

June 14, 2018



Dear James Dobson, Focus on the Family; Tony Perkins, Family Research Council; and Austin Ruse, C-Fam:

In recent weeks, Americans and elected officials from [both sides](#) of the [aisle](#) and a [constellation of leaders](#) from various faiths have come out strongly in opposition to the Trump Administration's policy that separates children from their families at the border.

As the Executive Director of Equity Forward, a healthcare and reproductive rights watchdog organization, I am shocked that you, as leaders of so-called, "pro-family" organizations, have stood on the sidelines and said nothing while families are torn apart. We firmly believe that families – regardless of where they come from or their immigration status – should be treated with dignity, respect and compassion.

As organizations with declared missions of supporting families, we call on you to live up to those missions and use your networks to fight the Trump administration's new policy. This policy is resulting in a humanitarian crisis, tearing apart hundreds of families, and jeopardizing the health and well-being of children, some of whom aren't even a year old.

In recent weeks, your organizations have remained silent on this devastating policy.

Despite the [\\$90 million](#) that Focus on the Family spent in one year alone on programs that advance your [mission of](#), "protect[ing families] from the harmful influences of culture and equip themselves to make a greater difference in the lives of those around them" and your pledge that "no matter who you are, what you're going through or what challenges your family may be facing, we're here to help," you have not made any public comments on the family-separation crisis. Does "no matter who you are" not apply to these migrant families?

Just as worrisome, in the last few weeks, Family Research Council CEO Tony Perkins invited Members of Congress – including Rep. Ron Estes, who sits on the Homeland Security Committee - on his radio show to discuss immigration. Not once did Mr. Perkins raise the migrant child crisis. The stated mission of Perkins' organization is: "to advance faith, family, and freedom in public policy and the culture from a Christian worldview," and yet, you are failing to condemn or address this current situation even when opportunities are right in front of you.

And, just last week, the [U.N. criticized](#) the policy, stating: "the Trump administration's practice of separating children from migrant families entering the United States violates their rights and international law... urging an immediate halt to the practice." But C-Fam, an organization that

[focuses](#) on promoting family issues at the United Nations and other international institutions, has had nothing to say to date.

Your organizations have [supported President Trump](#) politically or [backed policies](#) championed by his administration. While you claim to stand up for families at [fancy summits and rallies](#), but when it comes to families fleeing violence and abuse, you are standing idly by.

This crisis demands that all of us speak out against this horrific policy and in defense of families. Your silence to date is not only a moral failure, but it also makes you complicit in a policy that breaks apart families.

If you and your organizations believe that some families are worthy of defending while others are expendable, we encourage you to stop hiding behind your hollow pro-family rhetoric and clearly state your position.

We hope that you change course and support all families when they are in crisis and not just when it is politically convenient.

Sincerely,

Mary Alice Carter
Executive Director
Equity Forward