



COUNTY OF YOLO

Board of Supervisors

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STATEMENT REGARDING OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SECURE PLACEMENTS AT YOLO JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY

Like many Americans, Yolo County residents and the Board of Supervisors are gravely disturbed by recent federal directives that have resulted in the forcible separation of families upon their detainment by federal immigration authorities. Since 2008, Yolo County has provided under contract up to 24 beds for the secure placement of youth under the jurisdiction of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) at the County's Juvenile Detention Facility. We want to do right by these children and we are sincerely concerned for their well-being.

There have been no placements of youth apprehended with their parents and forcibly separated as a result of "zero tolerance" immigration directives.

The youth in our facility are typically between the ages of 15 and 17. The County does not, and has no interest in, operating a de facto federal prison for forcibly separated youth.

To qualify for an ORR secure placement at the County's Juvenile Detention Facility, a youth must pose a credible physical threat to self or others or have been charged with having committed a serious criminal offense. Yolo County has the ability to reject placements if we are not confident the youth meets the secure placement criteria and we have rejected placement in the past on these grounds.

In the ten years Yolo County has contracted with ORR, we have provided all of our placements the care and services they need, including physical and mental health treatment, educational services and a variety of social services. ORR provides, and the Juvenile Detention Facility facilitates, legal representation for the youth in immigration proceedings and in challenging secure placement. We are vigilant to ensure that they are "stepped-down" to a less restrictive placement as soon as possible. We do everything possible to promote family contact and support, regardless of if the family is in the US or another country.

In recent weeks we have directed our staff to negotiate a contract increase with ORR to ensure we can provide the level of service necessary to meet the needs of the youth placed in our facility. We anticipate staff concluding those negotiations shortly. However, we continue to closely monitor the broader federal policy immigration policy situation and will not take any actions contrary to our values. We are open to the media and members of Congress touring our facility.