

November 20, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear President Biden, Attorney General Garland and Secretary Mayorkas,

The over 110 undersigned organizations representing a cross-section of the country's immigration and civil rights advocacy groups, write to respectfully urge the Biden-Harris administration to immediately suspend immigration enforcement in states with anti-immigrant racial profiling laws - like Texas's SB4 - and promptly begin civil rights investigations into policing practices in states with such laws.

In recent years, Texas has led the nation in legislating anti-immigrant sentiment and codifying violent racial animus into law. The most infamous of these actions is the umbrella scheme of [Operation Lone Star](#), spearheaded by Governor Greg Abbott. Operation Lone Star ("OLS") is a legally dubious and deadly enterprise that repurposes state law enforcement for border security theater, targeting migrants for arrest, jail, and deportation. Created in March 2021, OLS is designed to politicize border policy and criminalize and rapidly deport migrants, many of whom are seeking safety in the United States—as is their [right](#) under domestic and international law. [Operation Lone Star](#) promotes [racial profiling](#), further fuels the mass incarceration of people of color, and encourages violent, [white supremacist rhetoric](#) that is harmful to us all.

OLS is made up of multiple initiatives, the most heinous of which is a state deportation law known as [Texas SB 4](#). Texas SB 4 is a controversial and extreme piece of legislation that targets immigrants in the United States. [Texas SB 4](#) creates a state deportation scheme by adding new state crimes such as "illegal entry" into Texas and "refusal to comply" with a state deportation order, and authorizing state law enforcement officers and state judges to arrest, jail, and eventually deport people they suspect to have unlawfully entered the United States. Texas

SB 4 brings all Texans and those suspected of being noncitizens under the permanent threat of immediate detention by law enforcement and transportation to a Port of Entry.

Texas and states that have followed suit in passing similar anti-immigrant laws are enacting laws that smack of racial animus and a clear willingness to target communities of color. The increasingly popular use of incendiary language by Texas Governor Greg Abbott and copycat leaders in other states, characterizing immigration across the U.S.-Texas border as an “invasion,” nods to the overtly racist and xenophobic [Great Replacement Theory](#). At least two violent massacres of Black and Brown people in the United States—one in El Paso in 2019 and another in [Buffalo](#) in 2022—featured perpetrators directly inspired by, and citing to this “invasion” rhetoric.

States across the country have begun to mimic Texas in its attacks on immigrants within state borders, passing into law legislation that undermines the U.S. Constitution and stokes the flames of racism and xenophobia to score cheap political points. States like Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Tennessee are creating new crimes that specifically target—or can only be committed by—immigrants, authorizing state law enforcement agents to target and arrest immigrants, or finding ways to [enhance existing criminal statutes](#) to punish immigrants. Indeed, Louisiana’s brazen legislative homage to Texas SB 4, [SB 388](#), *only* goes into effect if one of two outcomes occurs: any decision in the Supreme Court case *United States v. Texas* that upholds the validity of Texas SB 4, or the adoption of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution increasing the authority of Louisiana to “prohibit or limit the unlawful entry or reentry” of immigrants. In Florida, the state legislature [forbade](#) all municipalities from accepting identity documents knowingly issued to undocumented migrants and enhanced criminal penalties for [driving without a license](#) and [convictions](#) committed after unlawful reentry into the United States. In Georgia, the state legislature [banned](#) sanctuary jurisdictions and [authorized](#) state law enforcement agents to target and arrest immigrants.

The U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”) has sued in [Texas](#), [Iowa](#), and [Oklahoma](#), intervening where state legislatures have directly challenged *Arizona v. United States* and the federal jurisdiction of immigration law. Given the fundamental questions at issue in these cases, and the real-world harm the state efforts have already inflicted upon communities across the country, the undersigned organizations believe it is only logical that the Biden-Harris administration stop the unfolding damage in its tracks by exercising its executive powers and directing its agencies to take urgent action. Therefore, we respectfully request the following actions be taken immediately:

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) suspend all immigration enforcement activity in states with anti-immigrant Texas SB 4-style legislation or legislation motivated by racial animus, including: Texas, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.
- The DOJ open and expeditiously execute full civil rights investigations into recent immigration-related legislative and [enforcement activity](#) that may violate federal civil rights statutes based on discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin,

including in the following states: Texas, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

We strongly encourage The Biden-Harris Administration to mandate these actions immediately as U.S. citizens and immigrants alike look for measures to forestall the impact of the upcoming attacks on our communities promised by the second Trump administration. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact Sameera Hafiz at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) at shafiz@ilrc.org.

Signed,

18 Million Rising
AAPI New Jersey
ACT 4 SA Action Fund
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
American Gateways
Americans for Immigrant Justice
ANAR
Arriba Las Vegas Worker Center
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Law Caucus
Asian Texans for Justice
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Borderlands Resource Initiative
Cabrera Legal
Casa Freehold
Central American Minors (CAM) Working Group
Children at Risk
Children's Defense Fund-Texas
Cleveland Jobs with Justice
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition
Communities United for Status & Protection (CUSP)
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
Detention Watch Network
Divas Against Injustices
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, Washington DC
Drug Policy Alliance
Eagle Pass Border Coalition
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos
El Pueblo Unido of Atlantic City
Elmahaba Center
Emgage Action
Envision Freedom Fund
Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
Estrella del Paso (Formerly Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Inc)

Families For Freedom
First Friends of New Jersey & New York
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
FREED Texas
Freedom Network USA
Galveston-Houston Immigrant Representation Project (GHIRP)
Ganemos
Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights
Grassroots Leadership
Home is Here NOLA
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
ICE out of Tarrant
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Defenders Law Center
Immigrant Families Together
Immigrant Justice Network
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Immigration Equality
Immigration Services and Legal Advocacy (ISLA)
Indiana AID
Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice
Iris Juarbe Attorney at Law, P.C.
Just Futures Law
Justice Globe Inc.
Kamran I Makhdoom PLLC
Laredo Immigrant Alliance
Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center
Latino Commission on AIDS
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
LaUnidad11
Law Office of Leena Bhasin
Living Hope Wheelchair Association
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
Mathew Law Firm PLLC
Mauritanian Network for Human Rights in US
Migrant Justice
MPower Change Action Fund
Muslim Advocates
Mutual Aid Immigration Network
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Partnership for New Americans

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Never Again Action
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Oppressed Revolutionaries For Worker Power
Public Counsel
Refugee Support Network, RSN
Refugees International
Resistencia en Accion NJ
Revolución Violeta
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Rural Organizing Project
San Antonio Alliance
Semino Law, P.A.
South Asian Legal Defense Fund
South Asian Public Health Association
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southwest Workers Union
Tennessee Immigrant Refugee Coalitions (TIRRC)
Texas Black Migrant Ecosystem
Texas Civil Rights Project
Texas Organizing Project
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Border Network for Human Rights
The Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United)
Transformations CDC
Tsuru for Solidarity
United We Dream
University of San Francisco Immigration & Deportation Defense Clinic
Viles Law Firm
Voces De La Frontera
Washington Defender Association
Woori Juntos
Worker's Defense