

June 19, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
House Democratic Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
1705 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Republican Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

This year marks 23 years since President Clinton signed the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act into law (herein “the 1996 laws”). These laws put a chokehold on pathways to legalization and naturalization by massively expanding the number of disqualifying criminal grounds for legal permanent residents and other immigrants, and removing opportunities for individuals to seek deportation relief before a judge.

As with the widely condemned and punitive welfare “reform” and crime bills from this era, these laws relied on racialized stereotypes to create policies and laws that treat people of color as disposable and criminal until proven otherwise. These laws are the blueprint for the sweeping enforcement and deportation machine that we see in full force today.

We call on you to support legislation that begins to undo the harms of the 1996 laws by:

- Ending immigration detention without bail;
- Ending the automatic deportation of individuals who have had contact with the criminal legal system;
- Ending the entanglement of local policing and immigration enforcement; and
- Decriminalizing migration by repealing laws that make migration a crime.

An entire generation of people in this country have never experienced immigration apart from criminalization, as law enforcement and immigration enforcement functions have merged to arrest, detain, surveil, punish, and exile people of color. The abuses of these criminal legal and immigration systems have devastated our communities.

We have come together around a different vision: communities that are healthy and thriving, instead of ones torn apart by biased policing, incarceration, and deportation. We know that our community members who happen to not have been born in this country have no less dignity or value than those who were.

We seek transformational change in our criminal legal and immigration systems that will achieve this vision. One key step toward achieving this change is repealing the 1996 laws that laid the foundation for our mass immigration detention and deportation crisis. We urge members of the 116th Congress to take this critical step to protect and support immigrant communities.

Sincerely,

### **National Organizations**

Advancement Project, National Office  
African Communities Together  
Alianza Americas  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Friends Service Committee  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
Buddhist Peace Fellowship  
Campaign for Youth Justice  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Church World Service  
Columbia Law School Immigrants' Rights Clinic  
Conference of Presentation Sisters  
Defending Rights & Dissent  
Detention Watch Network  
Engage Action  
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)  
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement  
Families Belong Together (FBT)  
Families for Freedom  
Food Empowerment Project  
Free Migration Project  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom to Thrive  
Hispanic Federation  
Human Rights Watch  
Immigrant Defense Project  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Indivisible Sausalito  
InterReligious Task Force On Central America and Colombia  
Japanese American Citizens League

Justice for Muslims Collective  
Justice Strategies  
Laotian American National Alliance  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
LaUnidad11  
Lối Sống Tin Lành Ministry  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office  
Mijente  
NAACP  
National Action Network  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)  
NETWORK Lobby  
New American Leaders  
New Sanctuary Coalition  
NNAAC  
NYU Immigrant Rights Clinic  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
PeaceHost.net  
PIVOT - The Progressive Vietnamese American Organization  
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness  
Quixote Center  
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
South Asian Americans Leading Together  
Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
SURJ Marin  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
The Advocates for Human Rights  
The Black Alliance for Just Immigration  
The East Coast Asian American Student Union  
The Jus Semper Global Alliance  
The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
The Sentencing Project  
UndocuBlack Network  
Union of North American Vietnamese Student Associations  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo  
United We Dream  
US Human Rights Network  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation  
Yemeni American Merchants Association

### **Regional Organizations**

Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
United Confederation of Taíno People

### **State and Local Organizations**

#### **Alaska**

Alaska Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League

#### **Arizona**

Arizona Asian & Pacific Islander Americans Vote Table  
Asian Pacific Community in Action  
OCA - Greater Phoenix Chapter  
Organized Poder, LLC.

#### **California**

AFRICAN ADVOCACY NETWORK  
APIENC (API Equality - Northern California)  
APIROC, APSC  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Prisoner Support Committee  
AYPAL: Building API Community Power  
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area  
California For Progress  
Center for Empowering Refugees & Immigrants  
Coastside Immigrant Advocacy Group  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area (CAIR-LA)  
Creative Acts  
Dolores Street Community Services  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant  
Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa

Equality California  
Florin JACL-Sacramento Valley  
Fools Mission  
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)  
Hmong Cultural Center of Butte County  
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity  
JACL - Contra Costa Chapter  
Justice Reinvestment Coalitions of Alameda County  
Khmer Girls in Action  
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children  
San Diego Chapter of the JACL  
San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League  
San Francisco Peninsula People Power  
Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN)  
Silicon Valley De-Bug  
SIREN  
Stone Soup Fresno  
The Fresno Center  
The Jus Semper Global Alliance  
Vietnamese American Organization  
Vietnamese American Roundtable  
VietRISE  
VietUnity East Bay  
VietUnity-SoCal  
VietUnity South Bay  
WE RISE SF

## **Colorado**

Mile High JACL

## **Connecticut**

CT Shoreline Indivisible  
Unidad Latina en Accion (ULA)

## **District of Columbia**

Central American Resource Center  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)

## **Florida**

Friends of Broward Detainees

Florida Immigrant Coalition

### **Georgia**

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta

Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights

### **Illinois**

Access Living

Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home)

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago

Chicago Religious Leadership Network On Latin America - CRLN

Durango Unido en Chicago

HANA Center

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Latino Union of Chicago

OCA Greater Chicago

Organized Communities Against Deportations

PASO-West Suburban Action Project

### **Iowa**

Sisters of the Presentations

### **Massachusetts**

Asian American Resource Workshop (AARW)

Beyond Borders-Sin Fronteras, First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist

Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc.

Dominican Development Center

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Muslim Justice League

### **Maine**

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

### **Maryland**

Montgomery County (MD) Civil Rights Coalition

### **Minnesota**

Asian American Organizing Project (AAOP)

Coalition of Asian American Leaders  
Filipinx for Immigrant rights & Racial justice MN (FIRM)  
Hmong American Partnership  
ReleaseMN8

## **Nebraska**

Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community

## **Nevada**

Silver State Equality

## **New Mexico**

Albuquerque Center For Peace and Justice  
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos  
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center

## **New York**

Adhikaar  
African Communities Together  
Atlas DIY  
Columbia County Sanctuary Movement  
CPC - Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.  
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving  
Indivisible of Rockville Centre  
Legal Services Staff Association, NOLSW/UAW 2320  
Make the Road NY  
Mekong NYC  
MinKwon Center for Community Action  
Neighborhood Defender Service  
New American Leaders  
New York Immigration Coalition  
OCA - NY  
Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)  
S.T.O.P. -- The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project.  
UnLocal

## **New Jersey**

Reformed Church of Highland Park

## **North Carolina**

Comunidad Colectiva  
Southeast Asian Coalition

## **Ohio**

Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Dayton Chapter Japanese American Citizens League  
InterReligious Task Force On Central America and Colombia  
Ohio Immigrant Alliance  
Urban Connections  
Transformations CDC

## **Oregon**

APANO  
Portland JACL

## **Pennsylvania**

Asian Americans United  
Casa San Jose  
Immigrant Rights Action Doylestown  
JACL Philadelphia Chapter  
Juntos  
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition

## **Rhode Island**

Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education  
Providence Youth Student Movement

## **Tennessee**

AKIN - Allies of Knoxville's Immigrant Neighbors

## **Texas**

American Gateways  
Central American Resource Center/CRECEN  
Chinese Community Center of Houston, TX  
Interfaith Welcome Coalition  
Interfaith Welcome Coalition



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #60  
Justice For Our Neighbors East Texas  
Mano Amiga SM  
RAICES  
Texas Organizing Project  
Wilco Justice Alliance (Williamson County, TX)  
Workers Defense Project

## **Utah**

JACL Salt Lake City Chapter  
National Tongan American Society  
OCA Asian Pacific Islander American Advocates Utah  
Southeast Asian United Students at the University of Utah  
University of Utah

## **Virginia**

La ColectiVA  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
SURJ Northern Virginia

## **Vermont**

Migrant Justice

## **Washington**

Asian Counseling and Referral Service  
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington  
Casa Latina  
Entre Hermanos  
Faith Action Network  
Formerly Incarcerated Group Healing Together (FIGHT)  
International Community Health Services  
Jefferson County Immigrant Rights Advocates  
Khmer Anti-deportation Advocacy Group (KhAAG)  
Khmer Health Board  
LIFT  
MAPS-AMEN (American Muslim Empowerment Network)  
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project  
Raiz of Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho  
University of Washington  
University Unitarian Church

Wallingford Indivisible  
Washington Defender Association  
Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network