

# NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS BY U.S. PROVINCE LEADERS: JULY 2021

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## NAC FOCUS AREA: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

### **ISSUE: NORMALIZING THE SYSTEM OF PROSTITUTION AND ITS NEGATIVE AFFECT ON COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**General Content:** The letter points to an announcement in the 2021 TIP (Trafficking in Persons) Report on July 1, where US Secretary of State Blinken's remarks that many trafficking victims were "compelled into 'sex work'." Also, the 2021 TIP Report has a number of references to "sex work/er," including when referring to children. The letter to Congress calls attention to Sec of State Blinken's referral to prostitution as "sex work" during remarks around the Trafficking in Persons Report for 2021. This letter goes to Congressional representatives who have invested in anti-trafficking legislation throughout the years and who understand the dangers of normalizing the system of prostitution and its negative effects on combating human trafficking.

**Sent to:** Members of Congress

**Sponsored by:** Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

## NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

### **ISSUE: END "TITLE 42" EXPULSIONS, WELCOME PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM WITH DIGNITY**

**General Content:** Letter expressing grave concern regarding inhumane barriers to children, families, and individuals seeking asylum in the United States. Specifically, asylum seekers continue to be forcibly expelled from the border and returned to danger under the "Title 42" public health order put in place last year, which uses COVID-19 as an excuse to deny migrants the right to access asylum. As faith leaders representing faith-based organizations assisting with and advocating for asylum seekers and migrant children, we believe in honoring the inherent dignity of all and welcoming all people. Therefore, we urge you to do everything in your power to restore asylum protections, end the inhumane Title 42 policy, and welcome asylum seekers and unaccompanied children.

**Sent to:** President Joseph R. Biden CC: Hon. Antony Blinken Secretary U.S. Department of State. Alejandro Mayorkas Secretary U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**Sponsored by:** Interfaith Immigration Coalition

### **ISSUE: BIDEN ADMINISTRATION ADVOCACY RE: ASYLUM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

**General Content:** Nearly 1,000 Salvadoran and Honduran nationals were deported to Guatemala under the Trump Administration's Asylum Cooperative Agreement (ACA) with that country. In this letter, we are calling on the government to create a process to enable these individuals to meaningfully seek asylum in the United States, and are soliciting sign-ons from other organizations.

**Sent to:** Secretary Mayorkas, Secretary Blinken, and Attorney General Garland

**Sponsored by:** National Immigrant Justice Center

**ISSUE: TEMPORARY STATUS FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES IMPACTED BY HURRICANES ETA AND IOTA.**

**General Content:** NGO letter to the Biden administration calling for TPS for Central American countries impacted by Hurricanes Eta and Iota. In it, we recognize the TPS designations recently announced for Haiti and other countries and urge re-designations for TPS for Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua and a new designation for Guatemala based on the ongoing impacts of the storms on communities in the region and the need to protect TPS beneficiaries in the United States.

**Sent to:** President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, Cc Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas and Secretary of State Antony Blinken

**Sponsored by:** Alianza Americas and the Latin America Working Group (LAWG)

**ISSUE: ADOPT FY2022 BUDGET ALLOWING FOR NEW SPENDING (6TRILLION+)**

**General Content:** Budgets are moral statements. Right now, too many families continue to struggle to balance childcare, family and work, and millions struggle just to make ends meet, all while the ultra-wealthy continue to reap billions without paying their fair share. Communities across the country are demanding a budget resolution that meets the scope and scale of this moment. The letter urges Congress to adopt an FY2022 budget that allows for at least \$6 trillion in new spending through budget reconciliation to deliver for our families, communities, and our nation. The nation needs to recover from the pandemic, decades of racism, challenges like climate change and poverty.

**Sent to:** Members of Congress

**Sponsored by:** Faith in Public Life

- Also: Environmental, Degradation, and Racism

**NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY**

**ISSUE: TAX FAIRNESS IN RECONCILIATION**

**General Content:** With Congress set to roll out a more detailed framework for reconciliation in the next week or so, it is critical that they fix the unfairness in our tax code. For decades, our tax code has favored the wealthy and corporations. Specifically, the letter calls on Congress to raise at least \$4 trillion from corporations and the wealthy over the next ten years to help re-balance our tax code. We are not suggesting that this should limit the size of the reconciliation bill. We know that many on the Hill and our progressive allies are calling for a larger overall package, but the more that is raised through balancing our tax code, the more we can invest in critical programs. Currently, we are at risk of Congress raising \$2 trillion from the wealthy and corporations, which could both limit investments AND ensure the wealthy continue to play by a different set of rules.

**Sent to:** Members of Congress

**Sponsored by:** Center for American Progress.

## **ISSUE: MEDICAID IS YOUR RIGHT ACT**

**General Content:** The bill contains three sections: 1) Medicaid fallback coverage program for low-income adults in non-expansion states, 2) Medicaid fallback coverage program for low-income adults in non-expansion states, and 3) increase and extension of the temporary enhanced FMAP (federal medical assistance percentages) for states which begin to expend amounts for certain mandatory individuals

**Sent to:** Members of Congress

**Sponsored by:** Senator Raphael Warnock (D-GA) and Protect Our Care

## **ISSUE: TAX FAIRNESS – RECOVERY PACKAGE**

**General Content:** In this next recovery package, the letter signed by interfaith groups urges Congress to raise significant revenues in ways that will bring more fairness and equity to our tax code. Specifically, we urge you to consider the following policies:

- Raising the corporate tax rate to 28 percent;
- Restoring the top marginal tax rate to what it was during the Obama presidency;
- Raising the capital gains tax rate to tax wealth like work so wealthy individuals do not get major tax breaks from living off of investment income;
- Prohibiting wealthy families from passing on millions of dollars in income gains completely tax free by eliminated step-up in basis;
- Restoring the estate tax to 2009 levels;
- Closing tax loopholes that allows U.S. corporations to transfer their wealth offshore to avoid paying taxes;
- Establishing a minimum corporate tax rate to prevent large profitable corporations from paying zero in federal income taxes;
- Rolling back many of the tax cuts in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which only benefited the wealthy;
- Invest in IRS enforcement to close the tax gap and crack down on tax evasion by the wealthy.

**Sent to:** Members of Congress

**Sponsored by:** Friends Committee on National Legislation

## **ISSUE: RIGHT TO ORGANIZE ACT**

**General Content:** Letter urging the swift passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize Act. Earlier this year, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 842 and it is time for the Senate to send this critical legislation to President Biden's desk. When left without regulation and enforcement, corporations, employers, and the government have forced the working class to accept poverty wages and stymied the enactment of necessary benefits such as paid family and medical leave. They have allowed income inequality to exponentially rise, leaving essential workers and their families with little to show for their labor.

**Sent to:** Members of the Senate

**Sponsored by:** NETWORK

## NAC: OTHER RELATED AREAS\*

### ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION:

#### **ISSUE:** OAK FLATS – SACRED SITE of SAN CARLOS APACHE TRIBE

**General Content:** Interfaith groups in a letter urge the Biden administration to protect part of the Tonto National Forest that the San Carlos Apache Tribe and others hold as sacred — *Chi'chil Bildagoteel*, loosely translated as Oak Flat in English. In addition to its significant adverse impact on the environment, permitting mining under Oak Flat will permanently destroy this sacred sanctuary and be a loss for religious freedom.

**Sent to:** President Biden and his Administration with CC to; Secretary Thomas Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Deb Haaland, U.S. Department of Interior, Secretary Thomas Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Deb Haaland, U.S. Department of Interior, Susan Rice, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, Melissa Rogers, Senior Director for Faith and Public Policy

**Sponsored by:** BJC Faith Freedom for All

### VIOLENCE:

#### **ISSUE:** POLICE-FREE MENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE

**General Content:** Letter urging the Department of Health and Human Services to issue guidance and provide technical assistance for implementation to states that promote and stress the importance of youth mobile response models that do not involve law enforcement. Mobile response is one service in a continuum of crisis services to rapidly respond to youth and young adults who are experiencing a traumatic event, a mental health condition, and/or crisis in their communities.

**Sent to:** Secretary Becerra, Assistant Secretary Levine, and Assistant Secretary Delphin-Rittmon

**Sponsored by:** Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

- Also, Racism

#### **\*Explanation of RELATED AREAS (Root Causes, implicated in the Concern, or Current Situation)**

These would generally be contained within a FOCUS AREA listed above and noted to assist NAC with statistics for grant writing, etc. **COVID-19, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, FAMILIES, RACISM, VIOLENCE, OTHER**

## AMICUS BRIEFS

### CARE OF UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

Previously we signed on to an amicus brief other faith-related organization to oppose the new regulations that the Trump Administration proposed that would decrease protection for unaccompanied minors who cross the U.S. border seeking safety in our country. The brief was filed.

Since then, the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)—the government agency that is charged with responsibility for unaccompanied minors—is taking steps to move forward with the implementation of some of these problematic regulations.

This letter is for continued support for change on this issue. In general, the problematic areas are:

At its core, the Flores Settlement Agreement requires that children in immigration detention be placed in the least restrictive setting and be guaranteed necessities including appropriate food, medical assistance, legal access, and contact with family members. The Trump-era regulations: (1) give HHS discretion to strip children of unaccompanied child status and the rights that accompany such status, (2) increase the risk that children will unnecessarily be placed in restrictive settings in secure facilities and residential treatment centers (RTCs), and eliminates fairness checks in custody (bond) determinations, (3) deprive children, their custodians, and HHS of independent, ongoing oversight and monitoring, and (4) deny children access to critical legal services.

## SPONSORSHIPS

### **ISSUE: SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE FACING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Support for an Interfaith Prayer Vigil and Memorial scheduled for July 20 from 12:30-2pm to show compassionate solidarity with our sisters and brothers globally facing the COVID-19 pandemic.