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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 405 Session of  
2018

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INTRODUCED BY SCHWANK, WILLIAMS, BLAKE, FONTANA, STREET, LEACH,  
FARNESE, HUGHES, HAYWOOD, TARTAGLIONE, COSTA AND DINNIMAN,  
JUNE 22, 2018

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REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, JUNE 22, 2018

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to enact Federal  
2 legislation pending in the United States Senate to prevent  
3 the separation of children from their parents at the border  
4 and keep immigrant families together.

5 WHEREAS, The Trump Administration and United States Attorney  
6 General Jeff Sessions have adopted a "zero-tolerance" policy and  
7 announced criminal prosecutions regarding individuals who cross  
8 the border seeking protections from violence; and

9 WHEREAS, The "zero-tolerance" policy requires the separation  
10 of children from those individuals who are detained since  
11 children cannot be jailed; and

12 WHEREAS, The Trump Administration has cited Federal law as  
13 the reason for the separations, even though no statutes exist  
14 that require children to be physically separated from their  
15 parents; and

16 WHEREAS, The Trump Administration began interpreting a 1997  
17 legal agreement and a 2008 human trafficking bill as requiring  
18 the physical separation of families; and

1       WHEREAS, Neither the administrations of former President  
2 George W. Bush nor Barack Obama adopted this interpretation of  
3 those agreements; and

4       WHEREAS, The Trump Administration's unilateral change in  
5 policy has resulted in more than 2,000 children being physically  
6 separated from their parents over a six-week period, with more  
7 than 100 of those separated children being younger than 4 years  
8 of age, according to the Department of Homeland Security figures  
9 cited by numerous media; and

10       WHEREAS, In one facility in Texas, more than 1,100  
11 undocumented migrants were detained with 200 of those detainees  
12 being unaccompanied children; and

13       WHEREAS, There have been widespread reports and photographic  
14 evidence of children being housed in fenced-in shelters or  
15 makeshift facilities; and

16       WHEREAS, The Trump Administration policy has been roundly  
17 criticized by Democrats, Republicans, clergy, advocates and  
18 others as cruel, harsh, immoral and inhumane; and

19       WHEREAS, The United Nations Human Rights Office of the High  
20 Commissioner condemned the practice of separating immigrant and  
21 refugee children from their parents at the border as "a serious  
22 violation of the rights of the child" on June 5, 2018; and

23       WHEREAS, Senator Diane Feinstein, on June 7, 2018, introduced  
24 S. 3036, known as the "Keep Families Together Act," to prevent  
25 the United States Department of Homeland Security from  
26 separating immigrant children from their parents at the border,  
27 and similar legislation is pending before Congress; therefore be  
28 it

29       RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
30 urge Congress to enact Federal legislation pending in the United

1 States Senate to prevent the separation of children from their  
2 parents at the border and keep immigrant families together; and  
3 be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 condemn the Trump Administration's "zero-tolerance" policy; and  
6 be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 urge the Pennsylvania delegation to the 115th Congress to  
9 immediately request that the President reverse his ill-advised  
10 "zero-tolerance" policy separating children from their families;  
11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
13 the President of the United States, to the presiding officers of  
14 each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from  
15 Pennsylvania.