

NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER (NAC) PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS BY U.S. PROVINCE LEADERS: October 2022

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The NAC Focus Areas are issues that primarily impact women, children and families on the margins, including but not limited to human trafficking, immigration, poverty and U.S. policies that affect the Good Shepherd mission worldwide. Related areas include the root causes (that underlie the concern, or current situation). They include but are not limited to: Covid-19, environmental degradation, families, racism, and violence.

NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

ISSUE: DACA RECIPIENT ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH BENEFITS

General Content: Letter asking Secretary Becerra to issue regulations that would make DACA recipients eligible for ACA, Medicaid and CHIP coverage.

Background: .DACA recipients are ineligible for ACA, Medicaid and CHIP coverage because of a proactive decision made by the Obama administration when DACA was created. As a result, hundreds of thousands of immigrants, primarily made up of people of color, are denied access to health insurance. DACA recipients are needlessly disproportionately uninsured. However, the good news is that the Biden administration can make its own decision and issue a regulation expanding coverage eligibility to so many people, without Congress. The newly issued [DACA rule](#) is the precedent for this new push to do so, given DHS explicitly says it's HHS's role to make a decision on this issue. We know the future of DACA is uncertain, but that means if we can get health care for that population, while removing a terrible regulatory precedent, we would be supporting folks while we can.

Sent to: Secretary Becerra

Sponsored by: National Immigration Law Center, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and Unidos US.

ISSUE: TEMPORARY PROTECTIVE STATUS FOR ETHIOPIANS

General Content: A press release/letter from a coalition of 100+ organizations commending the Biden Administration Decision to Designate TPS for Ethiopia

Sent to: Biden Administration

Sponsored by: Masa Group

ISSUE: TITLE 42 TO BE EXPANDED TO EXPEL VENEZUELAN SEEKING REFUGE

General Content: Letter expressing our deep concern over the announcement that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is expanding the use of "Title 42" to expel Venezuelans seeking refuge at the U.S.-Mexico border (with an exception for approx. 24,000 Venezuelans who already have a sponsor in the United States). Though the Biden administration had already promised to end the policy, the letter urges DHS to immediately reverse this Title 42 expansion and invest in expanding our nation's capacity to welcome asylum seekers. This harmful Title 42 policy undermines international and U.S. law by blocking asylum access and sending people directly into harmful and dangerous conditions.

Sent to: Alejandro N. Mayorkas Secretary U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Sponsored by: Church World Service

ISSUE: INCREASED FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM

General Content: The letter urges Congress to increase funding for the critical FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) in Fiscal Year 2023 in light of the unprecedented need for community reception services for migrants seeking safety in border and other communities across the U.S. EFSP provides humanitarian assistance funding to faith-based and other non-profit organizations, states, and municipalities that provide respite and food to immigrants released from ICE or CBP custody. Increased funding is critical to ensure that local communities and service providers can continue to receive and support the basic needs of families and people on the move.

Sent to: Members of Congress
Sponsored by: Women's Refugee Commission

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY/FAMILY

ISSUE: MEDICAID PROGRAM: TEMPORARY INCREASE IN FEDERAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PERCENTAGE (FMAP) IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY (PHE): REOPENING OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

General Content: Request to full rescind 42 C.F.R. #433, 400 which was promulgated in the final days of the Trump administration as an Interim Final Rule (IFR). The IFR largely gutted the continuous coverage protections for Medicaid enrollees during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) passed under Section 6008 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). These protections have been critical for the most vulnerable, particularly elderly and disabled individuals, who continue to be the most impacted by COVID.

Sent to: Director Brooks-LaSure, Center for Medicaid CHIP Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Sponsored by: National Health Law Program

Also: Covid-19

ISSUE: INCREASE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL "PROGRAM" (NON-DEFENSE DISCRETIONARY) FUNDING IN FY 2023

General Content: Letter urging Congress to swiftly approve increases in domestic and international program funding (known as non-defense discretionary, or NDD). The request was to appropriate no less than the NDD amounts proposed by the House of Representatives for Fiscal Year 2023.

Sent to: Members of Congress
Sponsored by: Coalition on Human Needs

ISSUE: CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION BILL

General Content: Letter urging Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Ranking Member John Boozman (R-AR) to quickly negotiate a bipartisan Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) bill that includes reimbursement for an additional meal or snack in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This support will help relieve the strain childcare providers and working families are experiencing.

Sent to: Senate Agriculture Committee

Sponsored by: Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and American Federation of State County and Municipal employees (AFSCME)

ISSUE: CHILD TAX CREDIT

General Content: Last month, the Census Bureau released new data confirming expansions in the Child Tax Credit led to a record decline in child poverty rates, totaling a 46 percent decrease, bringing levels to 5.2 percent in 2021 overall. These figures represent the lowest recorded level of child poverty in recent history. In communities of color, the monthly payments reduced both the Black child poverty rate and the Latinx child poverty rate by 6.3 percent. The expanded Child Tax Credit helped lift millions of children of color out of poverty and is an essential component of any effort to build back for justice. Affirming the result, the letter asks that Congress reinstate the expanded Child Tax Credit and relieve child poverty across the nation in the legislative package this year.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Prosperity Now

- Also: Anti-Racism Focus Area

ISSUE: ADOPTEE CITIZENSHIP ACT

General Content. For 8 years, we along with other advocates have urged passage of the act. In March it passed in the House for the first time and is pending in the senate. We signed on to a second letter this year to request appropriations.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)

NAC FOCUS AREA: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

ISSUE: INTERFAITH LETTER OF GRATITUDE FOR LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS WOMEN FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

General Content: Expressions of gratitude to members of the 117th Congress for passage of VAWA and the Bipartisan Safer Committers Act – bills that centered on the needs of survivors of gender-based violence.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Interfaith Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

**NAC FOCUS AREA: US POLICIES
THAT AFFECTS GOOD SHEPHERD MISSION WORLDWIDE**

ISSUE: KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL ACT, SAFE FROM THE START ACT, AND GIRLS LEAD ACT.

General Content: Sign-on letter to House Majority leadership to support the passage of the Keeping Girls in School Act, Safe from the Start Act, and Girls Lead Act. This letter calls on leadership to take action and support the passage of these bills in this Congress, and to demonstrate its support to advancing gender equality in foreign assistance.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: CARE USA

ISSUE: USING SPORTS MEDIA TO COVER WOMEN/S RIGHT VIOLATIONS, THE YEMAN WAR & HOMOPHOBIA

General Content: On October 6th and 8th, 2022, the U.S. NBA (National Basketball Association) is holding two pre-season games in Abu Dhabi, UAE between the Atlanta Hawks and Milwaukee Bucks. This is an opportunity for us to make demands of NBA executives and generate sports media coverage of the UAE's terrible record of women's rights violations, the Yemen War, and homophobia.

Sent to: NBA (National Basketball Association)

Sponsored by: Freedom Forward

- Also, Poverty/Family Focus Area

ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE FINANCE

General Content: Letter to OMB to ask for higher international climate finance numbers for FY24- and more money for foreign assistance overall. A robust FY24 request is critical -- especially given the uncertainty about FY23 and the need to signal that the US will meet Biden's \$11.4B/year pledge by FY24.

Sent to: OMB

Sponsored by: Save the Children

- Also, Environmental Degradation Focus Area

ISSUE: GLOBAL HEALTH FUNDING

General Content: Letter to encourage Congress' continued support for robust funding for global health; nutrition; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and biosafety and biosecurity programs within the International Affairs (150), the Health and Human Services (550), and the Department of Defense (CTR) global health-related budgets as they consider final Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 appropriations. At a minimum, provide increased investments for these programs, in line with the highest dollar amount.

Sent to: Senate: Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger; House: Chairwoman Lee, and Ranking Member Rogers

Sponsored by: Global Health Council

OTHER RELATED AREAS

AREA: WAR RELATED CONCERNS: NUCLEAR WAR / MILITARY FORCE

General Content: Call to sign a letter to Pres. Biden urging him to pursue diplomacy and dialogue to avoid nuclear war with Russia and to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Sent to: President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Sponsored by: Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

ISSUE: DEPLOYMENT OF MILITARY FORCE IN HAITI

General Content: Letter to President Biden expressing profound concern about the proposed deployment of military force to Haiti and his administration's support for it. It also positive references his 2022 National Security Strategy a commitment to "not use our military to change regimes or remake societies," and encouragement for him to follow through on that commitment in Haiti.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Friends Committee on National Legislation

NOTE: While not in Haiti, many RGS Central American Sisters go there for periods of time to provide service and offer assistance back in Central America to refugees.

AREA: BORDER AGENT AND POLICE BRUTALITY

ISSUE: THE CASE OF ANASTASIO HERNANDEZ ROJAS

General Content: The letter is sent as a court document to be viewed at the hearing on the 2010 case of Anastasio Hernandez Rojas, who was brutally beaten and tasered to death by border agents. Those same border agents obstructed justice by dispersing witnesses, erasing videos that witnesses had taken on their cellphones, intervening in the autopsy and investigative interviews, destroying government video, altering government documents, and mishandling evidence. The case goes before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) on November 4th to determine whether United States law enforcement officials used the power of the state to kill Anastasio, cover it up, and deny the family access to justice. This is the first time the IACHR will hear a case on extrajudicial killing from the United States.

This case is not just about Anastasio; it is about challenging the whole system of law enforcement abuse and impunity in this country. This case is also about Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and the thousands of others who have been killed at the hands of law enforcement in this country. Through this landmark case, the letter hopes to challenge the law enforcement standard for use of force that disproportionately impacts people of color, especially Black and Brown community members.

Sent to: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

Sponsored by: Southern Border Communities Coalition

- Also, Racism Focus Area

STATEMENTS / ACTIONS WITH OTHER GROUPS

ISSUE: STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN IRAN

The statement is a stand in solidarity with those protesting following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, who was arrested by "Morality" police for improper Hijab, are now in their third week. They have turned extremely violent, and all known activists are being targeted for arrest. Prison conditions are abhorrent and dangerous and the lives of prisoners, including many human rights defenders are in danger.

Statement also signed GS International Peace and Justice Office and GSIF on behalf of the entire Congregation. We signed on for our USA representation.

ACTION ALERTS

1. Pass The American Dream and Promise Act
2. Diplomacy Must Be Our Path: Pursuing the path of diplomacy instead of considering nuclear weapons

BLAST EMAILS TO CONGRESS

1. Ukraine: Recent report on 235 Nonviolent Actions of Resistance in Ukraine (Request for Resources)
2. Please oppose R&D Deduction UNLESS it is coupled with CTC/EITC Investments
3. Catholic Letter to President Biden RE: Nuclear Threat in Russian War

AMICUS BRIEF

The case involved Thomas Walker, a Rastafarian who was forced to share his dreadlocks while incarcerated in an Illinois state prison. He sued under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA). The District Court of the Northern District of Illinois found the prison officials' conduct to be "troubling" but dismissed the suit. Mr. Walker has since been released from prison. The appeal is not in the Seventh Circuit, pending that in light of *Tanzin*, (A case that we signed on to for recognition of religious freedom – the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in that case). RLUIPA must be interpreted to permit damages.

OTHER NEWS

A letter was sent to all Mission Partners (sister and lay) with the results of the 2022 Survey they participated in which recommended the focus areas for 2022

FOLLOW UP EXAMPLE: SIGNING-ON MATTERS!

Due in part to our help, the Adoptee Citizenship Act is facing the best shot that it ever has in the 8 years that advocates have been fighting. In March, it passed the House for the first time ever! Unfortunately, this may also be our last shot- at least for a while- with midterms and the impending retirement of our Senate sponsor, Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO). We signed on to a second letter this year to request appropriations.