



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

Washington, DC, June 20, 2018 -- The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) strongly condemns the separation of infants and children from their parents at our country's borders. CCD calls on our nation's leaders to halt this barbaric practice and to restore dignity and respect to those refugee and immigrant families seeking asylum.

The sudden switch to a “zero tolerance” policy announced by Attorney General Jeff Sessions is inhumane, unethical, and contrary to our country's values. It denies the fundamental human rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness promised to immigrants and refugees for centuries, slamming the door of opportunity in the faces of those who came to our country beckoned by the call of those words inscribed at the feet of Lady Liberty from the *New Colossus*: “Give me your tired, your poor; your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...”

The cruel separation of children and infants from their families—many of whom have made perilous journeys across thousands of miles to flee dangerous conditions—will have lifelong repercussions, including disabilities caused by the trauma of adverse childhood experiences such as family separation. Moreover, we are disturbed by reports of children with significant disabilities experiencing abuse in a system that is not equipped to handle their unique needs.

The separation and detention of these children creates serious risks of long-term damage to their psychological, emotional, and developmental well-being. And in the case with children requiring specialized care, failure to meet their unique needs could result in injury and even death.

As disability advocates too familiar with the pains of segregation, institutionalization, and marginalization, we are deeply concerned by this new policy.

CCD demands President Trump reverse this Administration policy immediately and reunite these families. We simultaneously call on the Congress to act now to pass the Keep Families Together Now Act or another stand-alone bill that results in the immediate reunification of families.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

For more information, please contact Kim Musheno, CCD Chair, at 240-460-4600, Jennifer Mathis, CCD Rights Task Force, at 202-467-5730 ext. 1313, or Samantha Crane, CCD Rights Task Force, at 202-509-0135.