



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

**CLARE E. CONNORS**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

For Immediate Release  
July 10, 2019

News Release 2019-38

**Hawaii Attorney General Joins Coalition Defending  
Human Rights of Children in Civil Immigration Detention**

HONOLULU – Attorney General Clare E. Connors today joined a coalition of attorneys general, led by California and Massachusetts, in filing an amicus brief to defend the human rights of children in civil immigration detention in the United States. In the brief filed with the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, the coalition urges the court to grant immediate relief to remedy the imminent threat to the health and welfare of immigrant children detained by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Under the *Flores* Settlement Agreement, children have the right to safe and sanitary conditions of detention and prompt release or placement at a state-licensed facility. However, under the Trump Administration, immigrant children have been held for weeks in inhumane conditions without access to basic necessities like soap, clean water, toothbrushes, showers, or a place to sleep.

“Our federal government must be held accountable when it fails to meet minimum standards for the care of immigrant children,” said Attorney General Connors. “The demonstrated disregard for the rights of children runs directly counter to the principles and values of Hawaii.”

For more than two decades, the federal government has been required to meet minimum standards for the facilities in which children who are immigrants may be confined. These minimum standards, established in the *Flores* Settlement Agreement, require, among other things, that CBP facilities holding children following arrest must be safe and sanitary. They must also provide children with enumerated services, including access to toilets and sinks, drinking water and food, medical assistance, and adequate supervision.

However, CBP is blatantly failing to comply with its obligations under the court-monitored *Flores* Settlement Agreement. Children are being denied access to safe and sanitary conditions, clean drinking water, and medication. In addition, CBP dangerously and irresponsibly tasks children with the care of toddlers and infants. This treatment

inflicts irreparable harm on children under CBP custody, where hospitalizations continue to occur. The federal government's blatant disregard of its obligations under the *Flores* Settlement Agreement conflicts with federal statutory requirements that immigration authorities consider "the best interest of the child" when taking action with respect to unaccompanied migrant children.

In submitting the brief, Attorney General Connors joined the Attorneys General of California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the brief is available [here](#).

# # #

For more information, contact:

Krishna F. Jayaram  
Special Assistant to the Attorney General  
(808) 586-1284  
Email: [atg.pio@hawaii.gov](mailto:atg.pio@hawaii.gov)  
Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>  
Twitter: @ATGHlgov