



NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

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June 28, 2019

Hon. Robert Menendez
U.S. Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Menendez:

On behalf of the New Jersey State Bar Association, which represents over 18,000 lawyers and legal professionals, I write to share with you our opposition to the policies adopted by this administration in dealing with families seeking to enter the United States at the southern border. Further, the NJSBA requests that should you schedule a visit of any Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other government facilities where these families, particularly children, are detained that our representatives join your delegation to ensure their rights and security are being respected and upheld.

Last June, the NJSBA wrote to the Attorney General and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to express our outrage at the family separation policies that have led to thousands of children being taken into detention. We were joined in that message by legal organizations from around the state, including the Asian Pacific Lawyers Association of New Jersey; Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey; Garden State Bar Association; Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey; New Jersey Muslim Lawyers Association; and South Asian Bar Association of New Jersey. These issues remain at the fore of our concern and just this week related immigration issues and policies were a central part of our Annual Diversity Summit, which was attended by hundreds of attorneys.

We have grave concerns about these policies and believe that this government-enforced policy of intolerance has inflicted enormous harm on children separated from their families, it has impeded law enforcement's daily efforts to build trust and combat crimes in their communities, and taxed the overburdened courts and immigration system.

We, as a people, recognize as basic to American values that dignity of all persons must be protected against abusive state action, especially as it pertains to unaccompanied children, who have been subjected to inhumane conditions according to multiple news reports. To do this, we hold dear the concepts that government action must be subordinate to the safeguards of due process and a public, fair and impartial hearing.

The lawyers of New Jersey stand ready to assist in any way to ensure the country's core principles are upheld and that unaccompanied children are safe and secure, and hope that we can be of assistance for any planned visits to detention facilities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evelyn Padin".

Evelyn Padin
President