

NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS BY U.S. PROVINCE LEADERS: Week of May 11 - 31, 2020

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COVID – 19

NAC FOCUS AREA: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ISSUE: COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

General Content: The request urges congressional leaders to appropriate COVID-19 related supplemental funding to direct victims' services in the amount of \$200 million for existing trafficking grantees and administered through the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Trafficking in Persons.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: ATTEST

NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

ISSUE: RESOLUTIONS TO CELEBRATE THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUGEE ACT OF 1980

General Content: At this time when we as a nation are working together to fight the COVID-19 crisis, 161,000 refugee health care workers and 170,000 refugees working in the U.S. food supply chain, labor with thousands of other essential American workers to keep us healthy and fed. As we celebrate World Refugee Day 2020 and the 40th Anniversary of the Refugee Protection Act of 1980, we celebrate refugee contributions to America over these last 40 years and now during this era of COVID-19. Letter supports support identical, bi-partisan House Resolution 902 and Senate Resolution 545 that celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services

ISSUE: ACTION ON BEHALF OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN DEPORTATION PROCEEDINGS

General Content: On May 19, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a new order that will indefinitely eliminate protections for unaccompanied children and asylum seekers at the border. This letter urges the administration to restore humanitarian protections required under US law and treaty obligations and to implement practical, science-based safeguards endorsed by public health experts while processing unaccompanied children and asylum seekers asking for refuge at our border.

Sent to: Chad F. Wolf, Acting Secretary, Department of Homeland Security and Robert R. Redfield, MD, Director, Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Sponsored by: Human Rights First

ISSUE: DETENTION AND DEPORTATION POLICIES IN COVID-19 FLY IN FACE OF OUR FAITH VALUES

General Content: Closing the border. Rejecting asylum-seekers. Deporting children and adults, including those who have COVID-19. Spreading the virus throughout the world. Allowing immigration detainees to die in jail - these are just a few of the immigration policies the Trump administration has implemented, using the coronavirus as an excuse to enact its already-formulated, anti-immigrant agenda.

An open letter expressing that faith values require us to reject Trump administration policies that trap immigrants in jails to contract COVID-19; deport children without parents; deport adults who are sick and further spread the virus; and other human rights atrocities.

Sent to: Public Media

Sponsored by: Anacaona LLC

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY

ISSUE: COVID-19 LOW-INCOME BROADBAND + LIFELINE HILL LETTER

General Content: This letter supports a new legislative proposal to: 1) Immediately appropriate \$4 billion (and authorize appropriations of \$8.8 billion) in order to guarantee an \$50 emergency broadband benefit—\$75 in tribal areas—to every eligible low-income household in the country that makes a request to their Internet Service Provider (ISP), and, offer a one-time discount for ISP-provided devices; 2) Improve the existing Federal Communications Commission low-income Lifeline program to offer unlimited voice minutes and texting.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: United Church of Christ

ISSUE: RENTAL ASSISTANCE IN NEXT CORONAVIRUS RELIEF PACKAGE

General Content: Millions of America's lowest-income renters were struggling to pay rent and make ends meet *before* the current coronavirus pandemic. Now, many are facing increased risks of evictions and homelessness due to job losses and reduced wages. The letter urges Congress to include the *Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act* (S. 3685, H.R. 6820) in any comprehensive coronavirus relief package. It provides \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance to help keep America's lowest-income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, low-wage workers, and others stably housed during this crisis.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: National Low-Income Housing Coalition

ISSUE: EXTEND CHILD NUTRITION WAIVERS

General Content: Letter urging USDA to use its full administrative authority and extend all child nutrition waivers through the summer until September 30, 2020. This is critical to provide certainty to child nutrition providers to ensure access to meals during this national emergency and to ease the administrative burden on local providers, state child nutrition agencies, and USDA Food and Nutrition Service staff.

Sent to: US Department of Agriculture

Sponsored by: Food Research & Action Center

ISSUE: SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

General Content: COVID-19 has exacerbated already too high levels of food insecurity in America. SNAP is a proven program that alleviates food insecurity while also stimulating the economy. Letter to Congress and the White House to take action to limit the depth and duration of this health and economic crisis by providing a 15 percent boost in the SNAP maximum benefit, an increase in the SNAP minimum monthly benefit from \$16 to \$30, and a suspension of SNAP time limits and rules changes that would cut SNAP eligibility and benefits.

Additional investments must be made to other nutrition programs, including Pandemic EBT, CACFP, WIC, older adult nutrition programs, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Sent to: Senate Leaders/White House

Sponsored by: Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

ISSUE: TO END POVERTY IN THE U.S.

General Content: Congress has a moral responsibility to end poverty in the United States. The resolutions give live examples of needs and addresses the impact the COVID-19 on the poor.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: Rep. Barbara Lee

ISSUE: AFFORDABLE COVID-19 DRUG PRICING ACT & OVERSIGHT OF COVID-19 BIOMEDICAL TAXPAYER INVESTMENTS ACT

General Content: Once there is a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19 that clinical evidence has demonstrated to be safe and effective, there will be unprecedented global demand. Despite the billions of dollars of public funding pouring into COVID research and development (R&D), the Trump Administration has refused to commit to ensuring that such treatments and vaccines are reasonably priced, or to ensure that it will not give monopoly control of federally-supported treatments and vaccines to a single manufacturer, which would create obstacles to scaling up production and empower drug corporations to profiteer off the pandemic. The Affordable COVID-19 Drug Pricing Act would require nonexclusive licensing of federally owned COVID-19 treatment and vaccine inventions, as well as those developed under Cooperative Research and Development Agreements and under government grants; require reasonable pricing. COVID-19 treatments and vaccines in terms and conditions included in federal support; ensure transparency of COVID-19 R&D and other costs from prescription drug corporations; and protect against excessive pricing of COVID-19 treatments and vaccines, with or without federal support

The Taxpayer Research and Coronavirus Knowledge (TRACK) Act would require the federal government to create a single public database of federal biomedical investment information for COVID-19, including recipients, amounts, timeline, and expenditure breakdown; non-financial support; associated patents and clinical data; tax benefits; and terms of agreements between the federal government and manufacturers and other COVID R&D funding recipients. This information would help Congress and the public hold the administration and pharmaceutical corporations accountable by allowing oversight over whether the public interest is being protected under these taxpayer investments.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: Public Citizen

ISSUE: CHILD CARE IS ESSENTIAL ACT

General Content: \$50 billion childcare stabilization fund that would support childcare providers who experience a drop in revenue or have added expenses during and after the pandemic, including increased compensation for early childhood educators. It would also defray costs for parents and providers that accept funds would have to reserve children's slots.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Center for American Progress

ISSUE: HEROES ACT

General Content: The Heroes Act provides just \$7 billion for childcare—far short of the \$50 billion needed to stabilize this critical industry. Without significantly more funding, half of childcare providers are likely to close their doors.

Sent to: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

Sponsored by: Center for American Progress

NAC FOCUS AREA: US POLICIES THAT AFFECT OUR GOOD SHEPHERD MISSION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

ISSUE: UN FUNDING BY US GOVERNMENT

General Content: Urging Congress to honor our nation's financial obligations to the United Nations by supporting funding for the organization's peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian, development, and global health work in Fiscal Year 2021. As organizations that work in a variety of fields relevant to U.S. foreign policy, we firmly believe that American investments in the UN are critical to addressing global challenges in a cost-effective manner. Right now, the world is facing a deadly crisis that highlights the need for strong and collective multilateral action: the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sent to: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriation Chairs and ranking members in House and Senate: Committee on Appropriations Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Rogers, and Ranking Member Leahy:

Sponsored by: Better World Campaign

ISSUE: HONDURAS COVID-19 STATEMENT SIGN-ON

General Content: A statement denouncing the Honduran government's excessive use of force by security forces to carry out their lockdown order. The statement also condemns violence against human rights defenders and journalists who continue to be targeted for their important work, even in the middle of this public health crisis.

Sent to: Media – a Public Statement

Sponsored by: Latin America Working Group

ISSUE: PANDEMIC-RELATED AID TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

General Content: Latin America and the Caribbean has now been declared the new epicenter of the pandemic. According to the World Health Organization, the daily number of cases of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean is surpassing those reported in the United States and Europe. The time to act is now, and Congress is urged to include assistance for the region in the next emergency spending package.

Sent to: Senator McConnell, Senator Schumer, Representative Pelosi, and Representative McCarthy,

Sponsored by: Latin America Working Group

ISSUE: IMMIGRATION BAN ON CHINESE STEM STUDENTS

General Content: Letter urges key legislators to rescind their divisive and discriminatory bill, the SECURE CAMPUS Act, and its companion legislation in the House. In the wake of rising hate incidents against Chinese Americans and other Asian Americans, language that fans the flames of xenophobia further endangers our communities. Although there are concerns about the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), there is no evidence to suggest that Chinese students coming to learn in the U.S. are in any way affiliated with the CCP's ambitions. Further, this bill provides cover for increased racial profiling, terminations, and investigations of Chinese Americans in academic settings. During this epidemic of hate, more than ever, it is destructive to vilify and scapegoat the people of an entire nation, as well as Chinese Americans who have origins there.

Sent to: Senators Tom Cotton and Marsha Blackburn and Representative David Kustoff:

Sponsored by: OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates

NAC FOCUS AREA: OTHER RELATED MATTERS

ISSUE: PROTECTING CONSUMERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

General Content: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is continuing to favor the financial industry over working people in these very difficult times.

Over the past two months, we have seen the COVID-19 pandemic wreak havoc on millions of people all across the United States. Unemployment is near Great Depression levels and continuing to climb as families are struggling to pay their bills and put food on the table. To make matters worse, debt collectors are seizing stimulus checks, and there is widespread consumer confusion and uncertainty about their rights under federal and state law.

In the light of fast-tracked harmful deregulation, the letter calls on the (CFPB) to stop all rule-making and regulatory activity unrelated to COVID-19 and to focus on protecting consumers during the pandemic instead.

Sent to: Director Kathleen L. Kraninger,
Sponsored by: Our Financial Security.Org

Non COVID-19 Specific

NAC FOCUS AREA: VIOLENCE

ISSUE: EXPAND THE RANGE OF PRISON REFORMS

General Content: Congress should enact reforms that meaningfully reduce incarceration:

- 1) Pass the Second Look Act to offer the opportunity at a shorter sentence via judicial review;
- 2) Amend the FIRST STEP Act to eliminate the exclusions for earned time credits and from programming participation;
- 3) Consider bills as diverse as social security legislation or FAFSA6 restructuring removing negative amendments that carve-out violent or drug offenses or any policy that discriminates against returning citizens. Those amendments should not pass.

Sent to: Members of Congress
Sponsored by: Friends Committee on National Legislation