

**NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS ON BEHALF OF US
PROVINCE LEADERS: Week of: April 20 -30, 2019**

Prepared by Brigid Lawlor, Liaison

NON-COVID 19 Sign-ons

NAC FOCUS AREA: VIOLENCE

ISSUE: VIOLENT OFFENSES – SYSTEM CHANGE

General Content: The system of mass incarceration is fundamentally broken and needs robust and comprehensive reform which does not exclude violent offenses or discriminate against people because of the offense committed. Extending the negative impacts through policy that excludes violent offenses only reinforces further harms and impedes rehabilitation. The system of mass incarceration should be fixed. Addressing violent offenses is a necessary step in this process of reform.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Friends Committee on National Legislation

COVID – 19 Sign-ons

NAC FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

ISSUE: LETTER FOR A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

General Content: Letter calling for a just and environmentally sustainable response to the coronavirus pandemic. Written this in light of Catholic social teaching, to alert members of Congress that our faith calls us to meet hurting communities' immediate needs and also to shape a recovery that addresses the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in conjunction with Catholic Climate Covenant

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY

ISSUE: CALL FOR CREDIT AND DEBT PROTECTIONS TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL DISTRESS FROM COVID-19

General Content: Millions of people and small businesses in the United States are experiencing tremendous financial distress because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment is skyrocketing and families are struggling to put food on the table. Congress and the administration need to enact broad-based, efficient, and effective relief that goes far beyond the CARES Act to protect people's homes, cars, bank accounts, income, and benefits so that they can weather this crisis. These measures should include: Imposing a moratorium on all foreclosures and evictions for the duration of the pandemic, Stopping termination of utility services, Halting all debt collection activity, Preventing predatory lending, Preventing accrual of additional fees and interest, Requiring payment forbearance and flexible repayment options for all types of payment obligations, Prohibiting negative credit reporting, Cancelling student loan debt.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Our Financial Security

ISSUE: MEDICARE CRISIS PROGRAM

General Content: Proposal by U.S. Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Mich.) and U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy (D-Mass.), which would: (1) enroll in Medicare any uninsured person and the household of a person who is found eligible for unemployment insurance due to COVID-19, throughout the duration of this emergency; (2) establish a COVID-19 National Clearinghouse within the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to purchase necessary medical and personal protective equipment, including but not limited to: respirator masks, ventilators, gloves, bodysuits, safety glasses, eye protection, isolation gowns, swabs, and more; (3) expand insurance coverage for other uninsured people, by prohibiting cost-sharing within Medicaid and CHIP for COVID-19 vaccine and treatment for enrollees, increasing the federal matching rate for Medicaid during pandemics and economic downturns, and more; and (4) require private insurers (including group, individual, and ERISA plans), Medicare (including Medicare Advantage plans), Medicaid and CHIP, TRICARE and Veteran's Affairs plans, the Indian Health Service, and all health plans covering Federal workers to cover COVID-19 testing (regardless of the result) and treatment without cost-sharing or prior authorization.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: Public Citizen

ISSUE: UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

General Content: In the middle of an unprecedented public health crisis and the exclusionary relief packages passed by Congress, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos put out guidance this week to exclude undocumented and DACA-holder students from being included in \$6 billion of economic relief for post-secondary education institutions. Approximately 454,000 undocumented students will be directly impacted by this exclusion.

Sent to: Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos,

Sponsored by: United We Dream and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

ISSUE: COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

General Content: Community Health Centers provide care to vulnerable and underserved populations, mostly for low-income families, communities of color, and patients with limited English proficiency. Emergency funding provided by Congress to date has been helpful, but it is not enough. Additional leadership is needed at the state level. While Congress debates a phase 4 package, we are asking the NGA and governors to prioritize funding and assistance to health centers to ensure that health centers can keep their doors open during and after this pandemic.

Sent to: National Governors Association

Sponsored by: Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

ISSUE: COVID-19 EVERY WORKER PROTECTION ACT OF 2020

General Content: OSHA still has not taken steps to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard to protect all the workers still out there on jobs across the country, and has indicated no willingness to do so. In the face of its shameful abrogation of its responsibility to protect the health and safety of our nation's workers, Congress is taking the lead and trying to pass the COVID-19 Every Worker Protection Act of 2020.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: National Employment Law Project

ISSUE: HEALTH CARE AND ECONOMIC SECURITY RIGHTS OF OLDER ADULTS

General Content: Health care and economic security rights of older adults living in poverty urgent priorities for low-income older adults who are most at risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19. The actions we are asking Congress to: 1) Center equity to stop the devastating effects of racism and intersectional disparities on communities of color. 2) Increase economic security, including expanding SSI and eliminating asset tests. 3) Strengthen Medicare & Medicaid, including targeted support for Home and Community-Based Services and Medicare Savings Programs. 4) Protect nursing facility residents. 5) Bolster legal, nutrition, housing, and language access services for older adults.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Justice for Aging

ISSUE: ADULT DEPENDENTS BILLS

General Content: Letter urging Congress to include young adults age 16 and over and adult with disabilities who are dependents in the economic stimulus payments.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: The ARC

ISSUE: NEXT COVID-19 CRISIS FUNDING

General Content: Support for bigger, regular direct payments to people until we reach full employment. In the next bill to address the COVID-19 crisis emphasize the need for sustained, robust, and more inclusive direct cash payments to those who need emergency money most.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Justice and Witness Ministries | United Church of Christ

**NAC FOCUS AREA: US POLICY THAT AFFECT
GOOD SHEPHERD MISSION WORLDWIDE**

ISSUE: FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES

General Content: Letter to Vice President Biden calling for support a more just and progressive foreign policy. - one that prioritizes diplomacy and multilateralism over militarism. As the Coronavirus pandemic reveals, our country and many others are woefully unprepared for the crisis that we now face. Repealing the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) and respecting congressional war powers, Reducing the Pentagon budget, Engaging with Iran, North Korea, Supporting a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Opposing regime-change interventions and broad-based sanctions, Rejecting discriminatory immigration policies and supporting refugees, Closing Guantanamo, Ending support for governments that violate human rights, Prioritizing diplomacy and avoid militarizing our relations with other rising powers such as Russia and China.

Sent to: Vice President Biden

Sponsored by: one that prioritizes diplomacy and multilateralism over militarism.

ISSUE: GLOBAL MILITARY SPENDING

General Content: The exorbitant amount of money spent on militaries worldwide to be an irresponsible and harmful use of global wealth. U.S military spending must be reduced. We call on the United States to reduce Pentagon spending.

Sent to: Public statement that will be issued as a news release

Sponsored by: American Friends Service Committee

ISSUE: ZERO OUT FUNDING FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERIC INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION - WHINSEC IS THE NEW NAME FOR THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS(SOA)

General Content: Letter on behalf of support of the congressional request to zero out the funding for the Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), 10 U.S.C. Section 343, in the 2021 Defense Appropriations bill. WHINSEC is a Department of Defense institute located in Ft. Benning, Georgia, which primarily trains military and police from countries in the Western Hemisphere. Especially given the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vitally important that Congress prioritize funding public health needs and reduce funding in other areas. Defunding WHINSEC would accomplish this as well as strengthen the security of the United States by ending funding for an institute linked to serious human rights violations. We also urge inclusion of a provision to restore disclosure of the names of WHINSEC graduates.

Sent to: Chairman Visclosky, House of Representatives

Sponsored by: SOA Watch Staff Collective

ISSUE: ENHANCING NORTH KOREA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (ENKHA) ACT

General Content: A request for Enhancing North Korea Humanitarian Assistance (ENKHA) Act to be included in the next legislative relief package for COVID-19.

Sent to: Speaker Pelosi and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy

Sponsored by: American Friends Service Committee

NAC FOCUS AREAS: OTHER RELATED CONCERNS

ISSUE: CORONAVIRUS PACKAGE-4 PRIORITIES

General Content: The package includes the following categories which are further broken down into specific requests: Domestic Human Needs, Criminal Justice, Native Americans, Immigration, Health Care, Voting Rights, Environment, International Assistance, Peace and Security, Disability Justice and Global Debt.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: WISC (Washington Interreligious Staff Community)

ISSUE: COVID-19 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION

General Content: Request for action on collecting, analyzing and reporting detailed demographic data about COVID-19 patients.

Sent to: Members of Congress and HHS Secretary Azar (Two Separate Letters)

Sponsored by: Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum & Trust for America's Health

ISSUE: FUNDING FOR THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

General Content: Without Congressional action, the USPS could become insolvent by the end of September 2020. Because the USPS has long played a crucial role in connecting communities of color to economic opportunity and ensuring that vulnerable populations can stay connected to essential goods and services, we must ensure that this agency has the resources it needs. USPS carriers are delivering masks and respirators to the front lines. They are moving test kits to labs. They are ensuring that seniors and people with disabilities can receive the prescription medication they need to survive.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights