



June 27, 2018

Speaker Paul Ryan
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Minority Leader Charles Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi and Minority Leader Schumer:

As law enforcement leaders focused on public safety and fiscal responsibility, we write in support of the use of alternatives to detention (ATDs), after appropriate vetting, as a substitute to detaining families in immigration detention. With various recent executive branch and legislative branch proposals to detain parents and children together in immigration detention, we would urge policymakers to examine proven, effective ATDs as a cheaper and better solution than detaining families that pose no threat to their communities.

Law enforcement leaders, like other Americans, were deeply concerned about family separation. In addition to the toll that policy was taking on families, we also were concerned about its impact on communities, threatening to increase fear in our communities and undermine trust between immigrants and local law enforcement. We were encouraged by the administration's issuance of an executive order on June 20 that sought to bring an end to widespread family separations.

However, we continue to be concerned about the executive order's replacement for family separation – family detention. Simply stated, we do not believe that across-the-board family detention is the solution to family separation. Most families do not pose a threat to the community at large and, accordingly, our juvenile detention system is designed around keeping the family together. Given the risks to children's physical and emotional development posed by prolonged detention, we urge policy makers to consider alternatives.

Congress should consider alternatives that keep families together outside of immigration detention, while ensuring that families attend immigration hearings and required immigration check-ins. Programs such as the Family Case Management pilot program, which was terminated in 2017, should be examined because we understand this program reportedly kept families out of immigration detention facilities while getting them to their immigration hearings more than 99 percent of the time. From our experience in the criminal justice system other types of ATDs, ranging from GPS monitors to telephonic check-ins are highly successful at a fraction of the cost of detention.



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Taxpayers stand to save millions of dollars in detention costs each day through the use of ATDs. In fiscal year (FY) 2018, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) average cost of detaining a person in immigration detention is above \$200 each day. And the average cost of detaining a person in specialized family detention is nearly one-and-a-half times as much, well above \$300 per person per day. By contrast, the average ATD contract costs only \$5-6 per person per day, a fraction of the amount it costs to physically detain somebody.

We urge you to examine options that keep families together and avoid the prolonged detention of children, namely ATDs. ATDs are proven to be effective and save taxpayer money. We believe that is a better solution to address migration by families at the border.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you in a strong partnership to ensure the safety of America.

Sincerely,

Chief J. Thomas Manger, *LEITF Co-Chair*
Montgomery County, MD
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

Chief Art Acevedo, *LEITF Co-Chair*
Houston, TX
Vice President, Major Cities Chiefs
Association

Sheriff Margaret Mims, *LEITF Co-Chair*
Fresno County, CA

Executive Director Chuck Wexler
Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)

Retired Lt. Andy Norris
Tuscaloosa, AL

Chief Chris Magnus
Tucson, AZ

Chief Mike Soelberg
Gilbert, AZ

Chief Roy Minter
Peoria, AZ

Chief Sylvia Moir
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Retired Chief Roberto Villaseñor
Tucson, AZ

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Maricopa, AZ

Retired Chief James Lopez
Los Angeles County, CA

Chief David Valentin
Santa Ana, CA

Sheriff Joe Pelle
Boulder, CO

Chief Nick Metz
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Chief Peter Newsham
Washington, DC

Chief John Mina
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Signatures updated as of July 3, 2018 3 pm ET