



June 21, 2018

Opposing Resolution for the Immigration Zero-Tolerance Policy

WHEREAS, Alameda County is the fourth most diverse county in the United States, with foreign-born residents comprising over 34% of the county’s total population, and 54.5% of children ages 0-17 live with at least one parent who was born outside of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of children have and will be either separated from their parents and guardians or held in detention centers with them for an undisclosed amount of time. These children, including babies and toddlers, are being retraumatized after a dangerous and stressful journey to get to the U.S. Immigration policies that break families apart and/or forcibly keep them detained in detention centers facilitate egregious human rights violations. The detention of children has been condemned by respected human rights organizations globally; and

WHEREAS, First 5 Alameda County’s mission is to promote optimal health and development for young children. Housing children in detention centers, even with their families, may lead to prolonged exposure to stress which can cause irreparable harm to the developing brain and negatively affect short and long term physical and mental health. The American Academy of Pediatrics condemns family detention as “harsh and counterproductive” and calls for limited exposure of any child to current Department of Homeland Security facilities. “Even brief detention can cause psychological trauma and induce long-term mental health risks for children;” and

WHEREAS, The current “zero-tolerance” policy does not uphold the Flores settlement and its expanded terms, which requires the government to release children from custody or find the least restrictive care setting for them, and improve conditions at the U.S. Border Patrol’s short-term holding facilities; and

WHEREAS, The Administration’s treatment of families who cross the border to escape violence and harm is not only unconscionable, it is reminiscent of America’s shameful past and the atrocities experienced by people of color throughout our country’s history; and

WHEREAS, First 5 Alameda County continues to stand by our mission of partnering with the community to support a county-wide continuous prevention and early intervention system that promotes optimal health and development, narrows disparities, and improves the lives of children 0 to 5 and their families – regardless of their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of experts in early child development, child welfare, health, juvenile justice, international law, and human rights have opposed and denounced the separation of families, including the United Nations, the American Academy of Pediatrics, ZERO TO THREE, the Center for Law and Social

Policy, the Child Welfare League of America, American Medical Association, Children's Defense Fund, Juvenile Law Center, and the School Social Work Association of America; and

WHEREAS, California Senator Kevin de Leon's call to end the State's cooperation with the federal government, the United Nations human rights office declaring the policy illegal, and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, and 20 other attorney generals demanding the U.S. Department of Justice immediately end its new "zero-tolerance" immigration policy; and

WHEREAS, The First 5 Association, the California Department of Social Services, and the County Welfare Directors Association of California, along with 537 other respected local and national child welfare, juvenile justice and child health, development and safety organizations, urgently appealed to the Administration to halt plans to separate children and families months before the policy was implemented and again this month; and

WHEREAS, The First 5 Alameda County Commission passed an immigration resolution in 2017 denouncing executive orders and inhumane deportations that caused fear, isolation, and unrest in the communities we serve. Located here: <https://www.f5ecc.org/f5eventdetails.aspx?EventID=2601> ; and

WHEREAS, The Alameda County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in 2016 entitled "Upholding Due Process and Protecting Civil Rights of Immigrant Residents" and another resolution designating Alameda County a Welcoming County for Immigrants and Refugees.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, First 5 Alameda County wholeheartedly refutes policies that threaten, separate, and detain families, and we will work with our partners to keep our communities secure. We commit to protecting children and their families by:

- 1) Partnering with providers and community by offering training services on immigration policies and resources;
- 2) Supporting sanctuary city and safe haven policies at school districts across the county;
- 3) Providing trustworthy information for Alameda County First 5 staff, early childhood educators, community based organizations, partners and families; and
- 4) Advocating for just immigration policies and comprehensive immigration reform in service to community, family, and child well-being.

THE FOREGOING was **PASSED**, and **UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED** by the First 5 Alameda County Commission on this 21st day of June, 2018.