

December 17, 2021

By Email

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President of the United States

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States

Cc: The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State
The Honorable Merrick B. Garland, Attorney General of the United States
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

We, the undersigned 242 organizations, write in dismay at the administration's decision to expand the Remain in Mexico policy and deploy it in [tandem](#) with Title 42 in order to turn away to danger families and individuals who are seeking safety in the United States. Nearly eleven months since taking office, this administration continues to violate U.S. asylum law and evade U.S. treaty obligations by blocking and returning asylum seekers to places where their lives and safety are in peril. We urge the administration to terminate these harmful, illegal policies and ensure that people fleeing persecution and torture can request asylum and other protections at the border, including at ports of entry.

Despite repeated statements decrying Remain in Mexico as dangerous and inhumane – and issuing [memoranda to terminate](#) it – this administration has inexplicably and unconscionably chosen to *expand* Remain in Mexico beyond the scope of it under the prior administration. Now, non-Mexican migrants and asylum seekers from *any* country in the Western Hemisphere are subject to forced returns to danger in Mexico, including [Haitians](#), who often face targeted [anti-Black violence and discrimination](#) there. The first implementation of Remain in Mexico led to massive human rights violations with more than [1,500](#) reported killings, kidnappings, rapes, torture, and other violent attacks against people returned to Mexico. There is no reason to believe this time will be [different](#). As the union representing [USCIS asylum officers](#) and more than 50 former [Immigration Judges](#) and Members of the Board of Immigration Appeals have made clear, this deadly program cannot be implemented safely, humanely, or in compliance with U.S. law.

The decision earlier this month to [renew](#) the Title 42 order issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for another 60 days and use this unjustifiable policy in conjunction with Remain in Mexico to block, return, and expel people seeking asylum in the United States to danger is gravely concerning. There is no public health justification for continuing to bar people seeking protection at the border, as senior CDC [scientists](#) and other public health [experts](#), including [Dr. Fauci](#), have repeatedly explained to [Congress](#) and the [public](#).

Continuing to turn away asylum seekers is particularly galling, as vaccinated [tourists](#) and shoppers with visas are now permitted to cross the southern border while people in search of refuge are turned away at U.S. ports of entry. Human rights organizations have documented more than [7,600](#) reported kidnappings and attacks against people blocked in or expelled to Mexico under Title 42. In addition, the U.S. government continues to expel families and adults to Haiti, despite warnings by the Department of Homeland Security's internal civil rights watchdog that such expulsions risked [civil and human rights violations](#) and the opinion of a former senior State Department official which [confirmed](#) that such expulsions violate U.S. obligations to not expel or return individuals who fear persecution, death, or torture. Nothing prevents this administration from immediately halting the use of Title 42 to block and expel asylum seekers to danger.

As President Biden recently reaffirmed, reinforcing respect for human rights is not only in the national security interest but "[rights-respecting democracies are more peaceful, prosperous, and stable.](#)" We urge the administration to immediately stop inflicting violence on people seeking safety in our country by permanently ending these policies and restoring the core human right of access to asylum in compliance with U.S. and international refugee laws.

Respectfully,

ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
Advocating Opportunity
African Diaspora for Good Governance
Al Otro Lado
Albuquerque FaithWorks Collaborative
Aldea - The People's Justice Center
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
All Souls NYC Unitarian Church Peace and Justice Task Force
Alliance San Diego
American Gateways
American Immigration Council
American Immigration Lawyers Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Americans for Immigrant Justice
Arab American Family Services
Arizona Dream Act Coalition
Arizona Justice For Our Neighbors
Asylum Access
Asylum Access México (AAMX) A.C.
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Ayuda

Berrien Immigrant Solidarity Network
Bethany Christian Services
Bethany House of Hospitality
Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
Border Angels
Border Kindness
Border Network for Human Rights
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice
Caminando Juntos - Presentation Sisters Hispanic Ministry
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition
Caravan For The Children
Carolina Jews for Justice
Casa del Migrante en Tijuana, A.C.
Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico
Catholic Coalition for Migrants and Refugees
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Human Rights & Constitutional Law
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Victims of Torture
Central American Resource Center – CARECEN – of California
Centro Legal de la Raza
Chicago Jewish Coalition for Refugees
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America-CRLN
Chicana Latina Foundation
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice
Church Women United in New York State
Church World Service
Coalition for Spiritual and Public Leadership (CSPL)
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Asylum Center
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy, & Research Organization (CLLARO)
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Columbia Law School Immigrants' Rights Clinic
Community Change Action
Cornell Asylum and Convention Against Torture Appeals Clinic
Council for Global Equality
Daughters of Charity-Province of St. Louise
Detention Watch Network

Disability Rights California
Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Doctors for Camp Closure
Edmonds Lutheran Church
Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) Action
Faith in Public Life
Families for Freedom
Farmworker Justice
First Focus on Children
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
Forging Opportunities for Refugees in America
Former Peace Corps Volunteer
Franciscan Action Network
Freedom for Immigrants
Freedom Network USA
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Frontera de Cristo
Futures Without Violence
Galveston-Houston Immigrant Representation Project
Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network (GAIN)
Georgia Human Rights Clinic
Global Exchange
Government Accountability Project
Guadalupe Presbyterian Church USA
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Her Justice, Inc.
HIAS
Home is Here NOLA
Hope Border Institute
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Human Rights First
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
Human Rights Watch
Humanitarian Outreach for Migrant Emotional Health (H.O.M.E.)
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Action Alliance
Immigrant Defenders Law Center
Immigrant Justice Advocacy Movement

Immigration Center for Women and Children
Immigration Equality
Immigration Hub
Inspiritus
Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI)
International Mayan League
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
International Rescue Committee
Jemez Peacemakers
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western MA
Jewish Family Service of San Diego
Jewish Labor Committee
Just Neighbors Ministry
Justice for Our Neighbors El Paso
Justice in Motion
Karen Organization of San Diego
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Kino Border Initiative / Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera
La Raza Community Resource Center
La Resistencia
Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center
Las Vanders
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Legal Aid Justice Center
Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church
Loretto Community Latin America/Caribbean Committee
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Madres e Hijos
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Maryland Against ICE Detention
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Matthew 25 The Gorge
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County
Migrant Center for Human Rights
Milwaukee Zen Center

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
Mississippi Center for Justice
MomsRising
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Long Beach & West Orange County (CA)
National Education Association
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
National Partnership for New Americans
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New American Welcome Center at the University YMCA
New York Immigration Coalition
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Orange County Equality Coalition
Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees
Organizacion en California de Lideres Campesinas, Inc.
Oxfam America
Partnerships for Trauma Recovery
Pax Christi MA
Pax Christi New Jersey
Pax Christi New York State
Pax Christi Pacific Northwest
Pedro Arrupe Jesuit Institute
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Physicians for Human Rights
Project Corazon/Lawyers for Good Government
Public Counsel
Public Law Center
Puentes de Cristo a Presbyterian Border Ministry
Quixote Center
RAICES
Rainbow Beginnings
Rainbow Bridge Asylum Seekers
Ravenswood Presbyterian Church
Refugee Action Network
Refugee Congress
Refugee Council USA

RefugeeOne
Refugees International
RefugePoint
Rio Grande Borderland Ministries
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Saint Susanna Church
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
Saratoga Immigration Coalition
Save the Children
Save the Children Action Network
Second Congregational Church, UCC
Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants
Sisters of Jesus and Mary
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team
Sisters of St Joseph
Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood NY Office of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation
Social Justice Coalition, Central Lutheran Church
Society for Humanistic Judaism
South Bay People Power
South Texas Human Rights Center
Southern Border Communities Coalition
Southern California Immigration Project
St Athanasius School
St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley
St. Susanna Pax Christi/Pax Christi MA Board
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice
Syrian Community Network
Tahirih Justice Center
Takoma Park Mobilization -- Equal Justice
TASSC (Torture Abolition & Survivors' Support Coalition) International
Texas Impact
The Advocates for Human Rights
The American Civil Liberties Union
The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.
The Farmworker Association of Florida
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
The Workers Circle
Transgender Law Center

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
U.S. Immigration Policy Center at UC San Diego
UC Davis Immigration Law Clinic
UndocuBlack Network
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries
United We Dream
US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
VECINA
Vera Institute of Justice
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)
We Are All America
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Wisconsin United Methodist Church
Witness at the Border
Women's Refugee Commission
World Relief