

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 176

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 25, 2018

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Condemns federal government's policy of separating immigrant children from parents.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



AR176 LOPEZ, VAINIERI HUTTLE

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1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** condemning the federal government's
2 policy of separating immigrant children from their parents at the
3 Southwestern border of the United States.

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5 **WHEREAS**, The federal government, since the inauguration of
6 President Donald Trump, has begun prosecuting an increasing
7 number of immigration violations under criminal law instead of
8 civil law; and

9 **WHEREAS**, On April 6, 2018, the Department of Justice enacted a
10 "zero tolerance" policy under which all unauthorized crossings at
11 the Southwestern border of the United States will be treated as
12 criminal offenses; and

13 **WHEREAS**, These policies separate families crossing the border
14 without authorization, since the parents are placed in criminal
15 detention centers while the children are taken into the care of the
16 Department of Health and Human Services; and

17 **WHEREAS**, It has been reported that over 2,400 immigrant families
18 have been separated at the Southwestern border between October
19 2016 and May 2018; and

20 **WHEREAS**, These separations may last months, or even years, since
21 the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human
22 Services have few procedures in place to ensure the reunification of
23 separated families; and

24 **WHEREAS**, It has been reported that the motivation for these policies is
25 not to maintain the safety of the children, but merely to deter others
26 from committing immigration violations; and

27 **WHEREAS**, These policies are unjust, since they indiscriminately break
28 the sacred bond between child and parent, which should only be
29 broken by the government in cases of dire need; and

30 **WHEREAS**, These policies are against the values of the United States,
31 which traditionally prides itself on being a beacon of hope for
32 beleaguered people all over the world; and

33 **WHEREAS**, These policies run counter to the interests of New Jersey,
34 which depends upon immigrants for its cultural and economic
35 growth; now, therefore,

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37 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
38 Jersey:

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40 1. This House condemns the federal government's policy of
41 separating immigrant children from their parents at the
42 Southwestern border of the United States.

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44 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
45 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
46 President and Vice President of the United States; the Majority and
47 Minority Leaders of the United States Senate; The Speaker and

1 Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives; and
2 every member of Congress elected from this State.

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STATEMENT

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7 This resolution condemns the federal government's policy of
8 separating immigrant children from their parents at the
9 Southwestern border of the United States.

10 Since the inauguration of President Donald Trump in 2016, the
11 federal government has begun prosecuting an increasing number of
12 immigration violations under criminal law instead of civil law. In
13 addition, on April 6, 2018, the Department of Justice announced a
14 new "zero-tolerance" policy, under which all immigration violations
15 along the Southwestern border are to be treated as criminal
16 offenses.

17 The result of these policies is that families who cross the border
18 without authorization are divided. The parents are taken to criminal
19 detention centers and the children are taken into the care of the
20 Department of Health and Human Services. It has been reported
21 that over 2,400 immigrant families have been separated at the
22 Southwestern border between October 2016 and May 2018.
23 Furthermore, it has been reported that the motivation for these
24 policies is not the safety of the children, but merely to deter others
25 from committing immigration violations.

26 These policies are unjust. The bond between child and parent is
27 sacred and should be broken by the government only in cases of
28 dire need. These policies, however, break this bond
29 indiscriminately.

30 The policies are also contrary to the basic values of the United
31 States. The United States traditionally prides itself on being a
32 beacon of hope for beleaguered people all over the world, but these
33 policies will tarnish that reputation.

34 In addition, the policies run counter to the values and interests of
35 New Jersey. It has been reported that, between 2010 and 2016,
36 New Jersey's population growth was entirely dependent on
37 immigrants. Thus, these policies, by discouraging the immigration
38 of families to New Jersey, will cause the State economic harm and
39 cultural loss.