

IMMIGRATION

4

Civil Rights

A

RESOLUTION HCR 64 By Representative Eddie Rodriguez

WHEREAS, State Representative Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) filed HCR 64 calling for the 80th Texas Legislature to urge the US Department of Homeland Security to reconsider all alternatives in the detention of non-criminal immigrants and asylum seeking families with children;

WHEREAS, Putting children in jail is an inappropriate response to the issue of immigration. As a society we should uphold core family values which reject policies that punish children for the acts of their parents;

WHEREAS, There are more appropriate and cost-effective alternatives than imprisoning children or families with young children, such as supervised release programs, that save taxpayers money and are effective in making sure that people appear for their immigration hearings;

WHEREAS, We need practical, realistic immigration policies and family or unaccompanied minor detention centers are not it;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that LULAC support the closure of any and all detention facilities throughout the United States, including those located in the State of Texas;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LULAC also denounce those outside organizations and corporations that enter into partnership or association with the Department of Homeland Security's policy of creating detention facilities that continue to house our children and families;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Round Rock LULAC Council, LULAC Council # 85, LULAC District 4, LULAC Council 4780, LULAC Council 4785, LULAC Council 4858, LULAC Council 4860, LULAC Council 4861, LULAC Council 4877 fully supports, endorses, and promotes Representative Rodriguez's HCR 64 as written and attached.

Full Council President 4860
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Texas portion of the border between the United States and United Mexican States comprises more than half of the nearly 2,000 mile boundary between the two countries; as a result of this proximity, the State of Texas is uniquely aware of the importance of border protection to the security of the nation as a whole and sensitive to the impact of the illegal immigration on the economic and social well-being of both countries; and

*Ray V. Rodriguez Council # 4885
Leander, Celan Park, Tx.*

*David J. ... Council # 4603
Council # 1058*

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, border security and immigration have become fundamental issues in the development of national security policy; one such measure, the Secure Border Initiative, was unveiled by the Department of Homeland Security on November 2, 2005, and seeks to secure the United States' international borders by reducing illegal immigration; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Inspector General at the Department of Homeland Security estimates the costs of detaining illegal immigrants to be \$1.2 billion annually, and current research indicates that detaining immigrant and asylum-seeking families does not deter illegal immigration; even so, a central component of the Secure Border Initiative is expanded detention authority for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the largest investigative branch of the department; and

WHEREAS, under this authority, the Department of Homeland Security recently opened the T. Don Hutto Residential Facility in Taylor, Texas, for the exclusive purpose of detaining immigrant and asylum-seeking families who are awaiting immigration or deportation proceedings; and

WHEREAS, of the 400 people detained in this privately owned and operated, for-profit detention center, approximately 200 are children; a typical day for a child detained at the Taylor facility includes only four hours of education and one hour of outdoor recreation; the meals served are reported to have caused digestive problems for the children, including infants who are forced to consume formula beyond the advised date due to lack of alternative nutrition; and

WHEREAS, the United States House and Senate committees on Appropriations have each expressed concern about children of families detained at this and other centers, particularly about reports that many have been removed from their families and placed in separate facilities operated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement or in the Unaccompanied Minor Project; and

WHEREAS, children who have had no decisive role in their migration or flight should not be exposed to avoidable trauma; it is clearly within our means to provide these children and infants a safe environment without disruption to their families, nutrition, education, health, and exercise while their parents await immigration proceedings; and

WHEREAS, a valid alternative to the current method of detaining immigrant families would be to release and reunite these children and their parents but closely monitor them under the Intensive Supervision Appearance Program, thereby reducing the emotional consequences to young children, adolescents, and teenagers and the financial burden to taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, certainly the methods used to decrease illegal immigration and secure our borders must be effective, but considering the apparent consequences of family detention, every possible alternative to family detention should be examined, considered, and exhausted before such action is taken; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 80th. Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully request the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to reconsider all alternatives to the detention of immigrant and asylum-seeking families with children and children; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the State of Texas Secretary of State forward official copies of this resolution to the President of the Senate of the United States Congress, all members of the Texas delegation to the Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security, with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.