

NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER (NAC) PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS BY U.S. PROVINCE LEADERS: June 2023

Prepared by Brigid Lawlor, RGS and Fran Eskin Royer

The NAC Focus Areas for 2023 are taken from the 2022 NAC Survey. Our primary constituents, Sisters and Lay Partners-in- Mission participated. The issues recommended are: Human Trafficking, Immigration, Poverty/Economics, Family including Mental Health and Violence and U.S. policies that affect the Good Shepherd mission worldwide. These issues also address root causes. They are but are not limited to: Covid-19, environmental degradation, and racism. These areas will be noted at the end of the issue description. We also address significant current issues which indirectly impact the other focus areas.

SIGN-ONS:

NAC FOCUS AREA: Immigration

ISSUE: H.R. 16, THE AMERICAN DREAM AND PROMISE ACT OF 2023

Content: The American Dream and Promise Act allows Dreamers and individuals with Temporary Protected Status TPS and Deferred Enforced Departure DED to contribute fully in the country they love and know to be their home by providing a pathway to citizenship. The American Dream and Promise Act would grant individuals with (TPS) or (DED) LPR status and cancel removal proceedings if they: • Have been continuously present in the United States for a period of not less than three years; and • Were eligible or had TPS on September 1, 2017 or were eligible for DED status on January 20, 2021. The Act lists specifics about these requirements.

Sent to: House Representatives

Sponsored by: Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia (TX-29)

ISSUE: ACT TO SUPPORT HEALTH COVERAGE FOR DACA RECIPIENTS

Content: Letter in support of the Administration's proposed rule to make DACA recipients eligible for public health insurance programs. The rule improves coverage in more technical ways for other groups of immigrants including SIJS, asylum applicants and other humanitarian immigrants, and certain people with employment authorization.

Sent to: Department of Health and Human Services

Sponsored by: National Immigration Law Center and United We Dream

NAC FOCUS AREA: Poverty/Economics

ISSUE: IRS DIRECT FILING

Content: One of the biggest challenges to helping people receive government benefits distributed through the Treasury Department – like the Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit – is that people are required to file taxes. Many very low-income people are not required to file because they make too little. No filing = no benefits.

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The IRS is setting up a pilot for a free file system whereby the IRS uses their data and could automatically send checks to families. This is a huge structural change to the status quo. As you may imagine, the new system is under attack led by companies like Intuit and H & R Block.

Sent to: The Commissioner of the IRA

Sponsored by: CTC (Child Tax Credit) organizers and Coalition for Free and Fair Filing

ISSUE: PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE SAVES LIVES ACT

Content: The bill would address chronic underfunding of state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) public health infrastructure through a dedicated investment in foundational public health capabilities and workforce.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Trust for America's Health

ISSUE: RULE TO BAN THE USE OF PRIOR SALARY HISTORY IN FEDERAL HIRING.

Content: The letter supports the proposed rule made by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). If made final, will impact millions of workers. It is truly a very significant change for the federal government. Finalizing this rule is one of the top priorities of the Equal Pay Today campaign and many other partner organizations, since we know reliance on prior salary history is one of the drivers of ongoing gender and race-based pay gaps.

Sent to: Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Sponsored by: Equal Rights Advocates

ISSUE: WALL STREET TAX ACT OF 2023

Content: Request to members of Congress to co-sponsor the Wall Street Tax Act of 2023 Reinstating a Wall Street tax, also called a financial transaction tax (FTT), in the U.S. is an important step toward having Wall Street pay its fair share of taxes. By imposing a very small tax of 0.1%—ten cents per \$100—on purchases of stocks, bonds, or derivatives, the Wall Street Tax Act would raise an estimated \$752 billion in revenue over ten years that could be used to invest in working family priorities like education, health care, childcare, housing, and addressing the climate crisis.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Public Citizen

ISSUE: NEW TAX PACKAGE (reject H.R. 3937, the Small Business Jobs Act, and H.R. 3938, the Build It in America Act)

Content: The tax package expands corporate and business tax breaks that would cost more than a trillion dollars over the next decade, reduces tax programs that fight climate change, and fails to expand the Child Tax Credit that would lift millions of children out of poverty and shrink the

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racial wealth gap. The letter expresses strong opposition to this bill that leaves vulnerable families and children behind and accelerates climate change.

Sent to: House Ways and Means Committee

Sponsored by: Washington Interfaith Staff Committee (WISC)

- Also, Environmental Justice

ISSUE: CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) and the KEEP THE KIDS FED ACT (KKFA)

Content: The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal reimbursement rates under Public Law: 117-158, the “Keep Kids Fed Act” (KKFA), is ending June 30, 2023

The essential provisions in KKFA to address these issues are set to expire on June 30, 2023. Three months after KKFA resources end, Child Care Stabilization funds will also end. The letter urges the chairs of committees to extend the KKFA’s childcare *and* school meal reimbursement temporary increases for an additional year to help schools *and* childcare providers feed children over the summer and during the 2023-2024 school year. Childcare and Head Start providers will struggle to serve nutritious meals without the bolstered CACFP compensation through KKFA.

Sent to: Chairs Stabenow, Foxx, Heinrich, Harris, Murray and Granger, and Ranking Members Boozman, Scott, Hoeven, Bishop, Collins, and DeLauro:

Sponsored by: Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

ISSUE: FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY

Content: The letter urges FHFA to take bold action to implement these protections for all households living in properties with federally backed mortgages. These protections are necessary – along with to large-scale, sustained investments and anti-racist reforms – to ensure that the lowest-income and most marginalized renters have an affordable place to call home. The letter addresses: Source of Income Protection, “Just Cause” Eviction Standards Anti-Rent Gouging protections; and Safe, Decent, accessible and Healthy Housing

Sent to: Hon Sandra Thompson, Federal Housing Finance Agency

Sponsored by: National Low Income Housing Coalition

NAC FOCUS AREA: U.S. Policies That Affect Good Shepherd Mission Worldwide

ISSUE: PRESIDENT’S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF (PEPFAR)

Content: PEPFAR does an enormous amount of good from providing capacity strengthening to local health systems, increasing access to lifesaving medications, and supporting adults and children living with HIV in other countries. The letter requests reauthorization. PEPFAR was created in 2003 by President George W. Bush, who felt strongly that as a resource-rich and privileged country, the United States was morally obligated to help people with illnesses in low-

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income countries access medication which was otherwise unavailable to them. HIV/AIDS in the resource-limited world, particularly in southern and eastern Africa, was a stark example of such a disease.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Catholic Relief Services

ACTION ALERTS

- Request to NAC constituency to invite their Senators and Representative to the Human Trafficking Conference
- World Day Against Child Labor – June 12: Request to NAC constituents to contact members of Congress to support the Child Labor Exploitation Accountability Act so that children are not placed in hazardous conditions and corporations are held accountable.
- American Dream and Promise Act of 2023: Request to NAC constituents to contact members of the House of Representatives to co-sponsor and support the Act (pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients, some with TPS and DED status).
- Black Maternal Mortality Momnibus Act: Request to NAC constituents to contact members of Congress to support this Act that expands access to affordable, high-quality prenatal and postpartum care, particularly for low-income women and Black women who face disproportionate barriers to health care services .

BLASTS TO CONGRESS

June 14 webinar promotion “Forced Migration and the Threat of Human Trafficking” (*sent to House and Senate Foreign Policy and Immigration LAs, AND staff of the following committees: Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senate HELP Committee, Senate Homeland Security Committee, House Foreign Affairs Committee, House Homeland Security Committee, House, Education and Workforce Committee*)

STATEMENTS

ISSUE: CLIMATE JUSTICE

Global south countries are facing the heavy burden of debt, undermining their ability to address multiple crises and uphold the rights of citizens. Many countries are spending more on debt repayments than they are on addressing the climate crisis. Fifty – four countries are in debt crises.

Global north governments, corporations and institutions like the IMF and World Bank have failed to act. Instead, we have seen the rise of false solutions and dangerous distractions that will not solve the debt crisis, or worse, could exacerbate it. Meanwhile, wealthy creditors continue to profit. This is not good enough. Cancel the Debt Now.

Sponsored in conjunction with: Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office

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OTHER ADVOCACY / LOBBYING ACTIVITIES:

Regular coalition meetings: Coalition on Human Needs (weekly), DC Catholic Coalition Meeting (monthly), Justice for Immigrants (monthly), Jubilee USA meeting (monthly), Washington Interfaith Staff Community and Heads of Washington Office meeting (monthly), Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (monthly), Interfaith Immigration Coalition (weekly), Farm Bill Meetings (monthly), Value Our Families (monthly)

Human Trafficking / Forced Migration Grant:

Work in lead up to June 14 educational webinar, "Forced Migration and the Threat of Human Trafficking" (phase 1)

- Held successful June 14 webinar.
 - 569 registrants; 277 attended.
 - Among registrants: 30 Senate and House staffers, 3 federal policy makers, 44 GS sisters and partners-in-mission
- NAC secured bipartisan co-chairs for the event, Rep. Jamie Raskin (D – MD- 08) and Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ-04)

Communications:

- Media Advisory: Briefing to high light the Nexus Between Human Trafficking and Forced Migration
- Article: **The Nexus Between Human Trafficking and Forced Migration Is Dramatic but Not Hopeless**, *Result of Web Briefing Involving Survivor Stories & Voices of Those on the Ground*

Work in policy development (phase 2)

- Weekly team meetings
- Contacting policy experts and Hill staff as we work toward a July 26 meeting when we will determine the discrete policy solutions we pursue to protect migrants and immigrants from the threat of human trafficking.

Attended June 23, 2023 Webinar Outlining the 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report

Attended Franciscan Action Network Virtual Benefit: Included: staff and friends of FAN sponsoring and serving dinner to our impoverished neighbors at the [Franciscan Center](#) in Baltimore on **Tuesday 27 June**. Followed by an online program on **Wednesday 28 June**, featuring an interview with Friar David Couturier, OFM Cap. (Associate Professor of Theology at St. Bonaventure University and the Executive Director of the Franciscan Institute), and a moderated panel discussion with those engaged in working directly with the poor.

Attended NPNA webinar: Immigrant Communities on the Frontlines of Climate Disasters - On Monday, 26 June, National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA) Climate Justice Collaborative and member organizations from across the country shared how immigrant justice organizations have been responding to extreme weather in a way that keeps our communities safe, builds power, and fights for racial and economic justice in our disaster response policies.

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Capitol Hill Visits:

1 June – Initial meeting with staffer of Senate H.E.L.P. (Health, Education, Labor & Pensions) Committee Chair for 118th Congress including NAC and staffer from CORA Services, Droste Mental Health Services, and Good Shepherd Services New York to discuss mental health needs of agencies and their clients.

5 June - Met with staffer of Rep. Jonathan Jackson (D-IL- 01) to advocate for the RESTORE ACT that would allow formerly incarcerated persons to be eligible for SNAP benefits.

15 & 21 June - Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (H.E.L.P.) Committee of Senate Executive Session is meeting to discuss and vote to determine if legislation does or does not move to the full Senate. The H.E.L.P. Committee is important because it addresses issues impacting our agencies and the people they serve, especially those marginalized because of poverty, and various aspects of mental health.

21 June - Dialogue with Biden Administration officials on Root Causes of Migration

GOOD SHEPHERD COMMUNITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

- Work with the “**Collaborate / Amplify for Social Justice**” PMNA Mission Statement Subgroup

OTHER SIGNIFICANT NAC ACTIVITIES

QuickBooks Online training/troubleshooting (ongoing)