



City of Chicago



R2018-1405

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date: 12/12/2018

Sponsor(s): Burke (14)
Reboyras (30)
Lopez (15)
Thompson (11)
Maldonado (26)
Moore (49)
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Osterman (48)

Type: Resolution

Title: Denunciation of Federal government policy of separating families attempting to enter into United States, and support for Shut Tornillo Down Coalition to close Tornillo Detention Center

Committee(s) Assignment: Committee on Finance

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services operates a military style “tent city” in Tornillo, Texas, about 35 miles southeast of El Paso near the Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, the site has been used as a temporary holding facility for families since November 2016; and

WHEREAS, in June 2018, a children’s tent camp was built as a temporary home to house a few hundred “unaccompanied minors” as a result of the Trump administration’s “zero tolerance” policy; and

WHEREAS, the Tornillo Detention Center was scheduled to close on July 13, 2018, but it has been reported that it will remain open through March of 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Tornillo Detention Center has expanded rapidly in the last six months, and as of November 27, 2018, it housed 2,324 migrant children with the capacity to house a total of 3,800 youths; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services oversees the care of migrant children through its Office of Refugee Resettlement; and

WHEREAS, the Baptist Child & Family Services, a non-profit agency, received federal contracts in the amount of \$179 million to manage the Tornillo Detention Center; and

WHEREAS, because Tornillo Detention Center is in the middle of a desert, not connected to local electrical or water facilities, the cost to run the camp is approximately \$1,200 per child per day, compared to \$17 per child per day under the previous administration’s policy of having the children on monitor and not detained; and

WHEREAS, a minimal education is provided to the migrant children with no psychological or social support even when the children were traumatized by their experience during their travels or by their current detention status; and

WHEREAS, most of the children at Tornillo are waiting for FBI checks on their potential sponsors since the children are not released to the sponsors until fingerprinting and criminal background checks are completed; and

WHEREAS, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement have also used the fingerprints to arrest sponsor applicants, some of whom are undocumented immigrants, which has delayed some potential sponsors from coming forward and resulted in longer stay for the migrant children; and

WHEREAS, despite the Flores Settlement, a 1997 federal consent decree stemming from the case of *Reno v. Flores*, which limits the time the federal government is permitted to detain immigrant minors to no more than 20 days, the detention at Tornillo has increased to 59 days, up from roughly 30 days under the previous administration; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, a 16-year-old Guatemalan girl said that she had spent 30 days in Tornillo after spending two-and-a-half months in a facility run by the U.S. Department of Human Services in Miami; and

WHEREAS, the Shut Tornillo Down Coalition, which consists of Community and religious groups, has called upon the United States Congress to immediately shutdown the Tornillo Detention Center; and

WHEREAS, the members of this City Council recognize that there is no law requiring the detention of the migrant children; and

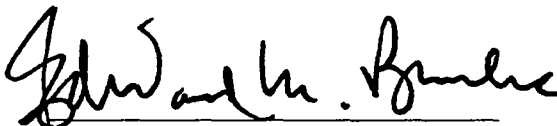
WHEREAS, detaining migrant children at the Tornillo Detention Center will result in an irreparable harm that will compound their existing trauma; and

WHEREAS, Chicago recognizes that this is another example of Trump's failed immigration policy and will have an everlasting effect on the migrant children; now, therefore

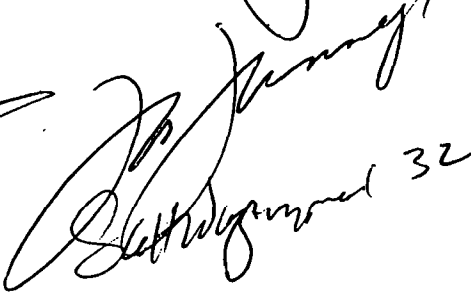
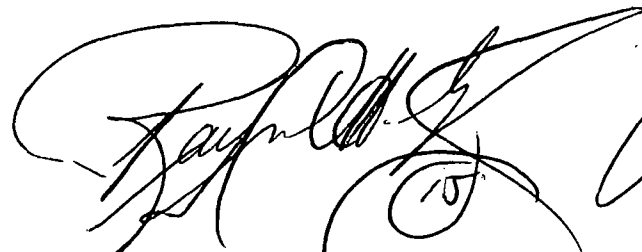
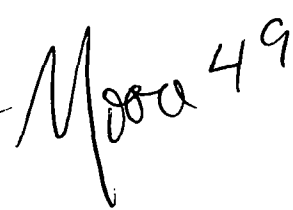
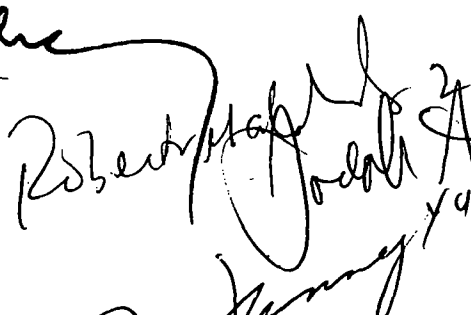
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO: that the members of this City Council hereby denounce the inhumane "zero tolerance" policy of separating families attempting entry into the United States and urge the federal government to cease its continued implementation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this City Council urges the United States Congress to immediately shutdown the Tornillo Detention Center and to assure a safe, humane, and expedited transition for the migrant children into the care of their families and/or sponsors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this City Council stands in full support of the Shut Tornillo Down Coalition in its efforts.



Edward M. Burke
Alderman, 14th Ward





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CHICAGO December 12, 2018

To the President and Members of the City Council:

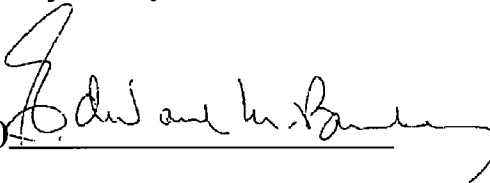
Your Committee on Finance having had under consideration a resolution denouncing the Federal Government's inhumane policy of separating families attempting to enter into the United States and supporting the efforts of the Shut Tornillo Down Coalition to close the Tornillo Detention Center.

Direct Introduction

Having had the same under advisement, begs leave to report and recommend that your Honorable Body pass the proposed Resolution Transmitted Herewith.

This recommendation was concurred in by _____ (a viva voce vote of members of the committee with _____ dissenting vote(s).

Respectfully submitted

(signed) 

Chairman

