

June 20, 2018

Dear Senator Isakson -

We are deeply troubled and saddened by the current administration's practice of separating children from their parents at our borders. We are unwilling to watch this inhumane and cruel treatment of children go unabated and believe we all have an obligation to take some action to stop this human rights crisis.

Many of us know you personally and from your years of service to the State of Georgia. We believe you to be a good person; one who teaches Sunday school and has achieved many great accomplishments for our state and one who could not possibly personally agree with the current administration's practice of separating children from their parents.

Virtually every human rights and children's advocacy group has sought the immediate end to this practice. The President of the American Academy of Pediatrics has succinctly stated what would seem obvious to any parent: "Separating children from their parents contradicts everything we stand for as pediatricians – protecting and promoting children's health. In fact, highly stressful experiences, like family separation, can cause irreparable harm, disrupting a child's brain architecture and affecting his or her short- and long-term health. This type of prolonged exposure to serious stress - known as toxic stress - can carry lifelong consequences for children." (May 8, 2018 Letter from Colleen Kraft, MD, MBA, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics; AAP Statement Opposing Separation of Children and Parents at the Border). UNICEF has repeatedly called for an end to this mistreatment.

We join this siren call.

Punishing parents by separating them from their children does not change the realities that drove the parents to seek refuge in the United States but instead traumatizes the children at the hands of our nation. To remain silent when our government is acting in such an immoral, inhumane way is to be complicit with child abuse. You have multiple avenues available to you to end this and we call on you, Senator, to take action today and to stand with your Senate colleagues who are condemning this practice.

We stand ready and willing to assist you. We cannot watch one more day without taking action.

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." — Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa

We are concerned leaders in the Atlanta community and we eagerly await your actions.

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