

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

Prepared by Brigid Lawlor, RGS

NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

ISSUE: HARM CAUSED BY MUSLIM AND AFRICAN BANS.

General Content: Letter urging the administration to provide relief to those harmed by the Muslim and African Bans. Although we really appreciate President Biden's rescission of the Muslim and African Bans on day one, the administration needs to take steps to address the harm caused by the Muslim and African Bans. They need to redress the harm for those that received visa denials before January 20, 2020, provide guidance to the communities that were denied visas, create a process for diversity lottery visa winners during the period of the bans, and restore consular services.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: No Muslim Ban Ever Campaign, ACLU, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice

- Also, Racism

ISSUE: REVISED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS GOAL

General Content: We signed on to a letter to tell the White house to swiftly honor its commitment to restoring and strengthening the refugee resettlement program by immediately signing a new, revised FY21 Presidential Determination of 62,500.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Church World Service

ISSUE: EXTEND TPS FOR YEMEN BY 18-MONTHS

General Content: DHS must make the decision to re-designate/extend TPS for Yemen by July 5, 2021. DHS must make the decision to re-designate/extend TPS for Yemen by July 5, 2021. This letter will serve as a companion to a Congressional letter led by Rep. Ted Lieu requesting extension and re-designation for TPS for Yemen.

Sent to: Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security and Antony Blinken, Secretary of State

Sponsored by: Masa Group

ISSUE: FINISH PROCESSING TPS CASES AFFECTED BY *SANCHEZ V. MAYORKAS*

General Content: The Supreme Court ruled on Monday, June 7, 2021, that TPS holders cannot use adjustment of status to obtain green cards without first having to leave the U.S. This decision could potentially impact tens of thousands of individuals and families seeking stability and security. The Biden administration must now decide whether to apply the ruling immediately or to wait for the approximately 30 days for the ruling to go into effect when the Court's certified judgment is issued. In those 30 days, the administration has the option of processing all the cases for TPS holders currently in the pipeline under the current law in their jurisdiction. This letter calls on the Biden administration to wait the 30 days and put forth all the resources necessary to process all affected cases in that time. Doing so would help vulnerable individuals

and families who have relied on this opportunity to have their cases processed under the law when they applied and would ensure compliance with the Supreme Court's decision while also prioritizing family unity, humanitarian protection, and American communities and economies.

Sent to: President Biden, Attorney General Merrick Garland, Department of Justice, Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Acting Director Tracy Renaud, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Sponsored by: Alianza Americas

ISSUE: BISHOPS SUPPORT OF CURRENT IMMIGRATION REALITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

General Content: Request that Catholic Organizations who support migrants to sign on to a letter to the leadership of the Catholic Bishops conferences in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the U.S. asking them to provide bold leadership now, while the window of opportunity in Washington is still open. It is a once in a generation opportunity to advance the dignity and well-being of migrants across Central America, Mexico and the United States. If Congress and the White House acted boldly, they could provide a pathway to citizenship for immigrants within the US, humanely welcome desperate migrants as they arrive at the US-Mexico border, and fundamentally shift US policy toward Central America by working with reliable local partners to address the underlying conditions which compel families to flee Central America.

Sent to: Above named conferences of Bishops

Sponsored by: Faith in Action, Hope Border Institute

ISSUE: RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING WORLD REFUGEE DAY

General Content: Sign on asking to declare a Reaffirming the importance of the United States to promote the safety, health, and well-being of refugees and displaced persons.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Church World Service

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY

ISSUE: STRONG FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR THE HOUSE AND SENATE LABOR-HHS APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEES.

General Content: Investments in the Departments of Labor, HHS, and Education are especially important as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to 'build back better.' The funding increases called for in this letter will allow for much-needed expansions to meet critical needs such as childcare, public health, substance use disorder and mental health treatment, home heating and cooling assistance, education from pre-k through college, and innovative job training programs.

Sent to: Sen. Patrick Leahy, Chairman, Richard Shelby, Vice Chairman Senate Committee on Appropriations Committee, and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Chair, Rep. Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations Committee

Sponsored by: The Coalition on Human Needs in conjunction with the Coalition for Health Funding, Committee for Education Funding (CEF), and Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce-

ISSUE: SUPPORT PRESIDENT BIDEN’S TAX PLAN: BUILD BACK BETTER

General Content: President Biden's Build Back Better agenda has directly tied more revenue with more investments. It is critical for our community to back up this agenda, and the tax reform measures he has proposed to make corporations and the wealthy get closer to paying their fair share of taxes. A major corporate lobbying effort is underway to blunt Biden's agenda. It is especially focused on opposing raising the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28% -- every one percentage point increase in the rate raises \$100 billion for investments. Another effort is underway to oppose making the wealthy pay the same higher tax rate on income from selling investments, like stock, as income from workers' wages.

Sent to: Member of Congress

Sponsored by: Americans for Tax Fairness

ISSUE: FY 2022 LABOR-HHS-ED 302(B) (Amount of money appropriations provides)

General Content: Letter to secure a strong funding allocation for the House and Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittees. Investments in the Departments of Labor, HHS, and Education are especially important as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to 'build back better.' The funding increases we called for in this letter will allow for much-needed expansions to meet critical needs such as childcare, public health, substance use disorder and mental health treatment, home heating and cooling assistance, education from pre-k through college, and innovative job training programs.

Sent to: Senate and House Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Appropriations Committee

Sponsored by: Coalition on Human Needs, Coalition for Health Funding, Committee for Education Funding (CEF), and Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce

ISSUE: HEALTHY HOUSING

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eral Content: Letter to support appropriation requests and advocate for healthy housing programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have further demonstrated the connection between housing quality and health outcomes, how these impacts disproportionately affect specific populations including communities of color and low-income communities, and the necessity of investing in addressing healthy housing hazards and poor housing quality. It is now more important than ever to advocate for federal programs that work to protect children and others from housing-related health hazards. funding asks of \$175 million for CDC Center for Environmental Health programs, \$606 million for HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Programs, and \$100 million for EPA programs.

Sent to: House and Senate

Sponsored by: National Center for Health Housing

- Also, Covid-19 and racism

ISSUE: EXPAND MEDICAID

General Content: As Congress prepares for negotiations on healthcare objectives in the upcoming Budget Reconciliation bill, a key goal is ensuring that we build on the success of the American Rescue Plan by passing historic legislation that once and for all ensures all people living in our nation have access to quality, affordable, and equitable health care. The specific objective to move forward include: 1) Closing the Medicaid coverage gap for the 12 states that have refused to expand Medicaid, 2) Renew Medicaid funding to U.S. territories, 3) Expand Medicaid coverage to the immigrants and incarcerated individuals.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Network

ISSUE: Restraining Order Stopping Relief for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Farmers and Ranchers

General Content: Letter deploring the action of an action by a Federal Judge in Wisconsin to stop USDA from distributing the funds provided in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to repay the Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct and guaranteed loans of Black, Indigenous and other farmers of color.

Sent to: Press Release

Sponsored by: Rural Coalition

- Also, Racism

ISSUE: HUD MORATORIUM/FORBEARANCE EXTENSION LETTER

General Content: Letter regarding the FHA foreclosure moratorium and the deadline for FHA borrowers to access COVID-19 forbearance plans, both of which expire on June 30, 2021, pursuant to Mortgagee Letter 2021-05. Letter urges HUD to extend the foreclosure moratorium and the deadline to access forbearance plans to August 31, 2021, for forward mortgages, and to extend this deadline to December 31, 2021 for Home Equity Conversion Mortgages (HECMs, or reverse mortgages).

Sent to: Marcia L. Fudge Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Sponsored by: Americans for Financial Reform Education Fund (AFREF) and National Consumer Law Center

- Also, Covid-19

ISSUE: FARM SYSTEM REFORM ACT

General Content: Letter by faith-based organizations joined by a desire to care righteously and justly for all of God's creation. Seeking a world where humans, animals, and our planet are treated with kindness and respect, we urge you to support the *Farm System Reform Act*, a bill that will soon be re-introduced by Senator Booker and Representative Khanna which would remedy injustices throughout our food system. Key points include: 1) Both workers and animals are treated merely as instruments and objects capable of filling our pockets and bellies, yet undeserving of being treated with dignity, compassion, and worth. 2) Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) have far-reaching negative environmental and public health impacts, causing direct harm to nearby communities, which are often predominantly communities of color.

3) Economic concentration in agriculture has been hurting our independent family farmers and rural communities for decades.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Franciscan Action Network, Senator Bookers Office

- Also, Racism

ISSUE: FOSTERING POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS FOR FOSTER AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT OF 2021

General Content: Without resources and a strong family support system, many foster youth face unique challenges in college. Only 14% of foster youth complete a bachelor's degree within 6 years.

This bipartisan bill would tackle the problem by creating a national center to help colleges implement campus-based supports for these students, such as mentorship programs, housing programs, and life and workforce skills development.

Sent to: Members of the House

Sponsored by: Congressman Dan Kildee (MI-05)

ISSUE: END OIL DRILLING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

General Content: Hundreds of thousands of Los Angeles County residents, predominantly low-income communities of color, live near oil and gas drilling sites. For many of them, just breathing is a serious threat to their health. The letter Los Angeles County asks to amend the County's Title 22 Oil Well Ordinance and update the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District to declare oil drilling a nonconforming use immediately and begin a five-year transition that protects both Los Angeles workers and communities.

Sent to: L.A. County Board of Supervisors

Sponsored by: Center for Biological Diversity

- Also, Environmental Degradation

NAC FOCUS AREA: U.S. POLICIES THAT AFFECT GOOD SHEPHERD MISSION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

ISSUE: CLIMATE FINANCE (US and /International)

General Content: Climate finance is a key part of any climate ambition. In addition to the moral necessity of supporting poor countries who are already facing major climate impacts despite doing little to create the problem, it's a necessity for unlocking the needed mitigation ambition to achieve a global 1.5°C pathway. Unfortunately, developed countries have repeatedly fallen short of their climate finance commitments and the US in particular has been absent under the last administration. It is crucial that Congress starts increasing its appropriations for climate finance, starting this year.

Sent to: US Committee Members: Chairwoman DeLauro and Chairman Leahy

Sponsored by: ActionAid USA, Natural Resource Defense Council, and Oxfam America.

- Also, Poverty

ISSUE: LETTER TO VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS IN PREPARATION FOR TRIP TO MEXICO AND GUATEMALA

General Content: As you prepare to visit Mexico and Guatemala, we would like to recognize some of the Biden-Harris administration's first steps on restoring access to asylum and addressing the root causes of why so many people and families are forced to flee their countries. At the same time, as U.S. faith, humanitarian, and other civil society organizations, many of which have worked with Central American and Mexican civil society partners for decades, we call for more decisive action to meet these urgent challenges. Your upcoming visit is an important moment to underscore that protecting human rights, addressing corruption, and standing with the human rights defenders and communities organizing for change must be central to U.S. strategy towards the northern countries of Central America and Mexico. . .

Sent to: Vice President Kamala Harris

Sponsored by: Latin America Working Group

ISSUE: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S PLAN FOR CENTRAL AMERICA

General Content: Request that the following limitations be placed on the State Department, USAID and other agency's programs in Central America, which is great but now there needs to be a lot of pressure on the committee chairs to adopt this language in next year's spending bills:

1. None of the funds appropriated by this Act for Central America may be used to finance infrastructure or energy projects that contribute to environmental damage, violate labor laws, disregard community land rights (including ancestral Indigenous land rights), are Opposed by local residents, and/or increase private sector participation in the delivery of essential public services such as water, electricity, education, and health care.
2. None of the funds appropriated by this Act for Central America under the heading Development Assistance or Economic Support Fund may be used to promote or incentivize private-public partnership initiatives that could result in the privatization of public services and natural resources.

Sent to: Appropriation Chairs

Sponsored by: Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)

- Also, poverty and racism

ISSUE: STOP THE VIOLENCE AGAINST PROTESTORS IN COLOMBIA AND FOR SUSPENSION OF US SECURITY FUNDING.

General Content: On May 1st, our sisters and brothers in the Colombian labor movement called a general strike to oppose tax increases on workers, and for a more just and equitable nation. The strike caught the imagination of Colombian society, and people started to pour into the streets

to support the striking workers, and call for dramatic changes in Colombia. Protestors have been out every day demanding racial justice, economic equality, better conditions for health care and essential workers, and access to education.

However, the response by the Colombian government to the protests has been brutal. At least 50 workers and protestors have been killed, thousands have been injured. We are in touch with our partner unions. They have reported unbelievable scenes of military helicopters shooting into crowds of striking workers and protestors, and mass arrests of peaceful protestors.

But now, with this extraordinary new wave of violence, we need more action and our partners are clear that the best way to stop Colombian president Duque's actions would come from an intervention by Biden.

Sent to: Secretary of State Blinken and Biden Administration

Sponsored by: Latin America Working Group

- Also, poverty and racism

ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICIES

General Content: Letter calling on G7 countries to stop international fossil fuel finance. It covers the following areas: 1) We can't afford more fossil fuels, 2) Countries must stop international fossil fuel finance immediately, 3) Gas is dirty, expensive, and unnecessary for development, 4) A just recovery must alleviate debt burdens "The COVID-19 crisis has led to instability in oil prices, less investment, and falling government revenues, and as a result, global South debt payments have become even more unsustainable, especially in fossil fuel producing countries. These debt payments are mounting at the same time that countries need to expand healthcare and social protections to deal with the effects of the pandemic. G7 governments must pursue debt cancellation to alleviate this burden. What our governments decide now will set the course for whether we cut global carbon emissions by 2030, stop harming communities with dirty fossil fuel projects, and keep people whole — or fail to protect our planet and communities."

Sent to: Leaders of G7 Countries

Sponsored by: Oil Change International and Oli Change, U.S.

- Also, Poverty and Environmental Degradation

ISSUE: OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENTS PUTIN AND BIDEN IN ADVANCE OF THEIR JUNE 16, 2021 SUMMIT

General Content: Now is the perfect time for you to declare a joint commitment that your nations **will not use nuclear weapons first under any circumstances**, and to make this a key step toward fulfilling the UN goal to totally eliminate nuclear weapons from the planet. We pledge to you - as legislators, former political/military leaders and representatives of multiple civil movements endorsing this goal - to mobilize civil and political support for your effort.

Sent to: Presidents Putin and Biden

Sponsored by: Justice Conference of Women Religious

ISSUE: THE ROOT CAUSES OF FORCED MIGRATION IN HONDURAS (Individual Sister signatures)

General Content: Signatures requested of Women and Men Religious to support a SHARE-sponsored delegation of religious and community leaders traveling to Honduras July 2-12, 2021, at the invitation of Sister Rosa Maria Troches, SSND and Father Ishmael “Melo” Coto, SJ. The purpose of the delegation is twofold: 1. To support a promising local initiative – *Vamos a la Milpa* – to build food security and community bonds. 2. To visit the families of 8 environmentalists from Guapinol unjustly incarcerated for over a year and seek their release.

Vamos a la Milpa draws from the age-old indigenous tradition of planting vegetable gardens of corn, beans, squash, fruit trees, medicinal plants, flowers and more. Not unlike the “victory gardens” planted during WWII in the United States, the campaign is an effort to promote local sources of food and solidarity as communities confront the devastation, dislocation and hunger caused by the recent natural disasters, the endemic violence and corruption plaguing their countries, and the recent hurricanes that further devastated the region. It also brings communities together to demand basic human rights, the rule of law, and due process.

Sent to: Vice-President Kamala Harris

Sponsored by: Share Foundation

- Also, immigration and Poverty

ISSUE: USAID PEACEBUILDING APPROACH

General Content: Letter to USAID Administrator Samantha Power. The letter congratulates her on her confirmation, outlines pressing global challenges, and calls for the integration of conflict prevention and peacebuilding approaches throughout USAID programming, policies, and strategies.

Sent to: USAID Administrator Samantha Power

Sponsored by: Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP)

- Poverty and Violence

ISSUE: GLOBAL AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

General Content: The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program started as a G20 initiative championed by civil society and the Obama administration. The Trump administration decided not to cooperate with other countries in funding it, though it has received partial funding from Germany, Norway and several others. However, to address food security and the disruptions of Covid19, the United States needs to step up. Unfortunately, the Biden administration did not include GAFSP in its first budget proposal. We need to ask Congress to include it.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: ActionAid USA

ISSUE: RIGHT TO WATER IN AMERICAS

General Content: Support of position paper by Pax Christi to launch a campaign on the right to water of communities resisting extractivism in the Americas.

Sent to: Social Media

Sponsored by: Pax Christi International Request to Pax Christi USA

ISSUE: VACCINE TO HAITI

General Content: As the poorest country in the hemisphere, Haiti is least equipped to deal with COVID but the only country to not have received a single vaccine dose. While the U.S. sits on life-saving doses that are expiring. In fact, no date has been set for when Haiti will receive its first vaccines, and the number of doses pledged by the international vaccine program pales in comparison to the need.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Faith in Action

NAC: OTHER RELATED AREAS

Environmental Degradation:

ISSUE: REQUIRE BANKS AND COMPANIES TO DISCLOSE CLIMATE AND RISKS TO INVESTORS AND THE PUBLIC

General Content: Letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) calling for mandatory climate and sustainability disclosures from public companies and banks that raise money in the public markets. These disclosures are important so that investors can make sustainable decisions about their investments that align with their values, and hold corporations accountable for their climate impacts, poor treatment of workers, tax avoidance, and hidden political spending.

Sent to: Securities and Exchange Commission

Sponsored by: Americans for Financial Reform Education Fund

ISSUE: End Fossil Fuel Subsidies

General Content: This is a crucial moment in the fight to end the billions in fossil fuel subsidies that the United States gives every year to oil, gas, and coal producers. There is increasing momentum to eliminate these dirty giveaways, from the climate movement to Congress to the Biden White House.

Sent to: House Speaker Pelosi and Senate Leader Schumer and then shared publicly

Sponsored by: Oil Change International and Oil Change, US

Racism:

ISSUE: CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE (CBO) FAIR ACT

General Content: The CBO FAIR Act would help fulfill one of our shared long-standing goals to push Congress to consider equity more systematically in lawmaking. It requires the Congressional Budget Office to: 1) Perform a distribution analysis by both race and income for all economically significant legislation, showing what effect the proposal would have on Black

Americans, Hispanic Americans, people in the top 1% or bottom 10% and etc. 2) Report on methods for incorporating gender breakdowns into future analyses. 3) Report this analysis in ways that are intelligible to non-specialists, such as by percent change in income. This bill will re-focus policy conversations around equity. It would give institutional credibility to the arguments we make about how bills will help or hurt communities of color and economic inequality.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Washington Center for Equitable Growth

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**

STATEMENTS

Joint Statements with other Advocacy Organizations

ISSUE: CRISES IN MYANMAR

We, Faith-Based communities from around the world, declare our common commitment to stand with the suffering people of Myanmar and call on the country's military to stop the violence, respect the sanctity of all human life, and work towards a just and lasting peace throughout the country based upon the will of the people.

Since the events of 1 February 2021, we have viewed with deepening concern the mounting humanitarian needs and spiraling disregard for human rights that, as always, impact most heavily our most vulnerable sisters and brothers . . .

INITIATED BY: Jesuit Refugee Service, International Office

ISSUE: STATEMENT ON DAVID CASTILLO TRIAL FOR MURDER OF BERTA CÁCERES

The March 2, 2016 murder of Honduran indigenous rights defender Berta Cáceres, Coordinator of the Lenca organization COPINH, provoked indignation in Honduras and around the world. Berta was murdered while supporting Indigenous Lenca communities in opposing the Agua Zarca Hydroelectric Project that was being advanced through a public limited company created for the project, Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA).

The trial of the DESA hydroelectric company CEO and former military intelligence officer David Castillo is underway and is expected to conclude within two weeks. Prior to Castillo's trial, on Nov. 29, 2018, five paid assassins and two former DESA executives were convicted of murdering Berta. Three other prosecutions are related to fraud and abuse of power in the granting of the permits and contracts for the Agua Zarca Hydroelectric Project.

INITIATED BY: Rights and Ecology, Americas Program, Center for Economic and Policy Research, Friendship Office of the Americas, Latin America Working Group Education Fund,

Just Associates, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team.

ISSUE: NGO LAW IN GUATEMALA

The statement takes the form of a letter manifesting grave concerns about the NGO Law in Guatemala, which went into effect on June 21. Several Guatemalan social organizations will present this week legal resources to argue the unconstitutionality of this law. The public statement will be circulated in Guatemala through social media.

INITIATED BY: Latin American Working Group

ISSUE: THE NEED FOR A BOLD BUDGET RESOLUTION

The \$6 trillion should be the floor, not the ceiling, for a bold reconciliation package. The American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan are strong starting points as Congress seeks to address decades of inaction on infrastructure, poverty, the ongoing climate crisis, rising inequality, and a care economy that continues to support us as our country emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 140 million poor and low-income people in this country, disproportionately people of color, have been hit hardest by the pandemic while billionaires have profited enormously. The recent bipartisan framework announced by the White House is insufficient to meet these challenges and must not advance on its own. In the coming weeks, Congress must seize the historic opportunity in the FY2022 budget resolution to build on the Biden Administration's proposals and set the stage for a bold reconciliation package.

INITIATED BY: Economic Policy Institute, Institute for Policy Studies, Poor People's Campaign, and Progressive Caucus Action Fund

Note: Provinces of Myanmar, Central America and Columbia/Venezuela support the work of the National Advocacy done on behalf of the US Provinces