

December 17, 2021

*By Email*

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.  
President of the United States

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris  
Vice President of the United States

Cc: The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security  
The Honorable Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State  
The Honorable Merrick B. Garland, Attorney General of the United States  
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

We, the undersigned 242 organizations, write in dismay at the administration's decision to expand the Remain in Mexico policy and deploy it in [tandem](#) with Title 42 in order to turn away to danger families and individuals who are seeking safety in the United States. Nearly eleven months since taking office, this administration continues to violate U.S. asylum law and evade U.S. treaty obligations by blocking and returning asylum seekers to places where their lives and safety are in peril. We urge the administration to terminate these harmful, illegal policies and ensure that people fleeing persecution and torture can request asylum and other protections at the border, including at ports of entry.

Despite repeated statements decrying Remain in Mexico as dangerous and inhumane – and issuing [memoranda to terminate](#) it – this administration has inexplicably and unconscionably chosen to *expand* Remain in Mexico beyond the scope of it under the prior administration. Now, non-Mexican migrants and asylum seekers from *any* country in the Western Hemisphere are subject to forced returns to danger in Mexico, including [Haitians](#), who often face targeted [anti-Black violence and discrimination](#) there. The first implementation of Remain in Mexico led to massive human rights violations with more than [1,500](#) reported killings, kidnappings, rapes, torture, and other violent attacks against people returned to Mexico. There is no reason to believe this time will be [different](#). As the union representing [USCIS asylum officers](#) and more than 50 former [Immigration Judges](#) and Members of the Board of Immigration Appeals have made clear, this deadly program cannot be implemented safely, humanely, or in compliance with U.S. law.

The decision earlier this month to [renew](#) the Title 42 order issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for another 60 days and use this unjustifiable policy in conjunction with Remain in Mexico to block, return, and expel people seeking asylum in the United States to danger is gravely concerning. There is no public health justification for continuing to bar people seeking protection at the border, as senior CDC [scientists](#) and other public health [experts](#), including [Dr. Fauci](#), have repeatedly explained to [Congress](#) and the [public](#).

Continuing to turn away asylum seekers is particularly galling, as vaccinated [tourists](#) and shoppers with visas are now permitted to cross the southern border while people in search of refuge are turned away at U.S. ports of entry. Human rights organizations have documented more than [7,600](#) reported kidnappings and attacks against people blocked in or expelled to Mexico under Title 42. In addition, the U.S. government continues to expel families and adults to Haiti, despite warnings by the Department of Homeland Security's internal civil rights watchdog that such expulsions risked [civil and human rights violations](#) and the opinion of a former senior State Department official which [confirmed](#) that such expulsions violate U.S. obligations to not expel or return individuals who fear persecution, death, or torture. Nothing prevents this administration from immediately halting the use of Title 42 to block and expel asylum seekers to danger.

As President Biden recently reaffirmed, reinforcing respect for human rights is not only in the national security interest but "[rights-respecting democracies are more peaceful, prosperous, and stable.](#)" We urge the administration to immediately stop inflicting violence on people seeking safety in our country by permanently ending these policies and restoring the core human right of access to asylum in compliance with U.S. and international refugee laws.

Respectfully,

ADL (Anti-Defamation League)  
Advocating Opportunity  
African Diaspora for Good Governance  
Al Otro Lado  
Albuquerque FaithWorks Collaborative  
Aldea - The People's Justice Center  
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas  
All Souls NYC Unitarian Church Peace and Justice Task Force  
Alliance San Diego  
American Gateways  
American Immigration Council  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
Americans for Immigrant Justice  
Arab American Family Services  
Arizona Dream Act Coalition  
Arizona Justice For Our Neighbors  
Asylum Access  
Asylum Access México (AAMX) A.C.  
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)  
Ayuda

Berrien Immigrant Solidarity Network  
Bethany Christian Services  
Bethany House of Hospitality  
Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)  
Border Angels  
Border Kindness  
Border Network for Human Rights  
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice  
Caminando Juntos - Presentation Sisters Hispanic Ministry  
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition  
Caravan For The Children  
Carolina Jews for Justice  
Casa del Migrante en Tijuana, A.C.  
Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico  
Catholic Coalition for Migrants and Refugees  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.  
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Center for Human Rights & Constitutional Law  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Victims of Torture  
Central American Resource Center – CARECEN – of California  
Centro Legal de la Raza  
Chicago Jewish Coalition for Refugees  
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America-CRLN  
Chicana Latina Foundation  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice  
Church Women United in New York State  
Church World Service  
Coalition for Spiritual and Public Leadership (CSPL)  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Colorado Asylum Center  
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy, & Research Organization (CLLARO)  
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach  
Columbia Law School Immigrants' Rights Clinic  
Community Change Action  
Cornell Asylum and Convention Against Torture Appeals Clinic  
Council for Global Equality  
Daughters of Charity-Province of St. Louise  
Detention Watch Network

Disability Rights California  
Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel  
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
Doctors for Camp Closure  
Edmonds Lutheran Church  
Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) Action  
Faith in Public Life  
Families for Freedom  
Farmworker Justice  
First Focus on Children  
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project  
Forging Opportunities for Refugees in America  
Former Peace Corps Volunteer  
Franciscan Action Network  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom Network USA  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Frontera de Cristo  
Futures Without Violence  
Galveston-Houston Immigrant Representation Project  
Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network (GAIN)  
Georgia Human Rights Clinic  
Global Exchange  
Government Accountability Project  
Guadalupe Presbyterian Church USA  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
Her Justice, Inc.  
HIAS  
Home is Here NOLA  
Hope Border Institute  
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas  
Human Rights Watch  
Humanitarian Outreach for Migrant Emotional Health (H.O.M.E.)  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Immigrant Action Alliance  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center  
Immigrant Justice Advocacy Movement

Immigration Center for Women and Children  
Immigration Equality  
Immigration Hub  
Inspiritus  
Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI)  
International Mayan League  
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)  
International Rescue Committee  
Jemez Peacemakers  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western MA  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Jewish Labor Committee  
Just Neighbors Ministry  
Justice for Our Neighbors El Paso  
Justice in Motion  
Karen Organization of San Diego  
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)  
Kino Border Initiative / Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera  
La Raza Community Resource Center  
La Resistencia  
Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center  
Las Vanders  
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church  
Loretto Community Latin America/Caribbean Committee  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Madres e Hijos  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Maryland Against ICE Detention  
Maryland Legislative Coalition  
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition  
Matthew 25 The Gorge  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.  
Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County  
Migrant Center for Human Rights  
Milwaukee Zen Center

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception  
Mississippi Center for Justice  
MomsRising  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Long Beach & West Orange County (CA)  
National Education Association  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
National Partnership for New Americans  
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)  
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New American Welcome Center at the University YMCA  
New York Immigration Coalition  
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project  
Orange County Equality Coalition  
Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees  
Organizacion en California de Lideres Campesinas, Inc.  
Oxfam America  
Partnerships for Trauma Recovery  
Pax Christi MA  
Pax Christi New Jersey  
Pax Christi New York State  
Pax Christi Pacific Northwest  
Pedro Arrupe Jesuit Institute  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Physicians for Human Rights  
Project Corazon/Lawyers for Good Government  
Public Counsel  
Public Law Center  
Puentes de Cristo a Presbyterian Border Ministry  
Quixote Center  
RAICES  
Rainbow Beginnings  
Rainbow Bridge Asylum Seekers  
Ravenswood Presbyterian Church  
Refugee Action Network  
Refugee Congress  
Refugee Council USA

RefugeeOne  
Refugees International  
RefugePoint  
Rio Grande Borderland Ministries  
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights  
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network  
Saint Susanna Church  
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium  
Saratoga Immigration Coalition  
Save the Children  
Save the Children Action Network  
Second Congregational Church, UCC  
Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants  
Sisters of Jesus and Mary  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sisters of St Joseph  
Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood NY Office of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation  
Social Justice Coalition, Central Lutheran Church  
Society for Humanistic Judaism  
South Bay People Power  
South Texas Human Rights Center  
Southern Border Communities Coalition  
Southern California Immigration Project  
St Athanasius School  
St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley  
St. Susanna Pax Christi/Pax Christi MA Board  
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice  
Syrian Community Network  
Tahirih Justice Center  
Takoma Park Mobilization -- Equal Justice  
TASSC (Torture Abolition & Survivors' Support Coalition) International  
Texas Impact  
The Advocates for Human Rights  
The American Civil Liberties Union  
The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.  
The Farmworker Association of Florida  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
The Workers Circle  
Transgender Law Center

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
U.S. Immigration Policy Center at UC San Diego  
UC Davis Immigration Law Clinic  
UndocuBlack Network  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice  
United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries  
United We Dream  
US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants  
VECINA  
Vera Institute of Justice  
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)  
We Are All America  
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration  
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center  
Wisconsin United Methodist Church  
Witness at the Border  
Women's Refugee Commission  
World Relief