

December 15, 2023

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

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

Dear President Biden and Majority Leader Schumer,

The undersigned 252 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>
- **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.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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/>.

<sup>2</sup> 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.>

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.”<sup>5</sup>
- **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.**<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup>

The Biden Administration and Congress should support humane, child and family-centered solutions.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> Congress must affirm their right to safety and reject harmful proposals in ongoing supplemental funding negotiations.

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<sup>4</sup> 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>.

<sup>5</sup> “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>

<sup>6</sup> “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/>.

<sup>7</sup> 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/>.

<sup>8</sup> 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>.

<sup>9</sup> 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>.

<sup>10</sup> 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/](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 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  
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  
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)  
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 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)  
Hunger Free Colorado  
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)  
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  
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  
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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