



June 25, 2018

To Mayor Wheeler, Commissioner Fritz, Commissioner Eudaly, Commissioner Fish and Commissioner Saltzman:

The Human Rights Commission of Portland advises City Council and city bureaus on promoting and protecting human rights in the City of Portland and on applying a human rights lens to city policies.

As such, the Human Rights Commission condemns the separation of immigrant children from their parents at the U.S. - Mexican border.

The Human Rights Commission urges our city's elected leaders to take a stand on human rights violations occurring in the city, and to make active policy decisions that uphold the human rights of any person who comes to our community by taking a stand to ensure that no city resources and/or facilities are used in the human rights violations of ICE detainees or their children. Furthermore, we encourage city leadership to work with other local jurisdictional leaders to take a stand to do the same.

Over the past few weeks, thousands of children have been inhumanely taken from their parents by US Customs and Border Protection in a policy that has been condemned by the United Nations and many international human rights observers. Indeed, no other country has a policy of separating families who intend to seek asylum. Despite the recent changes in the policy, thousands of families still remain apart with no plan for reuniting them.

Denying the human rights of those seeking asylum is a violation of Article 14 (1) of the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution."

We appreciate Mayor Wheeler's strong response to the federal government and commitment to not allowing the Portland Police Bureau to serve as an agent of ICE or other federal agencies complacent in enforcing this policy. We ask the Mayor that whenever possible, the city assist in the reunification of families separated by these inhumane policies.

Sincerely,
Human Rights Commission of Portland

Portland Human Rights Commission
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