

**Members Hearing Day Before the House Committee on the Judiciary
Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, CA-40
September 20, 2019**

I want to thank Chairman Nadler, Chairwoman Lofgren, and Congresswoman Jayapal for your support in the markup and passage of my legislation, H.R. 6, the Dream and Promise Act of 2019. As you know, my district holds the largest number of Dreamers of any congressional district in the country, and immigrants are a cherished part of our community. For the first time in history, your collective efforts and dedication, made it possible to secure the passage of the Dream Act through Committee which gave hope to Dreamers, and TPS and DED recipients in my district and across the country.

In the last two years, I have seen my community attacked by xenophobic and anti-immigrant policies inflicted by the Trump Administration. I have heard heartbreaking stories from teachers in my district who find that children are exhibiting signs of PTSD. They are terrified their parents will be taken from them by ice while they are in school.

Their stories are symptoms of a broken immigration system.

One such solution to limit the pain inflicted on children by the Trump Administration is my legislation, H.R. 3451, the Humane Enforcement and Legal Protection for Children Act or the HELP Separated Children Act. By instituting smart, responsible, and humane time of apprehension protocols, the bill will limit the harm to children caused by the detention of parents in our immigration system. It will help also to keep children out of foster care.

Specifically, the bill would ensure parents can say goodbye to their children before they are taken into detention. The HELP Separated Children Act would also require ICE to consider the best interests of children in the release, transfer, or detention of their parents. This includes permitting parents to remain in contact with their children through phone calls and video conferencing during enforcement actions. In such a traumatic time in their lives, children need and deserve the opportunity to hug their parents goodbye before being separated and to talk to them over the phone while separated.

Because detention should never mean an individual ceases to be a parent, the HELP Separated Children Act ensures parents can participate in any family court and child welfare proceedings. Detention

Immigration and child welfare advocacy groups have overwhelmingly supported this vital piece of legislation. In fact, I have attached to this testimony a letter of over 150 organizations across the country who have expressed their support for the HELP Separated Children Act.

In closing, I would like to briefly highlight additional immigration priorities, which will help ensure immigrants are treated with dignity, humanity, and respect and to guarantee immigrants receive medical and mental health care. This also includes humane custody

and welfare standards for children in CBP custody, as outlined in the Child Trafficking Victims Protection and Welfare Act.

I urge you to consider the HELP Separated Children Act in your upcoming immigration agenda, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that our immigration system is fair and humane.