

August 6, 2021

Dear Senators:

We, the undersigned **213** 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  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
HANA Center  
HIAS  
Human Rights First  
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  
Presente.org  
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