

NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER PRIORITIES SIGNED ONTO ON BEHALF OF USA PROVINCE LEADERS: January 2020

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NAC FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

ISSUE: EPA'S TOXIC WATER ROLLBACK FOR COAL PLANTS!

General Content: We signed on to oppose Power plants, mostly coal, are the number one toxic water polluters in the country--dumping more arsenic, lead, mercury, selenium, and other heavy metals into our nation's rivers, lakes, and streams than any other industry. Wastewater from these plants have polluted our drinking water sources, made it unsafe to eat fish from many rivers, contaminated the places where we swim, and damaged ecosystems. Yet now EPA wants to weaken critical safeguards finalized in 2015 that would have eliminated most of this pollution. Weakening these protections is nothing but a giveaway to prop up an archaic industry that has burdened communities with toxic wastewater for far too long.

Sent to: The Honorable Andrew Wheeler, Administrator, EPA

Sponsored by: Clean Water Action

ISSUE: BREAK FREE FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION ACT OF 2020

General Content: The Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act of 2020 is a comprehensive bill to address the plastic pollution crisis. The bill shows a commitment to real solutions by reducing throwaway plastics and encouraging producer responsibility while combating false solutions such as incineration.

Sent to: U.S. Senator Tom Udall, U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal

Sponsored by: Center for Biological Diversity

ISSUE: EPA's latest proposal that weakens and eliminates important parts of the 2015 coal ash rule.

General Content: Coal ash is the toxic remains of coal burning in power plants. It's full of chemicals that cause cancer, developmental disorders and reproductive problems. It also poisons our water and kills fish and wildlife. But despite this threat, the EPA -- bowing to pressure from coal ash polluting utilities -- is proposing to delay the closure and cleanup of hundreds of leaking, toxic coal ash ponds around the nation. Instead of gutting the rules set in 2015 to protect the waters we drink and recreate in from coal ash contamination, the EPA should strengthen them -- which is what a federal court told them to do in 2018!

Sent to: The Honorable Andrew Wheeler, Administrator, EPA

Sponsored by: Earth Justice

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY

ISSUE: CHILD POVERTY

General Content: A letter from faith communities that expresses concern about four of the administration's recent regulatory changes that increase child poverty. In 2019 the administration proposed many damaging rules and regulatory changes that harm the most vulnerable, particularly children.

Sent to: House Government Oversight Committee

Sponsored by: Network

NAC FOCUS AREA: RACISM

ISSUE: CLASSWIDE BAN ON FENTANYL

General Content: The DEA is looking to criminalize more black and brown people in the latest tactic in the war on drugs. Class wide scheduling of Fentanyl analogues. Federal fentanyl laws are more likely to be used on individuals at the lowest levels of drug distribution chains who are often not even aware that the drugs they're selling contain fentanyl. Moreover, these laws have been disproportionately used against people of color, with approximately three quarters of all individuals sentenced for fentanyl trafficking under federal law being people of color.

Sent to: Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader, Kevin McCarthy H.O.B., House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, House Minority Whip Steve Scalise

Sponsored by: Drug Policy Alliance

ISSUE: PREGNANCY AND RACIAL PROFILING RULE

General Content: On January 24, 2020, the State Department issued a new rule targeting pregnant people of color, or people they believe to be pregnant, visiting the U.S. The new rule took effect immediately, without advance notice or opportunity to comment, giving consular officers discretion to reject tourist (B visa) applications for people they believe to be traveling to the United States and its territories to give birth. This rule disproportionately and discriminatorily affects travelers from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as it will not apply to countries in the Visa Waiver Program.

Sent to: State Department

Sponsored by: National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

NAC FOCUS AREA: VIOLENCE

ISSUE: IRAN – US AGGRESSION

General Content: Statement condemning the United States' dangerous aggression towards Iran, including the assassination of Gen. Qassem Soleimani and the deployment of additional troops to the region and urging the Administration to step back from the brink of war. Calls on the US to renounce the escalation of violence and call on the United States to work towards lasting peace with Iran.

Sent to: Congress and various media outlets

Sponsored by: WISC Peace and Security Working Group

OTHER RELATED NAC AREAS

ISSUE: FAMILY ACT

General Content: Letter urging members of Congress to co-sponsor and advocate for swift and thorough consideration of the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463). The FAMILY Act would create a national family and medical leave insurance program to help ensure that people who work can take the time they need to address serious health and caregiving needs. It would help support working families' economic security, promote racial and gender equity, create a more level playing field for businesses of all sizes and strengthen our economy. The FAMILY Act is the national paid family and medical leave plan voters want and our country needs.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: National Partnership

ISSUE: FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

General Content: We support restoring the FEC's quorum in advance of the 2020 election by confirming one or two appropriate Commissioners identified through the existing process. But for the remaining vacancies, a nonpartisan blue-ribbon panel should be established to identify qualified candidates for the President's potential nomination, and the Senate should decline to confirm any nominee who is not drawn from the panel's recommendations.

And under no circumstances should the President nominate or the Senate confirm any individual who is opposed — whether for ideological, professional, or any other reason — to the enforcement of the duly enacted laws and regulations that protect the transparency and fairness of our elections.

Sent to: President Trump and Senators McConnell, Schumer, Blunt, and Klobuchar

Sponsored by: Campaign Legal Center, Public Citizen, Common Cause, Democracy 21 and CREW

OTHER RELATED NAC SIGN ON ACTIVITIES

SPONSORSHIPS:

We signed on as a sponsor endorsing the **International Day of Action on January 25, 2020 called NO WAR WITH IRAN**. Marches and Prayer Vigils are scheduled throughout the year.

Coordinator: Code Pink

We signed on as a sponsor of events with **FAITH 4 ASYLUM NONVIOLENCE CAMPAIGN:**

STOP THE INHUMANITY which includes prayer services, publicity, etc. Asylum seekers are migrants who flee their homes because of fear of violence or persecution. U.S. and international laws state that anyone has a right to apply for asylum in the United States. However, recent changes in U.S. immigration policy are preventing asylum seekers from waiting for their hearings in safety in the United States, instead forcing them to wait in locations in Mexico where they face [violence, extortion, sexual assault and kidnapping](#). At least [636 people](#) have been raped, kidnapped, assaulted, and even murdered, including 138 children.

This "Remain in Mexico" (MPP) policy violates domestic and international law by sending asylum seekers to dangerous conditions without an adequate screening process, effectively denying them access to lawyers and interpreters and preventing many from receiving a fair day in court. More than 56,000 asylum seekers have already been sent to Mexico under this policy.

Coordinator: Interfaith Immigration Coalition

STATEMENTS: FAITH STATEMENT ON ESCALATING VIOLENCE WITH IRAN

AMICUS BRIEF: We added our name in support of a brief to be filed in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals by January 28, in support of a district court decision that rejected new rules proposed by the federal government that would allow the indefinite detention of immigrant children with their parents in unlicensed facilities while their applications for asylum were being considered.

Coordinator: War No More