

# Engage With Congress on Family Incarceration & Separation

The national crisis of separated families and indefinite detention is raging on. Congress has an important role to play to end family incarceration and separation. But right now, they are considering pouring billions of dollars into inhumane immigration enforcement, detention, and border militarization, while considering legislation that will incarcerate more families indefinitely.

Congress must act to fund the government for fiscal year 2019 by September 30, 2018. It is imperative that people of faith and conscience make our voices heard immediately. Members of Congress will be home in August, and below are ways that you can urge them to reverse this course.

## Here's what you should be asking your members of Congress to do through September 30:

1. Urge the administration to end “zero-tolerance” criminal prosecution of families and asylum seekers for crossing the border. This causes family separation, and it must end now. Tell the administration to immediately reunify families already separated.
2. Reduce funding for immigration detention, deportation, and border militarization, and reject legislation or spending bills that expand family incarceration.
3. Invest in and direct the administration to utilize community-based [alternatives to detention](#) such as the Family Case Management Program. The administration ended FCMP in June 2017; it should be restored.

## Making Your Voice Heard

1. **Call Congress.** Call 1-866-940-2439 three times to connect with your 2 Senators and 1 Representative.
2. **Visit your member of Congress' office.** Schedule a visit using the IIC [Neighbor to Neighbor Visit Toolkit](#), or drop off materials. (*Print or copy the second page of this document to leave behind!*)
3. **Show up at a Town Hall.** Ask your member of Congress what they are doing to stop forcible family separation and family detention. Encourage them to reject additional spending for detention and deportation, and increase oversight over existing enforcement. Look up if your member of Congress is having a town hall at [townhallproject.com](#) or by calling their DC office.
4. **Write a Letter to the Editor or Opinion Editorial.** Call on your member of Congress by name in your local newspaper to expand oversight. Instead they should direct the administration to utilize community-based alternatives to detention for families, asylum seekers, and immigrants navigating the immigration system. Find your local newspapers here: [act.fcnl.org/lte/lte](#)
5. **Engage with candidates running for office in your community. Candidates need to hear that this is an issue that voters care about.** Ask candidates if they support reducing funding for immigrant detention and investing in community-based alternatives to detention. Ask what they will do to advance policies that protect family unity and the dignity of all immigrants, refugees, and migrants.

**For more information and resources, see this interfaith toolkit:**

<http://bit.ly/EndFamilySeparationToolkit>

*Print the following page to leave behind after a visit, drop off at your member of Congress' office, or leave with staff at a town hall or a candidate forum.*



## Stop Incarcerating Children & Separating Families

In two months, the administration's "zero-tolerance" border prosecution policy separated over 2,300 children from their parents with no reunification plan. The administration is also placing more families together in inhumane detention camps and trying to circumvent laws that protect children from indefinite incarceration.

Congress should reject legislation that expands family detention, which is detrimental to parents and children alike. Instead, they should increase oversight of immigration and border enforcement, reduce funding for deportation and detention, and invest in community-based alternatives to detention.

- » **Reject legislation that expands family detention, such as the Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act (S. 3093).** S. 3093 would allow for children to be detained indefinitely with their parents. Children should neither be incarcerated, nor needlessly separated from a parent.
- » **Push the administration to end its “zero-tolerance” prosecution policy** and return prosecutorial discretion to protect families, young children, and other vulnerable individuals seeking asylum.
- » **Invest in non-restrictive, community-based alternatives to detention,** the most appropriate response for families, children, and asylum seekers. Restore the Family Case Management Program (FCMP) which helped families navigate the legal system outside of restrictive custody.

Urge an end to  
“zero-tolerance”  
border prosecution.

Oppose child  
incarceration, with or  
without their parents.

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*The Interfaith Immigration Coalition is made up of over 50 national, faith-based organizations brought together across many theological traditions with a common call to seek just policies that lift up the God-given dignity of every individual. In partnership, we work to protect the rights, dignity, and safety of all refugees and migrants.*