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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission (ERC) condemns the federal Executive Branch's zero tolerance policy for refugees and asylum-seekers resulting in the separation of thousands of children from their parents. This practice is inhumane and gravely immoral, with long-term and short-term health effects to the children. These opinions are aligned with the statements released by three medical professional organizations representing over 250,000 American doctors. (1)

There is no legal requirement that asylum- or refugee-seeking parents be incarcerated or separated from their children while waiting for their hearings that can take years, which also flies in the face of international standards. We have a moral imperative to humanize refugees and asylum-seekers and reject the blatant untruths of a "border crisis" at the American southern border that is used to justify policies that subvert human rights and dignity. This practice causes local, national and international trauma.

The ERC calls on the federal government to ensure reunification of families and to stop enforcement of this policy immediately – which prevents the fair administration of justice and discriminates against families based on their immigration status.

Steadfast in the support of equal and human rights,

City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission

1. American College of Physicians, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics