



June 18, 2018.  
Philadelphia, PA

## STATEMENT FROM REV. LUIS CORTÉS JR. ON FAMILY SEPARATION

Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo,

Last week Esperanza gathered Hispanic clergy from across the nation for the [National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast \(NHPB\)](#) in Washington D.C. I am so thankful for all who joined us in person, watched online, and advocated on the Hill to help give voice to our Hispanic communities.

The NHPB is a bipartisan event where Esperanza convenes the leaders of both political parties with Hispanic faith leaders for conversation, advocacy, prayer and transformation. Both House Speaker Paul Ryan and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi were among the many who joined us this year, and I am pleased that Speaker Ryan has joined the growing bipartisan opposition to the Trump Administration's family separation policy. It was gratifying to hear both speak with one voice on that subject at their respective press conferences following the NHPB last Thursday.

The Trump Administration's assault on Hispanic families at our southern border is not a legal mandate under current immigration law, but rather an administrative decision by the Attorney General of the United States. Along with Esperanza, other faith communities, including the Catholic Church and Southern Baptist Convention, have voiced their opposition to this anti-family policy and it is beginning to have an effect. Attorney General Sessions' attempt to justify the separation of children from their parents using Romans 13, in my opinion, has backfired as many recalled how the same argument was forwarded in the past to undergird both slavery and institutionalized injustice.

It is important that we raise our opposing voices and keep the pressure up. Last week, many of us learned how to advocate, and together we made a hundred visits to our Senators and Representatives on Capitol Hill. I am asking all who read this statement to reach out to your Senators and Representatives by email, phone, text and at town halls to communicate your opposition to this Administration's family separation policy and to do so IMMEDIATELY.

It is both immoral and detrimental to forcibly separate and institutionalize young children from loving and caring parents. God's people are rising with one unified voice because we know the truth of the Scriptures, that the family is sacred. Let us communicate this truth, and please ask others to do the same.

Tenemos Esperanza!

Luis Cortés, Jr.  
Founder, President & CEO

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[Esperanza](#) is a national community-based organization founded in 1987 by Rev. Luis Cortés and the Hispanic Clergy of Philadelphia & Vicinity with the biblical mandate to serve and advocate for "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40). Beginning with a local initiative, with programs targeted to address the unmet needs of North Philadelphia's Hispanic community, Rev. Cortes is now sought by national and international leaders alike on issues of economic and workforce development, housing, immigration, and education. Under his leadership, Esperanza has grown from a small 20-person operation to a \$40 million organization with more than 350 employees. Follow us on social media @esperanza\_us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), [EsperanzaUSA](#) on Facebook and Esperanza US on [YouTube](#). For more information, please visit [www.esperanza.us](http://www.esperanza.us).