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**CONTACTS:**  
George Tzamaras or Belle Woods  
202-507-7649      202-507-7675  
gtzamaras@aila.org    [bwoods@aila.org](mailto:bwoods@aila.org)

## **COMPLAINT HIGHLIGHTS SERIOUS MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT OF FAMILY DETENTION ON CHILDREN AND MOTHERS**

**Washington, DC** – The psychological harm caused when mothers and children seeking asylum in the U.S. are detained in jail-like facilities is the subject of [a complaint filed today](#) with the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) by the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the Women's Refugee Commission, and the American Immigration Council. The complaint includes details of the harsh and detrimental impact of detention on [ten case examples](#) of mothers and children documented by mental health professionals after in-depth evaluations.

“Our three organizations joined together to raise our voices yet again against the trauma being inflicted by the federal government as it incarcerates mothers and children. The mothers and children profiled in the case examples are living proof that family detention is inhumane. As a volunteer at the family detention center in Artesia, New Mexico, I worked with many detainees and I can tell you unequivocally that these ten case examples are just the tip of the iceberg,” said Victor Nieblas Pradis, AILA President.

Michelle Brané, Director of the Migrant Rights and Justice program at the Women's Refugee Commission, commented, “Every one of the government's family detention facilities is on this list because there is no ‘humane way’ to incarcerate kids and moms. These evaluations confirm what numerous studies and other expert testimony have long attested: that family detention has serious consequences, breaks down family structures, and both creates and exacerbates trauma in the women and children detained there. Children and their mothers do not belong in detention.”

The three organizations call on CRCL to immediately and thoroughly investigate these cases of trauma in family detention and further request a complete investigation into psychological and physiological impact that family detention is having on children and mothers.