



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 28, 2018

CONTACT: Chase Tarrier, Public Policy Coordinator

End Domestic Abuse WI

chaset@endabusewi.org, 608.237.3985

End Domestic Abuse WI and RISE Law Center Support Rallies to End Family Separations

Representatives of End Domestic Abuse WI, the statewide coalition representing domestic violence shelters across Wisconsin, and RISE Law Center, a legal aid office for immigrant and undocumented survivors of violence, spoke out today in support of rallies occurring across the country to protest family separations at the border. Directors from the two organizations emphasized their outrage at the Trump administration's ongoing approach to border security and detention, focusing in particular on children who have yet to be reunited with their parents.

"The Trump administration's so-called "zero tolerance policy" on immigration is immoral, inhumane and cruel," said Patti Seger, Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse WI. "The policy of detaining and deporting all people attempting to cross the border is not only tearing apart innocent families who are legally seeking asylum, often from domestic and sexual violence, but is also heightening the fear that immigrant and undocumented victims of violence feel all across the country. When undocumented survivors of violence do not feel empowered to engage with law enforcement to stay safe, violent abusers capitalize on their victim's fear to continue their cycle of control unimpeded. We hope the nationwide demonstrations planned for this Saturday will make it clear that the American people will not stand for the continuation of this humanitarian crisis at the border."

The two organizations are calling on the Trump administration and leaders in Congress to use their executive and legislative authority to reunite every single family that remains brutally torn apart and prove it. Additionally, they are demanding the permanent end of the separation of children and families, an immediate and permanent reversal of the zero-tolerance policy and the passage of a clean DACA bill to ensure protections for young people brought to the United States as children.

"Every day, we work with clients who live in constant fear of deportation and separation from their children," said Grisel Santiago-Rivera, Executive Director of RISE Law Center. "The climate of fear that the Trump administration created with its abhorrent actions regarding immigration has had a direct impact on the willingness of survivors to contact police, seek out restraining orders or even pick up their children from school. The people we serve are loving parents who are in this country lawfully seeking out asylum from abuse. Whether that abuse stems from an intimate partner or instability and violence abroad, no one deserves to be detained, separated from their family and deported for simply wanting to live a dignified life free of violence. We demand the reunification of these families immediately, anything less is an affront to basic decency and human rights."

In the past month, more than 2,000 children were separated from their parents, and many more were separated in the previous month. Rallies to protest family separation will take place on Saturday, June 30, 2018 in over 700 cities across the United States including Madison, Milwaukee, La Crosse, Green Bay, Wausau, Appleton and many more.

###

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the leading voice for victims of domestic abuse in Wisconsin. At End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, we educate shelter and program volunteers and advocates, law enforcement, legislators, and community members to provide safety and support to survivors. We strive to shift Wisconsin from the attitudes and beliefs that cause domestic violence to values of mutual respect and equality, and we partner with communities in the effort to prevent and end domestic abuse.

We encourage reporters to include the National Domestic Violence Hotline number [1-800-799-SAFE(7233)] in their stories for victims who need help. A list of local Wisconsin domestic violence victim service providers can be found at <http://www.endabusewi.org>.