PRESS ADVISORY: FAMILIES BELONG TOGETHER NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION RALLY


Where: ICE Atlanta Field Office, 180 Ted Turner Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA 30303

When: Friday, June 1 at 12 PM

Who: National Domestic Workers Alliance - We Dream in Black
American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta
Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials
Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights
Lawyers United for a New Atlanta
Metro Atlanta DSA Immigrant Justice Work Group
Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America
National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum – Atlanta
Racial Justice Action Center
Southern Center for Human Rights
Solutions Not Punishment Coalition
Women Watch Afrika

Why:
Atlanta - In response to the moral crisis caused by the Trump administration intentionally separating immigrant children and youth from their families at the border and in their communities, as well as in response to the reported abuses committed against immigrant children and youth in detention, diverse groups representing families, youth and women from Atlanta will participate in a National Day of Action for Children this Friday, June 1st to demand that the Trump administration keep families together and ensure safety and fair representation for all children and youth.

There are 180 events throughout the country registered on familiesbelongtogether.org and peoplepower.org.

The U.S. Constitution Forbids Separating Parents and Children.
Legally speaking, the Constitution strictly forbids separating parents and children for any reason except one: if the parent is a threat to the child. This right is grounded in Fifth Amendment due process, as courts (and in particular conservative judges) have consistently held. As the Supreme Court held in 2000, “the interest of parents in the care, custody, and control of their children... is perhaps the oldest of the fundamental liberty interests recognized by this Court.”

That fundamental right is now the basis of a class action lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU filed a federal lawsuit seeking to reunite an asylum-seeking mother and her 7-year-old daughter fleeing violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, only to be forcibly torn from each other in the U.S. and detained separately 2,000 miles apart. The lawsuit cites violations of the Constitution’s due process clause, federal law
protecting asylum seekers, and of the government’s own directive to keep families intact.

ACLU also obtained documents showing widespread abuse of child immigrants in U.S. custody. The new ACLU report is based on thousands of government documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act that detail horrific stories.

In Atlanta, members and supporters of the following organizations will join the Families Belong Together Day of Action for Children at a rally at noon on Friday at the ICE Atlanta Field Office on Ted Turner Drive.

Below are quotes from participating organizations.

National Domestic Workers Alliance - We Dream in Black
“The Black communities in which NDWA organizes with our We Dream in Black program understand fundamentally the horror of law enforcement separating children from their families,” stated Tamika Middleton, Georgia State Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance. “It is part and parcel of the legacy of the enslavement of Black people in the U.S. We stand firmly in solidarity with immigrant communities, and assert the right of Black and Brown families, immigrant and U.S. born, to be whole and united.”

ACLU of Georgia
“As a new Mom, I cannot bear the thought that my government is separating families at the border—traumatizing children and their families. This is a betrayal of common human decency, the American Dream and the U.S. Constitution, said Gail Podolsky, Chair of the ACLU of Georgia. “As the Supreme Court held in 2000, ‘the interest of parents in the care, custody, and control of their children... is perhaps the oldest of the fundamental liberty interests recognized by this Court.’”

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Atlanta
“It is imperative that we hold our leaders accountable for the separation of immigrant families. These inhumane policies are part of larger issues found within the ICE and CBP agencies, which must be defunded,” stated Aisha Yaqoob, Policy Director for Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Atlanta.

Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO)
“We need to uplift our voices and actions today for the children who have been left without any voice or parents at our border and within our nation. For too long, we have seen children added to the foster care system or left to their own self-care when their parents have been taken from an already complicated immigration system,” stated Maria Palacios, Policy Director for Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO).

“...the administration’s ‘zero tolerance’ policy that separates children from their families at the border is cruel. Children should never be separated from their families just so the current administration can enforce harsh punishments for misdemeanor offenses at the border,” Palacios continued. “The administration’s policies and actions betray the ideals of the America that has traditionally been the beacon of hope throughout the world.”

Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights
“Our children and loves ones are being taken away from parents and families because of an inhumane and racist policies from Jeff sessions and the Trump Administration that have decided to separates us with one of the most inhumane policies,” stated Adelina Nicholls, Executive Director of Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights. “We will remain in resistance, and we will prevail beyond this intensification of Trump’s attacks on immigrant children, and families, we won’t be silent anymore.”

National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF)
“Many of us have personal or family stories of journeys that were long, difficult, and frightening -- stories of sacrifice and separation, even in the best of circumstances,” stated Roula AbiSamra, reproductive justice organizer at National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF). “No child should be forcibly separated from their family, nor detained or abused; these acts are punitive, inhumane, and violent. As Asian American and Pacific Islander women, we stand with the many children and parents harmed by the Trump administration's systemic racism and xenophobia.”
Metro Atlanta DSA Immigrant Justice Work Group

“As we work towards true liberation, a step in that direction is to defund, dismantle, and abolish ICE which is the personification of the evils of society,” stated Alexander Hernandez with Metro Atlanta DSA Immigrant Justice Work Group. “This country’s racist policies use militarism to go after the most vulnerable. That is what ICE does. Kill a young woman. Break up families. Put children in cages. Cause unnecessary pain.”

“We do not need this agency,” Hernandez continued. “It has no use in our society. We can no longer stay silent as our government ramps up this ethnic cleansing. We stand in solidarity with those affected by this racist agency. We stand in solidarity forever.”

Women Watch Afrika

“Women Watch Afrika notes with heavy heart the pain, hardship and sufferings that our people are going through. Especially the wake of the news of the shooting death of the young woman at the border and the separation of families,” stated Glory Kilanko, Director and CEO of Women Watch Afrika, Inc. “Shutting the doors on some of the most vulnerable people in the world (like our children) for the very same reason that they are fleeing their country and seeking safety is morally wrong and shocking to the whole world. Separation affects the natural bonding of children with their parents, a problem that is difficult for most children to overcome.”

About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees (“Asian Americans”) in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.