehumanizing and barbaric, subjecting thousands of children to neglect, unsanitary conditions, and physical and mental abuse. Children are being denied basic goods such as toothbrushes, blankets, showers and clean clothes. They are also being denied contact with responsible and caring adults, medical attention, proper nutrition, and education. Worst of all, at least five children have died in ICE custody, on our shores. The treatment of these children – no matter where they came from, or who their parents are – goes against all the American values and ethics we, as an organization, embrace and seek to promote.

WAVE is proud to defend immigrants in our local communities and throughout the nation. WAVE regularly hosts clinics to provide legal assistance and know-your-rights training to undocumented immigrants facing the threat of deportation. WAVE works in partnership with other community organizations to address the needs of refugees, detainees and asylum seekers. We will continue to stand with these partners to defend the rights, and ethical and lawful treatment of immigrant children and their families.