

August 6, 2021

Dear Senators:

We, the undersigned **210** organizations, respectfully urge you to **SUPPORT** provisions in the FY 2022 budget reconciliation package that establish a pathway to citizenship for immigrants, and to **OPPOSE** any harmful anti-immigrant amendments to the package. Based on amendments filed during the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 vote-a-ramas earlier this year, we anticipate that some Senators will file amendments that will aim to deny immigrant families a pathway to citizenship and will double down on harmful policies to construct the border wall, block unaccompanied children from protection, exclude immigrant families from health and safety net programs, and criminalize immigration in ways that disparately impact Black and brown immigrants.

We urge you to consider that a vote in favor of any controversial anti-immigrant amendments would be a vote against immigrant communities who have been and will continue to be key to the robust economic recovery of the country.

We specifically urge you to vote against amendments on the following topics:

Funding for further buildup of dangerous infrastructure at the border and the border wall: Border interdiction is already funded at all-time highs. Funding for U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has ballooned by over [30%](#) over the past 5 fiscal years from \$13.2 billion to \$17.4 billion. The number of Border Patrol agents nearly doubled from Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 to FY 2019. Since 1993, the annual budget of the Border Patrol has increased more than ten-fold, from \$363 million to nearly \$4.9 billion. It would be irresponsible to transfer additional funds for construction of the border wall, additional border agents, or invasive technology when these agencies are already funded at historic highs.

Unaccompanied children: Current law recognizes that children who arrive unaccompanied at the U.S. border are generally in crisis and require a [process](#) to evaluate their legal claims that takes their vulnerability into account. These protections are critically important to ensure that children who are victims of trafficking, abuse or other crimes or violence are treated humanely. Undermining these laws would lead to children suffering death or further trauma and abuse.

Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP)/Remain in Mexico policy: This unconscionable policy, which has been ended by the Biden administration, led to the forcible return of more than [68,000](#) asylum seekers and migrants to some of the most dangerous regions of Mexico where they waited months, many without access to food, shelter, and basic services, for U.S. immigration court hearings—resulting in a humanitarian and human rights catastrophe. As of February 19, 2021, there are at least [1,544](#) publicly reported cases of murder, rape, torture, kidnapping, and other violent assaults against asylum seekers and migrants forced to return to Mexico under this policy. Any amendment requiring a return to this cruel state of affairs must be defeated on grounds of human decency, as well as U.S. refugee protection obligations under the law.

Mandatory detention or prioritized detention of immigrants with certain criminal charges or convictions: Under the current grounds of removability, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has overwhelming authority to detain individuals on the basis of unlawful presence and/or almost any criminal conviction, even as minor as drug possession or petty theft. Expanding this authority would impose even more draconian penalties on those who have already served out their sentence in the criminal legal system, causing disproportionate harm to Black and brown immigrant communities who are already overpoliced and subject to racial profiling. Furthermore, these amendments are at odds with established evidence and research regarding [public safety](#): increasing detentions and deportations through the criminal legal system has been shown to have no positive impact on crime rates or public safety broadly, and in fact only serves to destabilize families and communities.

Anti-farmworker legalization: Our agricultural labor system is broken. At least half of farmworkers are undocumented and a legalization program is desperately needed to stabilize our farmworker families, rural communities and food supply. During the pandemic, farmworkers have demonstrated their value to the food system as the essential workers they are-- showing up and putting their own health at risk as they continue working to ensure our food supply. Unfortunately, we are already seeing efforts to undermine farmworkers, such as Senator Graham and Manchin's legislation that would expand the flawed and exploitative H-2A temporary guestworker program to include year round and nonagricultural jobs without any providing any relief for the current undocumented workforce. Please oppose any amendments that would undermine farmworker rights or path to immigration status.

Sanctuary city policies: 33 prominent current and former prosecutors and law enforcement leaders from 24 jurisdictions representing over 24 million people around the country have [argued](#) that public safety, sound police work, and successful prosecution depend on community trust and cooperation, which are undermined when undocumented immigrants fear that interacting with police and the criminal justice system could lead to deportation. Attempts to defund “sanctuary cities” and require that state and local law enforcement carry out immigration enforcement responsibilities not only [undermine](#) the delicate balance between federal and local law enforcement and harm locally based policing and public safety, but also compound racial inequities in policing and our criminal justice system given that Black and brown immigrants are disproportionately targeted for arrest, detention, and deportation. A [report from Black Alliance for Just Immigration](#) found that only 7% of non-citizens in the U.S. are Black, but Black immigrants made up 20% of people facing deportation on criminal grounds in 2016. In addition to encouraging racial profiling, attempts to coerce local and state law enforcement to be “force multipliers” for ICE also disregard the choices of voters and local officials about their own community priorities, overriding them with federal imperatives.

Further excluding immigrants from the health care and safety net programs: If the last year and a half has taught us anything, it is that immigrants are essential to the health and well-being of our communities and our nation. Current law nevertheless excludes many of them from numerous programs that their own taxes pay to support. These exclusions are short-sighted -- and should be defeated -- because they not only harm immigrants but also often lead to unintended consequences that hurt the rest of us.

It is critical that a pathway to citizenship be included in the reconciliation package given the invaluable contributions of immigrants to our economy and communities throughout the pandemic and into recovery. A vote in favor of any anti-immigrant amendment could hinder efforts to deliver relief for immigrant communities by establishing negative precedent that, even if seemingly harmless on its face, could lead the legislation to ultimately not succeed. In short, though this vote-a-rama is in relation to the budget resolution, it could have lasting consequences on the final legislation.

We urge you to vote no on these or any other anti-immigrant amendments in the vote-a-rama that would harm immigrant communities and hinder inclusive recovery efforts for all regardless of immigration status. We urge you to stand with immigrant communities and hold firm on the inclusion of a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS holders, farm workers, and essential workers in the reconciliation package.

Signed:

Academy of Medical & Public Health Services, Inc.
ACLU People Power Fairfax
Adhikaar
ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
AFGE Local 1260
African American Ministers In Action
African Communities Together
Al Otro Lado
Aldo's Silver City Broadband
Alianza Americas
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
Alliance San Diego
America's Voice
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
American Friends Service Committee
American Humanist Association
American Immigration Lawyers Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
APALA San Diego
Asian American Federation
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Asian Pacific Community in Action
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

Asian Pacific Islander Political Alliance (API PA)
Asian Resources, Inc.
Asian Solidarity Collective
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
BORDER ANGELS
Borderlands for Equity
Bridges Faith Initiative
Broward for Progress
CAIR-SD
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
Cameroon American Council
CASA
Casa Familiar
Casa San José
Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Justice & Reconciliation at Point Loma Nazarene University
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Popular Democracy
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN-LA)
Central American Resource Center of Northern CA - CARECEN SF
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
Children's Defense Fund
Chinese Progressive Association
Christ Ministry Center
Church World Service
Cleveland Jobs with Justice
Coalición de Derechos Humanos
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition of Asian-American IPA (CAIPA)
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, San Diego County Chapter
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Change Action
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
CRECEN
CSA San Diego County
Detention Watch Network
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Doctors for Camp Closure
EAST COUNTY COALITION
Employee Rights Center
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Espacio Migrante

Faith in Action
Faith in Public Life
Faith in Public Life Action
Families Belong Together
Farmworker Association of Florida
Farmworker Justice
FIRM Action
First Focus Campaign for Children
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Frontera de Cristo
Gamaliel of California
Good Shepherd Lutheran
HANA Center
HIAS
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)
Immigration Hub
Indivisible
Indivisible San Diego Persist
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
Japanese American Citizens League
Japanese American Citizens League, San Jose Chapter
Jewish Family Service of San Diego
Jobs With Justice
Justice at Work (PA)
Justice in Motion
Justice Overcoming Boundaries in San Diego County
Karen Organization of San Diego
KCS Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc
League of Conservation Voters
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)
Main Street Alliance
Mainers for Accountable Leadership
Make the Road Nevada
Make the Road New York
Make the Road Pennsylvania
Massachusetts TPS Committee
Mi Familia Vota

Michigan Immigrant Rights Center
MomsRising/MamásConPoder
Mujeres Unidas y Activas
Muslim American Society-Public Affairs and Civic Engagement
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Network of Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
NETWORK Lobby For Catholic Social Justice
New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE)
New York Immigration Coalition
NM Comunidades en Acción y de Fe (CAFe)
NorCal Resist
North Carolina Asian Americans Together
North Carolina Farmworkers' Project
North Carolina Justice Center
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
OCA-FC, Fairfield County
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership in Ohio
Oxfam America
Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA)
PCUN, Oregon's Farmworker Union
Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition
People's Action
PG Change Makers
PICO California
Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California
Pittsburgh LCLAA
Poder Latinx
Project New Yorker
RAICES
RISE/Levantaté Coalition
Sakhi for South Asian Women
San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council

San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
SEIU 6 Property Services NW
SEIU 775
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Social Eco Education (SEE-LA)
Sojourners
Somali Bantu Association of America
South Bay People Power
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southern Border Communities Coalition
Southern California Immigration Project
Student Action with Farmworkers
Survivors of Torture, International
Taiwanese American Foundation
Takoma Park Mobilization, Equal Justice
Tapestri
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Bronx Defenders
The National Korean American Service and Education Consortium - Virginia (NAKASEC VA)
The Public Defenders Coalition for Immigrant Justice
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
UC Cohort, UCLA Dream Summer
UFW FOUNDATION
UndocuBlack Network
Unidos MN
UnidosUS
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
Unite Here
UNITE HERE Local 30
United Farm Workers (UFW)
United Stateless
United We Dream Network
Universidad Popular
VAYLA New Orleans
Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations
Virginia Civic Engagement Table
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Voces De La Frontera
Win Without War
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Witness at the Border

Women's Refugee Commission
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
Workers Defense Action Fund
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights