

December 15, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
Hart Senate Office Building, 322
Washington, DC 20510

Dear President Biden and Majority Leader Schumer,

The undersigned 263 organizations and academics are alarmed to see reports that the White House and lawmakers are seriously considering proposals that would further restrict asylum, expand expedited removal, detain families, and revive Title 42.¹ We urge the Biden Administration and Congress to oppose these and other anti-immigrant and anti-asylum policies as part of the negotiations to secure support for the supplemental foreign aid funding bill.

We reject any proposal that threatens the safety and unity of immigrant families, including those listed below:

- **Asylum restrictions with devastating impacts** that have been well documented, including subjecting thousands of people, including children and families, to violent attacks such as kidnapping, torture, rape, and extortion.²
- **Nationwide expedited removal which threatens the unity and well-being of tens of thousands of immigrant families** who have long been integrated into our communities—including U.S. citizen children in mixed-status families—by separating them, creating a climate of fear, and rapidly deporting immigrants without a chance to present their claims in immigration court.³

¹ Camilo Montoya-Galvez, “White House Open To New Border Expulsion Law, Mandatory Detention And Increased Deportations In Talks With Congress,” CBSnews, December 12, 2023,

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/immigration-white-house-congress-border-security-detention-deportation/>.

² Christina Asencio, “Asylum Ban Strands Asylum Seekers And Migrants In Mexico And Returns Them To Danger,” Human Rights First (November 28, 2023)

<https://humanrightsfirst.org/library/asylum-ban-strands-asylum-seekers-and-migrants-in-mexico-and-returns-them-to-danger/>;

“Title 42: A Human Rights Disgrace,” Human Rights First (2020-2022),

<https://humanrightsfirst.org/title-42/#:~:text=As%20of%20December%202022%2C%20Human,since%20President%20Biden%20took%20office.>

³ Nicole Chávez, Suma Setty, Hannah Liu, and Wendy Cervantes, “Still at Risk: The Urgent Need to Address Immigration Enforcement’s Harms to Children,” CLASP (June 2023),

<https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/urgent-need-address-immigration-enforcement-harm-children/>

- **Family detention which can lead to serious and lasting harm to children** – many of whom have the legal right to remain in the U.S. because they have arrived as part of a family fleeing persecution.⁴ ICE’s Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers has stated definitively that “detention or the separation of families for purposes of immigration enforcement or management are never in the best interest of children.”⁵
- **The Title 42 policy which expelled millions of asylum seekers into harm’s way, including more than 30,000 children 3 years old and younger.**⁶

All these policies will endanger lives. Any effort to revive Trump-era proposals to expand mandatory detention and expedited removal also put more people at risk of being jailed in inhumane conditions or separated from their families. It is also clear that Black, Brown, and Indigenous immigrants would be at greater risk of being targeted and harmed by such measures.⁷

The Biden Administration and Congress should support humane, child and family-centered solutions.⁸ Many of the policies currently under consideration are those that policymakers rightfully opposed under the Trump administration and then worked to overturn—both because they are harmful to families and also because they have proven ineffective in deterring migration.⁹

Congress does not have to compromise our nation’s values to achieve its funding priorities. Families and children seek asylum because their lives depend on it.¹⁰ Congress must affirm their right to safety and reject harmful proposals in ongoing supplemental funding negotiations.

⁴ Kelly L. Edyburn and Shantel Meek, “Seeking Safety and Humanity in the Harshes Immigration Climate in a Generation: A Review of the Literature on the Effects of Separation and Detention on Migrant and Asylum-Seeking Children and Families in the United States during the Trump Administration,” *Social Policy Report* 34, No.1 (Mar 2021): 1-46, <https://srcd.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sop2.12>.

⁵ “Report of the ICE Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers,” ICE Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers, Department of Homeland Security, (October 7, 2016), <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report/2016/acfrc-report-final-102016.pdf#page=6>

⁶ “Children and Families Must Have Access to Asylum: Threats to Asylum are Threats to Children’s Safety,” Children Thrive Action Network (Sept. 22, 2022), <https://childrethriveaction.org/2022/09/children-and-families-must-have-access-to-asylum-threats-to-asylum-are-threats-to-childrens-safety/>.

⁷ Lynn Tramonte and Suma Setty, “Issue Brief: Broken Hope: Deportation’s Harms and The Road Home,” CLASP (Dec 2023), <https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/broken-hope-deportation-harm/>.

⁸ Miriam Abaya, “Fact Sheet: Border Policies that Protect and Support Children,” First Focus on Children (January 18, 2023), <https://firstfocus.org/resources/fact-sheet/border-policies-that-protect-and-support-children>.

⁹ Edward Alden, “Is Border Enforcement Effective? What We Know and What It Means,” *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 5, no. 2: 481-490, [https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241700500213\(2017\)](https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241700500213(2017)); Julia Ainsley and Julie Tsirkin, “Border policies under consideration could overwhelm system, DHS officials warn,” NBC News, December 13, 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/border-policies-consideration-overwhelm-system-dhs-officials-warn-rcna129557>.

¹⁰ Julieta Suárez Calderón and Esther Reyes, “Children Need Protection, Not Rejection: The Violence of Title 42,” Children’s Defense Fund Texas, https://cdf-texas.org/policy/media/cdf_tx_blog/protectionnotrejection/.

This letter is signed by the below:

National Organizations

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors

Acacia Center for Justice

Advocates for Youth

African Communities Together (ACT)

ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal

Alianza Americas

America's Voice

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of Teachers

American Immigration Council

Americans for Immigrant Justice

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)

Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network

Avodah

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action

Cameroon Advocacy Network

Care in Action

Caring Across Generations

CASA

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies

Center for Law and Social Policy

Center for Popular Democracy (CPD)

Center for the Study of Social Policy

Children's Defense Fund

Children's HealthWatch

Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy

Church World Service

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)

Coalition on Human Needs

Community Change Action

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces

Detention Watch Network
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Economic Policy Institute
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Family Values @ Work
Feminist Majority Foundation
First Focus on Children
Franciscan Action Network
Freedom Network USA
Futures Without Violence
FWD.us
Haitian Bridge Alliance
HIAS
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights First
Immigration Equality
Immigration Hub
International Mayan League
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
International Rescue Committee
Islamic Relief USA
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)
Justice & Advocacy Ministries at Disciples Home Missions
Justice for Migrant Women
Justice in Motion
Keshet
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Lawyers for Good Government
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Marianist Social Justice Immigration team
Mauritanian Network for Human Rights in the U.S.
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
MomsRising/MamásConPoder
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Center for Children in Poverty
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment at Chicago Women in Trades

National Center for Youth Law
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project (NELP)
National Health Law Program
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
National Partnership for New Americans
National Women's Law Center
Never Again Action
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity/ Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
Oxfam America
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Presente.org
Prevention Institute
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Quixote Center
Refugees International
ResourceFull Consulting
Save the Children
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
South Asian Public Health Association
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Start Early
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice
Tahirih Justice Center
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
The Education Trust
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
The Shalom Center

The Workers Circle
Tsuru for Solidarity
UndocuBlack Network
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United We Dream
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)
Value Our Families
Voto Latino
We Are All America
#WelcomeWithDignity
Win Without War
Witness At The Border
Washington Office on Latin America
Women's Refugee Commission
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights
ZERO TO THREE

State and Local Organizations:

African Advocacy Network (CA)
AHRI Center (CA)
Al Otro Lado (CA)
All Saints Episcopal Parish (NJ)
Alliance for Quality Education (NY)
Asian Resources, Inc. (CA)
Ayuda (DC/MD/VA)
Bend the Arc Jewish Action: South Jersey
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore (MD)
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
Carolina Jews for Justice (NC)
Center for People With Disabilities (CO)
Central American Resource Center of Northern CA - CARECEN SF
CHILDREN AT RISK (TX)
Children's Advocacy Alliance (NV)
Children's Alliance (WA)
Children's Institute (OR)
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (NY)

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CA)
Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Comunidades Sin Fronteras CSF-CT INC (CT)
Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
Contra Costa Immigrant Rights Alliance (CA)
Corridor Community Action Network (IA)
DC Action
Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Inc (TX)
DIRE Legal Services (NJ)
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, Washington DC
East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum (CA)
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant (CA)
ECE On The Move (NY)
Education Law Center-PA
Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless (NJ)
Family Voices NJ
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project (AZ)
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Fordham Law School's Feerick Center for Social Justice (NY)
GRACE/End Child Poverty California
Haiti Solidarity Network of the North East (NJ)
Hispanic Services Council (FL)
Hope Border Institute (TX)
Hispanic Unity of Florida
Hunger Free Colorado
I.A.J.E. (MS)
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ME)
Immigrant Children Advocates' Relief Effort (ICARE) (NY)
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (CA)
Immigration Working Group of Southwestern PA Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Jesuits West CORE AZ
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western MA
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (MA)
Jewish Community Action (MN)
Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (IL)
Jews For Racial & Economic Justice (NY)
Just Neighbors (DC/MD/VA)

Katherine Adler Central Synagogue (NY)
Kino Border Initiative (AZ)
Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center (TX/NM)
Latino Community Fund INC (LCF Georgia)
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area
Legal Services for Children (CA)
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants - LORI
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center
Michigan League for Public Policy
Michigan United
Minnesota Freedom Fund
Minnesota Interfaith Coalition on Immigration
MN8
Mobile Pathways (CA)
National Council of Jewish Women San Francisco
New Jersey Forum for Human Rights
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center
New York Immigration Coalition
Newark Science and Sustainability Inc
North Carolina Justice Center
Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA) (WA)
Oasis Legal Services (CA)
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
OPAWL (OH)
Pacific Asian Counseling Services (CA)
Pax Christi New Jersey
Pax Christi New York State
Pittsburgh Area Pax Christi
Plymouth Congregational Church of Minneapolis, Immigrant Welcoming Working Group
Priority Africa Network (CA)
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
Rural Arizona Action
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (NY)
Shalom Friends Immigration Detention Visiting Group (NY)
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill Philadelphia
South Carolina Program for Infant/Toddler Care
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (NJ)

Synagogue Coalition on the Refugee and Immigration Crisis (NY)
The Advocates for Human Rights (MN)
The Children's Partnership (CA)
The Mami Chelo Foundation Inc (NY)
Unidad Latina en Accion NJ
Unidos MN
United African Organization (IL)
VOICES for Alabama's Children
Voices for Utah Children
Voices for Vermont's Children
Volunteer Lawyers for Justice (NJ)
Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP
Washington State Parent Ambassadors
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration (NY)
White Center Parent Ambassadors (WA)
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center (NJ)
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
Women Working Together USA (FL)

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