

# THE NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

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## “The Executive Order Has No Clothes!” Lawyer Moms of America Speak Out About Immigration Policy and Plan Action

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Monday, June 25, 2018

News of children being taken away from their parents as both are sent to immigration detention centers has dominated the news cycle over the past few weeks, and a group of Lawyer Moms are doing something about it. Specifically, the group is writing an open letter that demands a “just and humane” resolution to the crisis at the border, and they are planning a day of action to deliver their message directly to elected officials at their offices on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Trump Administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy has resulted in parents and children being separated at the southern border. And the images and audio of the distraught children and parents have prompted both Americans and pundits here and abroad to express their outrage. The continuous media coverage and wide-spread outcry forced the issue and President Trump bowed to the political pressure, signing an Executive Order on Wednesday, June 20, saying that while the administration will enforce immigration laws [“it is also the policy of this Administration to maintain family unity.”](#)

Four self-described lawyer Moms, distraught by the images coming in the media surrounding this crisis, formed the group [Lawyer Moms of America](#) on Facebook. Erin Albanese, one of the founding members says, that it all started with a Facebook posting. One of the other co-founders, an immigration attorney, posted about her client, who had her child taken away and had not seen nor heard from her child in several weeks. Albanese, says this story resonated, and she and the other co-founders thought, “there’s got to be something more that we can do.”

It turns out, there was. The four co-founders, Tovah Kopah, Laura Latta, Elizabeth Gray Nuñez and Albanese started the group on June 7, and this group has grown to about 14,000 members as people are looking for ways to get involved and take action. The group drafted an open letter to political leaders on the situation and are asking individuals and groups to sign it, they intend to deliver the letter on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, Albanese says, “we are working with organizations in this space that are already doing work and trying to amplify their efforts and connect people to places where they could volunteer or donate and get more information as well.”

### Lawyers Mom’s Seek More than the Executive Order

The Lawyer Moms of America read the Executive Order and were not impressed. Albanese says, “our catchphrase is ‘the Executive Order has no clothes’. The more we look at it, the more unhappy we are.” The group has determined that their number one concern is getting the families back together, and the Executive Order “EO” does not articulate how that is going to happen. Albanese says, “The number one glaring issue is that it [the EO] doesn’t mention family reunification at all . . . It seems like there hasn’t really been a system for tracking families that have been separated and bringing them back together.” This analysis has proven precedent, as of the [2500 children taken away from their parents, as of Saturday only 522 had been reunited](#). Additionally, the Executive Order seems to solve the problem of family separation by creating indefinite detention, creating “internment camps” to house families for the foreseeable future, with little idea of when they will be



Article By

[Eilene Spear](#)

[The National Law Review / The National Law Forum LLC](#)

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released. Albanese points out in her criticism of the Executive Order that, “Ending family separation by indefinite family detention is not a great fit.” Perhaps most problematic, Trump’s Order does not address the root of the problem--the policy of “zero-tolerance” that created this situation in the first place.

This issue has proved a hot-button one for many, as it hits at something fundamental. Albanese says, “Many have had a visceral reaction to this, because every one of us can put ourselves in that place or that child or that mother.” With the situation far from resolved, there is still plenty of work to do. Lawyer Moms of America have created a [list of actions](#) concerned individuals can take, and they are asking people to sign their [open letter](#). The Lawyer Moms of America group is aware that there are a lot of great groups at work on this issue, and they are focused on helping those groups in their respective missions. Albanese says, “We are mobilizing and using the energy to help make some noise. We're trying to funnel resources to the folks that are already doing this and doing it well.”

On June 29, the group is looking to hand-deliver the letter to elected officials across the country, demanding action in a show of unity. Albanese says, “Our goal would be to, at a minimum, that we hit somebody's office in every state. We'd love to hit every member of Congress's office. But we'll see if we get there.”

With a track record that includes a Facebook group growing from 4 to 14,000 members in a few days? There’s a good chance it’ll happen.

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