



AMERICAN
IMMIGRATION
LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION

U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

November 28, 2023

via email

Re: AILA Opposes Proposals Restricting Asylum and Parole in Supplemental

With federal funding discussions underway on a supplemental budget deal, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) calls upon lawmakers to reject dangerous immigration proposals that would do grave, irreparable harm to the U.S. asylum system while creating chaos in efforts to manage the border.

The harmful proposals include tightening the asylum standard applied to people who are initially screened at the border; stripping humanitarian parole authority from the President; and resurrecting a version of the 2019 Trump-era transit ban. AILA opposes these changes as they would make it far more difficult for asylum seekers to obtain life-saving protection, resulting in children, families, and adults who would otherwise qualify for asylum being returned to violent, dangerous conditions.

These proposed changes would hinder border management rather than improve it. In particular, the recent use of parole authority for nationals of several countries has helped reduce the flow of migrants to the southern border. Congress would severely undermine the federal government's border management efforts by eliminating or restricting parole authority, which presidents have used for decades.

It is vital that Congress fund the federal government to effectively manage the border, but that can and must be done while still maintaining a humanitarian protection system that ensures access to asylum. To accomplish this, Congress should:

- Fund CBP to improve capacity and infrastructure at ports of entry.
- Adequately fund USCIS, the immigration courts, and the State Department to ensure efficiency and manage existing backlogs. Years-long backlogs in visa applications are forcing employment- and family-based applicants to [come to the southern border](#) and, in the long-term, are hurting American businesses and communities.
- Increase funding for the Shelter and Services program to assist local governments and communities providing short term support for migrants.
- Fund strategies targeting the trafficking of fentanyl, other narcotics, and firearms.

Border management must be done concurrently with much-needed improvements to the broader immigration system. Specifically, Congress will not effectively address either of these challenges unless it expands legal pathways to ensure there are adequate visas for businesses and families and legalizes the status of people who are undocumented.

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Finally, Congress should not be entertaining deep and lasting changes to the U.S. asylum or parole statutes as part of the emergency supplemental bill. Doing so will have a detrimental impact on effective border management and does not give serious consideration to the complexities and interconnectedness of our nation's immigration system.

Thank you for your attention. Please contact me at gchen@aila.org or Amy Grenier, Policy and Practice Counsel, agrenier@aila.org.

Sincerely,

Gregory Chen
Senior Director of Government Relations
American Immigration Lawyers Association