

ALBUQUERQUE — James Jimenez, executive director of New Mexico Voices for Children, issued the following statement on the Trump Administration's proposed regulations regarding the Flores Settlement Agreement Sept. 9.

"We are appalled that the Trump Administration has taken another step away from simple human decency by trying to subvert the Flores Settlement Agreement. The number one priority of the Flores agreement is that children not be incarcerated. This foundational principle recognizes that the best way to ensure a child's well-being is to keep them out of jail. These standards of protection have been in place for decades and there is no reason they should be discarded.

"Because of this Administration's policies, hundreds of separated children remain terrified and alone in detention six weeks after the court-ordered reunification deadline. With this moral stain still on our nation, the Trump Administration is moving to try and replace family separation with indefinite family incarceration in an unacceptable bid to jail children indefinitely and subject them to more trauma and abuse.

"What's more, the proposed regulations would allow the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to jail children indefinitely while DHS 'self-certifies' that the jails are safe for children. This is despite the fact that time and time again DHS has proven itself unable or unwilling to ensure the basic safety and health of the people it jails.

I believe that we are better than this and that we can safeguard our nation without harming

children. We must demand that Flores is followed."

By James Jimenez, executive director

New Mexico Voices for Children