

# In reversal, Trump signs order stop to family separation rule

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Bowing to pressure from anxious allies, President Donald Trump abruptly reversed himself Wednesday and signed an executive order halting his administration's policy of separating children from their parents when they are detained illegally crossing the U.S. border.

It was a dramatic turnaround for Trump, who has been insisting, wrongly, that his administration had no choice but to separate families apprehended at the border because of federal law and a court decision.

The order does not end the "zero-tolerance" policy that criminally prosecutes all adults caught crossing the border illegally. But, at least for the next few weeks, it would keep families together while they are in custody, expedite their cases and ask the Defense Department to help house them. It also doesn't change anything yet for the some 2,300 children taken from their families since the policy was put into place.

The news in recent days has been dominated by searing images of children held in cages at border facilities, as well as audio recordings of young children crying for their parents — images that have sparked fury, questions of morality and concern from Republicans about a negative impact on their races in November's mid-term elections.

Until Wednesday, the president, Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen and other officials had repeatedly argued the only way to end the practice was for Congress to pass new legislation, while Democrats



President Donald Trump signs an executive order to keep families together at the border, but says that the 'zero-tolerance' prosecution policy will continue, during an event in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington on Wednesday. Standing behind Trump are Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, left, and Vice President Mike Pence.

said Trump could do it with his signature alone. That's just what he did.

"We're going to have strong, very strong borders, but we're going to keep the families together," said Trump, who added that he didn't like the "sight" or "feeling" of children separated from their parents.

Under a previous class-action settlement that set policies for the treatment and release of minors caught at the border, families can only be detained for 20 days. A senior Justice Department official said that hasn't changed.

"This is a stopgap measure," said Gene Hamilton, counsel to the attorney general. Justice lawyers were planning to file a challenge to the agreement, known as the Flores settlement, asking that a judge allow for the detention of families until

criminal and removal proceedings are completed.

So Trump's order is likely to create a fresh set of problems and may well spark a new court fight. It's unclear what happens if no changes to law or the settlement take place by the time families reach the detainment deadline.

The language also leaves room to separate children from parents if it's best for the child's welfare.

And it didn't do much for the teeming outrage over the issue. The Alabama-based Southern Poverty Law Center said the order didn't go nearly far enough.

"The administration still plans to criminalize families — including children — by holding them in prison-like detention facilities. There are workable alternatives," president Richard Cohen said in a statement.

It's also unclear what will happen to the children already separated. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said his department will start reuniting detained immigrant children with their parents — but he made no specific commitment on how quickly that can be accomplished. And officials said the cases of the children already separated and turned over to their custody would proceed as usual.

Trump's family apparently played a role in his turnaround.

A White House official said first lady Melania Trump had been making her opinion known to the president for some time that she felt he needed to do all he could to help families stay together, whether by working with Congress or acting on his own.



President Donald Trump listens during a meeting with Republican members of Congress on immigration in the Cabinet Room of the White House.

# House struggles to unite behind bills to stem border crisis

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Paul Ryan is pushing ahead with votes on rival House GOP immigration bills, but neither appears to have enough support for passage, prompting President Donald Trump to take executive action Wednesday to stem the crisis of family separations at the border.

Trump has said he's "1,000 percent" behind both GOP bills, but restive House Republicans have all but begged GOP leaders for more clarity about what the president would actually sign. Public outcry is mounting over the family separations, but so far, there's no clear roadmap for Thursday voting on the emotional issue dividing Republicans.

With the immigration bills teetering in the House, the White House launched an eleventh-hour push to bring Republicans onboard.

A group of wavering lawmakers was sent to the

White House to meet with Trump in hopes he can persuade them, confirmed the office of Rep. Steve Scalise, the GOP whip. Back on Capitol Hill, Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen was set to meet with a larger group of House Republicans.

But congressional action remains uncertain. Facing condemnation of the family separations from across the political spectrum, the White House took action.

Trump on Wednesday signed an executive order drafted by Nielsen that directs her department to keep families together after they are detained crossing the border illegally.

"We're going to have strong, very strong borders, but we're going to keep the families together," said Trump, who added he didn't like the "sight" or "feeling" of children separated from their parents.

More than 2,300 children were separated from their families at the border from May 5 through June 9, according to DHS.

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON & EVENING

Table with 24 columns (12 PM to 11:30 PM) and 18 rows of TV channels (FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, PBS) listing programs like FIFA Soccer World Cup, Divorce Court, The Talk, Judge Mathis, etc.

## JUNE 21, 2018

Large TV schedule table with 24 columns (12 PM to 11:30 PM) and 48 rows of channels (AMC, ANPL, CMT, etc.) listing programs like The First 48, Smokey & the Bandit, Animal Cops, etc.

## THURSDAY LATE NIGHT & FRIDAY MORNING

Table with 24 columns (12 AM to 11:30 AM) and 18 rows of channels (FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, PBS) listing late night and morning programs like Late Show, Today Show, etc.