

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS AND
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Opposing the Federal Administration's Expanded Detention of Migrant Children

The Federal Administration (Administration), in its continued efforts to expand child detention, is conducting a search for vacant properties that could potentially serve as permanent facilities to detain unaccompanied migrant children in the States of California, Florida, and Virginia. On August 1, 2019, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors received the Administration's inquiry for properties. Rather than seeking new locations to expand the detention of children, the Administration should put an immediate end to this unconscionable practice and redirect taxpayer dollars to ensure the humane treatment and swift reunification of migrant children with their families and qualified sponsors. Further, no local or state government should be complicit in any action that would enable the indefinite detention of children. Countless medical and mental health experts, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, have made clear that the prolonged detention of children results in irreparable trauma and negative health outcomes. The detention of children by immigration authorities is cruel, inhumane, and

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needs to stop.

Even in facilities federal authorities currently operate or oversee, agencies have failed to provide adequate temporary shelter for the children who have recently arrived at our borders. In fact, since September 2018, at least six migrant children have died while in federal custody, and it has been verified that thousands of children have been held without sufficient food or clean water in unheated, unsafe, and unsanitary conditions. On August 15, 2019, a federal appeals court panel ruled that the federal government must provide detained migrant children with basic hygiene supplies such as soap, toothbrushes, and sleeping mats. The Administration has endangered children's health and mental well-being, and should not be allowed to grow a private industry that is profiting from detaining children and families. It can cost nearly \$800 a day to hold a child in detention, according to an official from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In one of its most recent and blatant abuses of power, the Administration announced its plan to terminate the 1997 Flores Settlement Agreement (FSA), a longstanding court order that limits the detention of migrant children to 20 days. The rollback of the FSA protections would allow federal immigration authorities to detain children and families indefinitely while their immigration cases are pending. The Administration defended its proposal by saying it would "permit the Department of Homeland Security to appropriately hold families together and improve the integrity of the immigration system." The act of detaining families with children in a prison-like facility for extended periods of time is indefensible and lacks any semblance of integrity. The State of California, along with 18 other states and the District of Columbia, have filed a lawsuit

challenging the Administration's intention to invalidate the Flores Settlement Agreement.

Los Angeles County has fought consistently against the Administration's anti-immigrant policies and provided wraparound services, including health, mental health, and legal aid, to migrant children who may have been separated from their parents or relatives. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors should stand resolute in its mission to improve the quality of life and help ensure the safety of every person and community living in Los Angeles County, regardless of immigration status.

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in consultation with the Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) in the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and County Counsel, to send a five-signature letter to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to express Los Angeles County's vehement refusal to identify or assist in identifying any County property that would be used for the detention of migrant children and/or families, and urge that the Federal Administration instead dedicate its time and resources toward efforts that would expedite the reunification of migrant children with their parents, relatives, or sponsors in the United States.
2. Direct CEO to notify all County Departments, in writing, to refrain from directly communicating with HHS, the Office of Refugee Resettlement, or any other federal agency regarding the lease and/or sale of any County property for immigration enforcement purposes, and to immediately inform the CEO and County Counsel if they receive any related communication.

3. Direct CEO, in consultation with OIA and County Counsel, to send a five-signature letter to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to express Los Angeles County's firm opposition to terminating the protections established under the Flores Settlement Agreement.
4. Instruct County Counsel to join and/or file amicus briefs in support of litigants challenging the Administration's termination of the Flores Settlement Agreement and/or the inhumane treatment of children in the following lawsuits: 1) State of California, et al., v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, et al. (filed in the Central District of California); 2) Flores v. William P. Barr (originally filed in the Central District of California); and 3) Ms. L, et al. v. ICE, et al. (originally filed in the Southern District of California).

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