

Trump to Order End of Immediate Immigrant Family Separations at U.S. Border

U.S. President Donald Trump said he would sign an executive order on immigration on Wednesday to end the immediate separation of immigrant families at the border, which has sparked outrage in the United States and abroad.

An administration official said Trump would sign an order that would require immigrant families to be detained together if they are caught crossing the border illegally. Trump previously had insisted his hands were tied on the separation policy.

Trump's order also would move parents with children to the front of the line for immigration proceedings but would not end a "zero tolerance" policy that urges criminal prosecution of immigrants crossing the border illegally, the official said.

"I'll be doing something that's somewhat pre-emptive but ultimately will be matched by legislation I'm sure," Trump told reporters at the White House.

"We want security for our country," Trump said. "We will have that at the same time we have compassion ... I'll be signing something in a little while that's going to do that."

Videos of youngsters in cages and an audiotape of wailing children have sparked anger in the United States from groups ranging from clergy to influential business leaders, as well as condemnation from abroad, including Pope Francis.

The House of Representatives planned to vote on Thursday on two bills designed to halt the practice of separating families

and to address other immigration issues.

But Republicans said they were uncertain if either measure would have enough support to be approved. Trump told House Republicans on Tuesday night he would support either of the immigration bills under consideration but did not give a preference.

Some Christian leaders, like Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, praised the move:

I join with millions of Americans of all political persuasions in expressing my relief that our country's collective crescendo of horror at seeing families separated at our southern border has led this administration to urgently advance an executive order to keep families intact during processing. Indeed this policy was misguided, poorly communicated to the public, and is anti-American. We must be able to agree on something so simple and so fundamental as keeping families intact whenever it's in our power to do so.

That being said, I think once again leaning only on presidential executive orders to fix our failing immigration system would be an egregious mistake that will only create additional crises in the future. Let us not settle for so little when it comes to reform. The NHCLC has been a vocal supporter of border security, even going so far as to supporting a wall should it also mean legislation that provides a legal pathway for Dreamers; bringing the 11 million undocumented immigrants in our country out of the shadows but to the back of the line; and stopping the flow of human trafficking and drug smuggling that plagues our nation. We must stop approaching immigration as an 'either-or' decision, but as a 'both-and.' We can have border security and compassion. We can have common sense reform that is in the best interest of our citizens that also uplifts the dignity of all human life. Regardless of this executive order or any other narrowly tailored stop-gap measures, the NHCLC

calls on Congress to act now on comprehensive immigration reform.

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