



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Reaffirming Protections for Unaccompanied Children: Justice in Motion's Statement of Support

NEW YORK – Justice in Motion strongly supports the *Upholding Protections for Unaccompanied Children Act of 2025*, essential legislation that restores the original intent of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) and reaffirms the United States' commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children seeking protection. As an organization with deep cross-border expertise, Justice in Motion has seen firsthand how gaps in migrant child protections can expose young people to exploitation and danger.

In recent years, policy changes – most notably those enacted under H.R. 1 (the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) – have weakened essential safeguards by imposing unprecedented fees on children that restrict or even block their access to critical humanitarian protections,¹ accelerating removals without adequate screening,² expanding enforcement-driven data sharing,³ and authorizing invasive medical and body examinations that risk retraumatizing children in custody.⁴ **These measures have pushed the system away from TVPRA's child-protection framework and placed children at heightened risk of trafficking, exploitation, and retraumatization.**

The *Upholding Protections for Unaccompanied Children Act* reverses these harmful shifts and restores Congress's long-standing bipartisan mandate to ensure:

- Child-appropriate custody;

¹ American Immigration Council, Analysis of H.R. 1- Spending Provisions Related to Immigration Enforcement and the Border, https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/analysis_big_beautiful_bill.pdf; Immigration Accountability Project, H.R. 1: The One Big Beautiful Bill Act – Immigration Provision Summary https://iaproject.org/cdn/resources/fact-sheets/H.R.1_The_One_Big_Beautiful_Bill_ActImmigration_Provision_Summary.pdf.

² Global Refuge, How Does the One Big Beautiful Bill Act Affect Unaccompanied Children?, <https://www.globalrefuge.org/news/obbba-unaccompanied-children>; Brennan Centre, Big Budget Act Creates 'Deportation Industrial Complex', <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/big-budget-act-creates-deportation-industrial-complex>; NILC, The Anti-Immigrant Policies in Trump's Final "Big Beautiful Bill," Explained, <https://www.nilc.org/resources/the-anti-immigrant-policies-in-trumps-final-big-beautiful-bill-explained/>.

³ National Immigration Forum. One Big Beautiful Bill Act: Immigration Provisions, <https://forumtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/One-Big-Beautiful-Bill-Act-Immigration-Provisions-1.pdf>.

⁴ ACLU opposition to H.R.1, <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2025/08/ACLU-NO-on-H.R.1-the-One-Big-Beautiful-Bill-Act-Senate-vote-6.29.25.pdf>; Global Refuge, How Does the One Big Beautiful Bill Act Affect Unaccompanied Children?, <https://www.globalrefuge.org/news/obbba-unaccompanied-children>.

- Fair access to humanitarian protections;
- A clear firewall between child welfare and immigration enforcement.

Keeli Sorensen, Policy Director at Justice in Motion: “Children who arrive alone at our border are among the most vulnerable individuals in our immigration system. This bill brings us back to the fundamental principle that child safety – not speed or enforcement – must guide every decision. Congress has the opportunity to recommit our laws with our values and with basic standards of due process.”

We urge Congress to swiftly pass the *Upholding Protections for Unaccompanied Children Act* and to conduct robust oversight to ensure that both DHS and HHS fully implement its child-centered protections. Protecting unaccompanied children is not only a statutory requirement – it is a moral imperative.

For all media inquiries, please contact media@justiceinmotion.org

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[Justice in Motion](#) protects migrant rights by ensuring justice across borders. Our unique network of on-the-ground human rights defenders in Mexico and Central America partner with U.S. advocates to make sure that wherever migrants go, their rights will follow.