

June 18, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: FY 2019 DHS Appropriations Bills  
Urging reduction in funding for detentions, border wall and deportations

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

We, the undersigned organizations, call on you and all Members of Congress to oppose any actions that facilitate the Department of Homeland Security's mass detention and deportation, especially of people of color, construction of a harmful border wall, or further border militarization. Specifically, we urge you to significantly cut funds for immigration detention and enforcement within the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) budgets whether funded through the appropriations process or other legislative vehicles.

This administration has unleashed a further militarized immigration force, set on tearing apart families and utilizing dangerous rhetoric to justify its attacks on immigrants. The nation is watching in horror as DHS agents now routinely tear children from their parents' arms, sending parents to be prosecuted and removed from the U.S. while their children suffer unimaginable anguish and fear.<sup>1</sup> DHS's intentional infliction of trauma on families is nothing short of state-sponsored terror<sup>2</sup> and is diametrically opposed to our moral and legal obligations to protect people from being forcibly returned to harm.

DHS's cruel tactics have resulted in countless tragedies including three that have recently gained national attention. On May 23, Claudia Patricia Gómez González, a 20-year-old Guatemalan woman traveling to the United States to continue her education and reunite with her loved one, was shot in the head and murdered by a Border Patrol agent at the U.S.-Mexico border, one of over 70 individuals who have died at the hands of border agents since 2010.<sup>3</sup> Just two days later,

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<sup>1</sup> The New York Times, "It's Horrendous': The Heartache of a Migrant Boy Taken From His Father," (June 7, 2018), <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/07/us/children-immigration-borders-family-separation.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The New Yorker, "Taking Children from Their Parents is a Form of State Terror," (May 9, 2018), <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/taking-children-from-their-parents-is-a-form-of-state-terror>.

<sup>3</sup> The Guardian, "From a Guatemalan village to death in Texas," (June 2, 2018), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/02/guatemala-texas-rio-bravo-border-claudia-gomez>.

Roxsana Hernández, a 33-year-old transgender Honduran woman, died while in ICE custody due to complications from pneumonia. Roxsana was one of many asylum-seekers from Central America who fled violence and persecution of transgender community members with a caravan of immigrants last month.<sup>4</sup> On May 27, Prince Gbohoutou, a 26-year-old asylum seeker from the Central African Republic who is also the husband of a United States citizen, was abused by ICE agents attempting to force him onto a plane to deport him despite his insistence that he would be killed, without any notification to his wife or attorney.<sup>5</sup>

Families belong together. A faithful approach upholds family unity and does not prolong family separation. Yet in these tragedies, we see the dehumanizing rhetoric of this administration in action. We know this administration intends to engage in repeated targeting of immigrants and people of color via agencies like ICE and CBP. In order to build these forces, the President has requested over \$25.5 billion<sup>6</sup> for ICE and CBP; further bloating a fiscally and morally irresponsible agency, ICE and CBP's budgets are already more than what the United States spends on all other law enforcement agencies combined.

In fiscal year 2017, ICE incarcerated a daily average of 38,106 people,<sup>7</sup> and now the President is requesting that detention facilities be expanded to hold 52,000 individuals per day for fiscal year 2019.<sup>8</sup> Deaths of immigrants in detention reached their highest total since 2009 last year.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the administration has expanded the detention of pregnant women,<sup>10</sup> a cruel and inhumane move that puts both women and children at higher risk of health complications and negative physical and mental effects.<sup>11</sup> The administration has already demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to address instances of physical and sexual abuse, deaths, and inadequate access to health care in custody. As the administration seeks to significantly increase the number of people held in jail-like, poor conditions, Congress must reject the President's request and cut funding for detention.

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<sup>4</sup> NBC News, "Transgender migrant from Honduras dies in U.S. custody," (May 30, 2018),

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/transgender-migrant-honduras-dies-u-s-custody-n878596>.

<sup>5</sup> Washington Post, "'I'll be killed if I go back': Undocumented immigrant refuses to board flight at JFK," (May 27, 2018), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/ill-be-killed-if-i-go-back-undocumented-immigrant-refuses-to-board-flight-at-jfk/2018/05/27/064a52be-6117-11e8-9ee3-49d6d4814c4c\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.c82685c2d00f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/ill-be-killed-if-i-go-back-undocumented-immigrant-refuses-to-board-flight-at-jfk/2018/05/27/064a52be-6117-11e8-9ee3-49d6d4814c4c_story.html?utm_term=.c82685c2d00f).

<sup>6</sup> FY 2019 Budget in Brief, Department of Homeland Security, <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/DHS%20BIB%202019.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> National Immigrant Justice Center and Detention Watch Network, ICE Lies: Public Deception, Private Profit, [http://immigrantjustice.org/sites/default/files/content-type/research-item/documents/2018-02/IceLies\\_DWN\\_NIJC\\_Feb2018.pdf](http://immigrantjustice.org/sites/default/files/content-type/research-item/documents/2018-02/IceLies_DWN_NIJC_Feb2018.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Fiscal Year 2019 Congressional Justification, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/U.S.%20Immigration%20and%20Customs%20Enforcement.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Houston Chronicle, "Immigration detention deaths reach the highest total since 2009," (Jan. 12, 2018), <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Immigration-detention-deaths-reach-the-highest-12494624.php>

<sup>10</sup> CNN, "ICE paves way to detain more pregnant immigrants," (Mar. 29, 2018), <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/29/politics/ice-immigration-pregnant-women/index.html>

<sup>11</sup> American Academy of Physicians, "AAP, medical groups urge ICE not to detain pregnant women," (Apr. 2, 2018), <http://www.aappublications.org/news/2018/04/02/pregnancyimmigration040218>

Furthermore, the Trump administration has demanded increased funding for border militarization, including \$25 billion for more border wall constructions at the U.S.-Mexico border, that border communities and over 60 percent of Americans do not want.<sup>12</sup> The past two decades have already seen unprecedented levels of spending on harmful border enforcement. This militarization of the border region, including border walls and other enforcement efforts, has damaged the environment, cut off U.S. citizens from their own private lands, risked the survival of endangered species, caused life-threatening flooding, interfered with tribal sovereignty, and pushed individuals into crossing in riskier areas, causing thousands of migrant deaths.<sup>13</sup>

With apprehension levels at the southern border continuing a decades-long downward trend,<sup>14</sup> despite seasonal fluctuations, and many families presenting at ports of entry seeking protection, there is no justification for additional funding for more border agents and more miles of border wall. Instead, resources should focus on the real needs of border communities, including strengthened oversight and accountability to ensure that CBP and ICE agents adhere to the law and are held accountable for civil rights abuses and corruption.

As immigrants, people of color, and other vulnerable populations lose critical access to protections, whether as a result of this administration's unfair rescinding of programs like Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or the implementation of policy that tears families seeking safety apart, Congress must take action. Congress should push for permanent, real solutions that keep families together, while decreasing funding for the very forces that target these communities whether through the appropriations process or other legislative vehicles. The undersigned organizations are united in fighting for permanent solutions for immigrant and border communities that do not harm our families and loved ones or undercut other community members. We call on you and all Members of Congress to demand decreased funds for enforcement, border militarization, detentions, and deportations carried out by ICE and CBP.

Sincerely,

Accion Comunal Latinoamericana de Montgomery County (ACLAMO) Family Centers  
 American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)  
 ACLU of New Mexico  
 Action Network  
 Action Together Network  
 ACTIONN  
 Adelante Mujeres  
 Adhikaar

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<sup>12</sup> CBS News, "Most Americans support DACA, but oppose border wall," (Jan. 18, 2018),

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/most-americans-support-daca-but-oppose-border-wall-cbs-news-poll/>

<sup>13</sup> The Guardian, "US-Mexico border migrant deaths rose in 2017 even as crossings fell, UN says," (Feb. 6, 2018),

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/feb/06/us-mexico-border-migrant-deaths-rose-2017>.

<sup>14</sup> CATO Institute, Still No Crisis at the Border, (Apr. 25, 2018), <https://www.cato.org/blog/still-no-crisis-border>

Advancement Project  
Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.  
Advocates for Youth  
African Services Committee  
AFSC Colorado  
Alianza  
Alianza Americas  
Alliance San Diego  
Ameinu  
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)  
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)  
American Gateways  
American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee  
Apostle Immigrant Services  
Arab American Action Network (AAAN)  
Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services  
Arizona Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote Table  
Asian American Organizing Project  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-LA  
Asian Counseling & Referral Service  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
Asian Services In Action, Inc.  
Asylum Seeker Assistance Project  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
Bernardine Franciscan Sisters  
Bethany Immigration Services  
Brave New Films  
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC  
California Partnership  
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence  
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition  
CARECEN DC  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Employment Training  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Center for NonProfit Legal Services (CNPLS)  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Center for Victims of Torture  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. (CDM)  
Centro Laboral de Graton  
Centro Latino Americano  
Change Agency  
Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting (Philadelphia)  
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America  
Children's Law Center of Massachusetts  
Chinese Community Center, Houston  
Church of Our Saviour/La Iglesia de Nuestro Salvador  
Church Women United in New York State  
Church World Service  
Clergy and Leity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) - Ventura County  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Coalicion de Derechos Humanos  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Colectiva Legal del Pueblo  
Color of Change  
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach  
Comboni Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Office of the North American Province (NAP)  
Community of Friends in Action, Inc.  
Comunidades Unidas en Una Voz  
Conference of Superiors of Men  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces  
CREDO  
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
DC-Maryland Justice for Our Neighbors  
Defending Rights & Dissent  
Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM)  
Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee-El Paso  
Detention Watch Network  
Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries  
Dolores Street Community Services

Dominican Sisters - Grand Rapids  
DoSomething.org  
Downtown Languages  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Engage Action  
Encuentro  
End Domestic Abuse WI  
End Streamline Coalition  
Enlace  
Equal Access Legal Services  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Equality California  
Equality North Carolina  
Equality Texas  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)  
Faith in Action  
Faith in Public Life  
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement  
Farmworker Justice  
Fe y Justicia Worker Center  
Feminist Majority  
First Congregational United Church of Christ - Portland  
First Friends of New Jersey and New York  
First Unitarian Church, Portland, OR  
Food Empowerment Project  
Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice  
Franciscan Action Network  
Freedom for Immigrants (formerly CIVIC)  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Friends of Broward Detainees  
Friends of Miami-Dade Detainees  
Frontera de Cristo  
Gay Liberation Network  
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition  
Greater Rochester Coalition for Immigration Justice  
Greenville Multicultural Church  
Habonim Dror North America  
HANA Center

Hilton Head for Peace  
Hip Hop Caucus  
Hispanic Federation  
Hispanic Federation - CT  
Hispanic Federation - FL  
Hispanic Federation - Puerto Rico  
Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama  
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas  
Iglesia Alas de Salvacion  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Immanuel Fellowship  
Immigrant and Refugee Support Group  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center  
Immigrant Defense Project  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Immigration Equality  
Immigration Equality Action Fund  
Immigration Project  
Immigration Taskforce, SWPA Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda  
Indivisible  
Indivisible Indiana District 2  
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)  
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center  
Interfaith Coalition on Immigration  
Interfaith Worker Justice  
International Institute of New England  
InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia  
Irish International Immigrant Center  
Jewish Community Action  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Jobs With Justice  
Journey's End Refugee Services  
Justice for Muslims Collective  
Justice Strategies  
Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Kentucky Equal Justice Center  
Kids for College  
Kino Border Initiative

La Casa de Amistad  
Labor Council For Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) - Pittsburgh  
Latin America Working Group  
Latino Immigrant Rapid Response Initiative Coalition  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Latinx Alliance of Lane County  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
Legal Services for Children  
Main Street Alliance  
Make the Road NY  
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute  
Mi Familia Vota  
Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project  
MinKwon Center for Community Action  
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)  
MomsRising  
Montana Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Mujeres Latinas en Accion  
Muslim Advocates  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Latina/o Psychological Association  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Network for Arab American Communities  
National Network of Abortion Funds  
National Organization for Women  
Network Against Racism and Islamophobia - Portland, OR



NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ (NHCUCC) Immigrant and Refugee Support Group  
New Mexico Environmental Law Center  
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center  
NextGen America  
Nicaragua Center for Community Action  
NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice  
NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe  
No More Deaths/No Más Muertes  
North County Immigration Task Force  
Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors  
Northwest Philadelphia Immigrant Action and Mobilization  
Oakland Law Collaborative  
Ohio Council of Churches  
OneAmerica  
Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
OutFront Minnesota  
Pangea Legal Services  
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition  
Pennsylvania Immigration Resource Center  
PFLAG National  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Poligon Education Fund  
Portland Central America Solidarity Committee (PCASC)  
Positive Women's Network - USA  
Pre-Health Dreamers  
Presente.org  
Project IRENE  
Project South  
Proyecto de Accion de los Suburbios del Oeste (PASO) - West Suburban Action Project  
Public Law Center  
Reformed Church of Highland Park  
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network (RMIAN)  
San Diego Border Dreamers  
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium  
San Diego Indivisible Downtown  
San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, Inc.  
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province

Seattle Human Rights Commission  
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)  
Sierra Club  
Sin Fronteras  
Sisters of Charity of New York  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Leadership Team  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester  
Skagit Immigrant Rights Council  
Social Justice Collaborative  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Southern Border Communities Coalition (SBCC)  
Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)  
Southside Worker Center  
Southwest Environmental Center  
St John of God Church  
St. Andrew Lutheran Church  
St. Mark's Presbyterian Church  
St. Simon Stock Parish  
STEP UP! Sacramento  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Taos Refugee and Immigrant Network  
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition  
Tennessee Immigrant Empowerment Solutions  
The Black Alliance for Just Immigration  
The Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc.  
The Hampton Institute: a Working Class Think Tank  
The Jewish Council on Urban Affairs  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The Queer Palestinian Empowerment Network  
Transgender Law Center  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
U.S. Palestinian Community Network (USPCN)  
UltraViolet  
UndocuBlack Network  
UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza)  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN)

Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity (URGE)  
Unite Oregon  
United We Dream  
University Unitarian Church  
Uri L'Tzedek: Jewish, Orthodox Social Justice Movement  
UUFaithAction New Jersey  
VietLead  
Voto Latino  
Voz Hispana Cambio Comunitario  
Washington Office on Latin America  
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV)  
Wayne Action for Racial Equality  
We Belong Together  
WeCount!  
Win Without War  
Women's Refugee Commission  
Worksafe  
YWCA Southern Arizona