

June 17, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Thune and Leader Schumer:

The undersigned 105 national, state, and local organizations dedicated to protecting refugees, asylees, and other immigrant groups write to express deep concern over provisions in the House budget reconciliation package that the Senate is considering as it develops its own budget bill. The House-passed reconciliation bill includes harmful provisions that would cut off hundreds of thousands of otherwise-eligible humanitarian arrivals from core human needs programs like SNAP and Medicare, as well as eligibility for ACA marketplace coverage. The [Senate proposals](#) so far maintain the [SNAP ineligibility](#) for refugees and other humanitarian populations – and in a profoundly harmful turn, exclude refugees and humanitarian populations from [Medicaid](#) eligibility, a lifeline for newcomers to receive the medical care they need after fleeing unimaginable trauma, violence, and persecution.

We call on congressional leaders to reject any legislation that cruelly eliminates crucial support for refugees and other humanitarian entrants.

There has long been a bipartisan commitment to providing basic support to refugees and others who have fled violence and persecution. However, the Senate proposals (as of June 16) and the House-passed reconciliation bill (HR 1) would:

- **End food assistance.** Section 10012 of the House bill would specifically target refugees, asylees, victims of trafficking and torture, and other humanitarian entrants and render them ineligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Congressional Budget Office estimates this provision alone would cut off groceries for roughly 250,000 people who are here with refugee or other lawful humanitarian status and would otherwise be eligible. (H.R.1 and Senate Agriculture proposal)
- **End Medicaid eligibility.** Section 71110 of the Senate Finance Committee proposal would exclude refugees and humanitarian populations from Medicaid eligibility, a literal lifeline for those who fled violence, trauma, and persecution. For example, new arrivals with urgent medical needs – cancer treatment, heart conditions, pregnant women, and individuals with ongoing medical conditions like diabetes – rely on Medicaid eligibility to receive life-sustaining support while they simultaneously receive integration services to reach economic self-sufficiency. Further, Afghan allies, tortured by the Taliban and resettled under *Enduring Welcome*, depend on healthcare for needed therapies to recover from their injuries or chronic conditions.

Section 71302 of the Senate Finance Committee proposal exacerbates this harm by disallowing premium tax credit (PTC) during periods of Medicaid ineligibility for lawfully present individuals who are ineligible for Medicaid with incomes below 100 percent of federal poverty level (FPL) from receiving the PTC.

Medicaid is essential for refugee and newcomer clients – and this is particularly critical for long-term coverage for families as they get on their feet. Most refugee arrivals' first

jobs after arriving to the U.S. don't offer health insurance benefits (or they're priced out due to cost of the premiums). Access to health coverage is equally essential for refugees who may never have had access to care prior to arrival in the U.S. Medicaid allows them to address chronic and acute health needs, which would otherwise prevent full participation in school and the workforce and also result in use of the emergency room for primary care, contributing to increased health costs for everyone. Coupled with the White House's [proposal](#) to zero-out funding for Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)-administered Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) and ORR's efforts to [reduce the RMA eligibility period](#), the devastating harm from excluding humanitarian populations from Medicaid eligibility would also place an unfair burden on local community health centers and medical providers who are already underfunded.

- **End Medicare eligibility.** Section 112103 of the House bill and section 71201 of the Senate Finance proposal would render the same populations and other immigrants ineligible for Medicare. Under current law, people who are older than 65 or living with certain illnesses or disabilities can apply for Medicare if they or their spouse have spent over a decade working in the U.S. We would note that one must have worked for ten years to qualify for Medicare, and a worker's payroll taxes partly go to help fund Medicare. So these people have paid into Medicare but now would not get their benefit. Under this provision, they would be locked out of needed health care until they become lawful permanent residents, but some impacted may not have a pathway to adjust their status and others may face significant backlogs or other barriers in obtaining LPR status. (H.R.1 and Senate Finance proposal)
- **End affordable health-insurance subsidies.** Section 112101 of the House bill and section 71301 of the Senate Finance proposal would exclude many humanitarian arrivals from eligibility for the [Premium Tax Credit](#) (PTC) which helps people who are insured via the Health Insurance Marketplace cover the cost of their health insurance premiums. This would amount to an unprecedented denial for such a federal tax credit. (H.R.1 and Senate Finance proposal)

These provisions punish people the United States has already pledged to protect, undercut the path to self-sufficiency, and shift costs to states and localities as hospitals, food banks, diaspora and veterans groups, and state programs are forced to fill the gaps. The provisions will leave families and children hungrier and sicker, denying them the often-temporary help they need to get established in their neighborhoods. They have already drawn bipartisan opposition when they were pushed rapidly through the House, with Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE) [pushing](#) to limit restrictions on SNAP eligibility and Rep. Blake Moore (R-UT) [describing](#) a "need for conversation" around provisions curtailing benefits eligibility for refugees and other humanitarian arrivals.

As passed by the House and the Senate proposals to date, the reconciliation bill would take away the very tools Congress has long recognized as critical to helping refugees, people granted asylum, Afghan and Ukrainian parolees, and survivors of torture or labor or sex trafficking regain stability and contribute quickly to our communities. **We urge you to ensure that the Senate version of reconciliation to remove these harmful provisions before the Senate floor vote.**

Welcoming those who flee persecution—and ensuring they can feed their families and seek medical care—reflects the best of American values and serves our national interest. We stand

ready to work with you to craft legislation that strengthens, rather than weakens, the communities we all serve.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

#AfghanEvac

Afghans For A Better Tomorrow

African Communities Together (ACT)

African Human Rights Coalition

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies

Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Center for Migration Studies

Center for Victims of Torture

Church World Service

Climate Refugees

Coalition on Human Needs

Community Supported Film

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

Franciscan Action Network

Freedom Network USA

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Global Refuge

HIAS

Hispanic Federation

International Refugee Assistance Project

International Rescue Committee

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA

Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mina's List

Mobile Pathways

MPower Change Action Fund

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Immigration Law Center

National Korean American Service and Education Consortium

National Partnership for New Americans

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

REACT DC, Inc.

Refugee Advocacy Lab

Refugee Congress

Refugee Council USA

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Washington Office on Latin America

We Are All America (WAAA)

Welcoming America

Witness at the Border

Women's Refugee Commission

World Hazara Council USA

World Relief

State & Local Organizations

3Sisters, Omaha Ne

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality (ABLE), Dayton, OH

Afghan American Community, Albany/New York

Afghan Community in Rochester NY, Rochester New York

African Community Center, Denver, CO

African Immigrant Family Services, Nebraska

Agency for New Americans, a program of Jannus, Inc, Boise, Idaho

Al Otro Lado, San Diego - Los Angeles - Tijuana

Alliance for Refugees, Plainsboro, NJ

Ascentria Care Alliance, Worcester, MA

Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California (AJSOCAL), CA

AVAN Immigrant Services, Los Angeles & Counties surrounding Adelanto, CA

Ayuda, DC, Maryland, Virginia

Bennington County Multicultural Community Center, Bennington, Vermont

Catholic Charities of Oregon, Oregon

Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement, Nebraska

CRIS - Community Refugee & Immigration Services, Columbus, Ohio

CWS Harrisburg, Harrisburg, PA

Dorcas International Institute of RI, Rhode Island

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, California

Empowering Communities Globally: For the Care of Children, Colorado

Estrella del Paso (formerly Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Inc), West Texas / New Mexico

Exodus Refugee Immigration, Indianapolis and Bloomington, Indiana

GALEO Impact Fund, Georgia

Green Mountain Welcome, Southern Vermont

Hispanic Affairs Project, Montrose, CO

Immigrant and Refugee Outreach Center, Washington, DC Metro Area

Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef), California

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, Maine

International Institute of New England, Boston, Lowell, Massachusetts; Manchester, New Hampshire

JAMAAT - Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together, DC area

Jewish Family Service of Colorado, Colorado

Just Neighbors, DMV

Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants, Louisiana - Baton Rouge

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA), Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia

Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Arizona

Lutheran Social Services Of WI and UP, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan

My home, Omaha, NE

Nebraska Afghan Community Center, Omaha/Lincoln Nebraska

Neighbor to Neighbor, South Bend, Indiana

Nooristan Foundation, McLean, Virginia

Oasis Legal Services, California

Omaha Welcomes the Stranger, Omaha, NE

Opening Doors, Inc., Sacramento, CA

Orel Alliance, Omaha

Refugee Women Rising, Omaha

RefugeeOne, Chicago, IL

Restoring Dignity, Omaha, Nebraska

Rocky Mountain Welcome Center, Colorado

Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN), Bay Area and Central Valley, California

Simplicity Design, Durham, NC

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, Colorado

Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative, Loyola Law School, CA

The Human Trafficking Prevention Project, Maryland

The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc., Maryland

Uzima Health Services, Boise Idaho

World Relief Modesto, Modesto, CA

World Relief Sacramento, Sacramento, CA

World Relief Southern California, CA