

# ADVOCACY CENTER PRIORITIES AND NAC SIGN-ONS BY U.S. PROVINCE LEADERS MONTH OF: June 2020

Prepared by Brigid Lawlor

## NAC FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

### **ISSUE: OPPOSITION TO THE YAZOO PUMPS**

General Content: This project would destroy tens of thousands of acres of wetlands and create a precedent that threatens our ability to protect waters and public health across the country. The Corps is attempting to build the same project that was vetoed in 2008 under Clean Water Act 404(c), and the Corps has announced that the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement will not look at any alternatives in direct violation of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Sent to: Major General R. Mark Toy, Commander, Mississippi Valley Division  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Colonel Robert A. Hilliard, Commander, Vicksburg District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Sponsored by: Water Protection Network

## NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

### **ISSUE: REINSTATING DACA**

General Content: Letter directed to DHS and USCIS following the SCOTUS DACA decision. The letter calls on DHS/USCIS to immediately reinstate DACA as it was implemented in 2012, put in place a robust outreach and education program, and work with the Senate to immediately pass the American Dream and Promise SUPREME COURT DACA DECISION Act.

Sent to: Chad F. Wolf, Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Joseph Edlow, Deputy Director for Policy, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Sponsored by: Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

### **ISSUE: NEW PROPOSED REGULATIONS THAT AIM TO END ASYLUM -**

General Content: The proposed [regulations](#) aim to overturn U.S. asylum law, making it effectively impossible for people fleeing persecution to obtain protection in the United States. If implemented, the rule would eliminate [gender-based asylum](#)—shutting the door to anyone fleeing life-threatening persecution due to their gender, while undoing decades of legal precedent. Women fleeing rape and severe domestic violence, LGBTQ+ individuals facing deadly attacks, and those escaping other fatal gender-based harms will no longer be allowed to seek safety within our borders if the regulations take effect. Letter opposes the regulations,

Sent to: Open Statement

Sponsored by: Tahirih Justice Center

## COVID-19 RELATED: IMMIGRATION

### **ISSUE: EXECUTIVE ORDER – 112866 - LENGTH OF TIME FOR REVIEW**

General Content: The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review issued a Joint Notice for Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) , which concerns the procedures for asylum and withholding of removal and threshold determinations for credible fear and reasonable fear reviews. This NPRM allows only 30 days for public comments. .Due to the length and complexity of the 161-page rule, combined with public disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the potential impact of this rule on asylum based on religion or fear of religious persecution, the U.S Baha'i Office of Public Affairs, invites your organization to sign-on to the attached letter, which calls for compliance with [Executive Order 12866](#). Executive Order 12866 requires agencies to "...afford the public a meaningful opportunity to comment on any proposed regulation, which in most cases should include a comment period of not less than 60 days."

Sent to: Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration

Sponsored by: Office of Public Affairs| Baha'is of the United States

### **ISSUE: IMMIGRATION POLICIES USING COVID-19 AS AN EXCUSE**

General Content: A letter from Interfaith groups about immigration policies affecting immigrants especially using COVID – 19 as a rationale: 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.

Sent to: Open Statement addressed to U.S, state and local governments

Sponsored by: Anacaona LLC

### **ISSUE: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT, AND THE OMB**

General Content: Letter requesting an extension of the 30-day comment period for the public to respond to sweeping regulatory changes that the government just proposed for cases involving individuals fleeing persecution in their countries and seeking safe haven ("asylum") in the U.S.

The NPRM regs dismantles asylum eligibility for traumatized and vulnerable individuals beyond recognition. As a result, the United States will unlawfully return asylum seekers to grave danger under the rule. The human cost of the rule is beyond measure and demands the most careful research, analysis, and public consultation. It is highly inappropriate to afford the public a mere 30 days for comment on a proposal that violates our domestic laws and international obligations on its face; even more so during an unprecedented global crisis such as COVID-19. To honor the public's right to a meaningful and fair opportunity to respond to the NPRM, consistent with the Executive Orders cited above, the Administrative Procedure Act, and the OMB OIRA's own guidance, a comment period of at least 60 days must be provided.

Sent to: Attorney General Barr, Director McHenry, Assistant Director Reid, Acting Secretary Wolf, Senior Official Mizelle, Senior Official Cuccinelli, Division Chief Dunn, and Administrator Ray

Sponsored by: Tahirih Justice Center

## **NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY**

### **ISSUE: DISCLOSURE OF TAX HAVENS AND OFFSHORING ACT (H.R. 5933 / S. 1609).**

General Content: Ninety-One of the most profitable companies in America -- Amazon, NETFLIX, Starbucks and Pfizer – did not pay taxes last year. This is because they have created so many tax loopholes that they can avoid paying taxes. Meanwhile, there is a need to make sure millions of people are not taxed into poverty. This bill would significantly increase the transparency of corporate tax practices by requiring large, publicly traded corporations to publicly disclose critical information — including profits, taxes, revenues, employees, and tangible assets — on a country-by-country basis. Shining a light on offshore corporate tax practices will act as a major deterrent against the hundreds of billions of dollars in corporate tax avoidance each year. The letter urges Congress to Support Public Country-by-Country Tax Reporting.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Network Lobby

## **COVID-RELATED: POVERTY**

### **ISSUE: OUTREACH TO ENCOURAGE CAREERS IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS.**

General Content: Expanded access to food and nutrition care is crucial for minority populations that have long faced chronic disease health disparities due to socioeconomic inequalities reduced access to health care, healthful foods, and safe places to be active. Communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 simultaneously lack access to diverse allied health providers, including those in nutrition and dietetics who play an instrumental role in improving health equity for people of color. Funding requested for \$300 million in grants for allied health programs and \$10 million for outreach to encourage careers in nutrition and dietetics.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

### **ISSUE: COVID-19 TESTING, REACHING, AND CONTACTING EVERYONE (TRACE) ACT**

General Content: COVID-19 Testing, Reaching, And Contacting Everyone (TRACE) Act – companion legislation to H.R. 6666 introduced by Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL) in the House. The TRACE Act would make substantial headway toward our goal by funding community organizations to deploy mobile COVID-19 testing units in neighborhoods with high case rates and little or no access to tests. I've attached a one-pager on the bill for your information. The ADA has endorsed the bill, and Senator King is looking for additional organizational support

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: American Diabetes Association

### **ISSUE: COVID-19 TESTING**

General Content: It is urgently important that leaders in Congress understand that getting necessary testing and contact tracing to our most vulnerable communities requires a more targeted approach. As we work to find a path toward safely reopening the country, it is imperative

that we address the needs of Americans whose health, socio-economic status, race, and zip code have put them at a disproportionately high risk of dire consequences related to COVID-19.

Sent to: Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy

Sponsored by: American Diabetes Association

**ISSUE: Reclaim Public Medicine for Public Health**

General Content: Far too many people have suffered and died because our medicines and medical products system was not prepared to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with prompt and universal access to reliable tests, treatments, and vaccines. Governments, non-profits, and industry in the U.S. and around the world are working furiously to catch up. But their efforts have been hampered by fundamental flaws in our profit-driven pharmaceutical industry.

For Americans with diabetes, cancer, asthma, infectious diseases, mental illnesses, and a myriad of other health issues, those flaws have been causing suffering and even death for decades. From growing shortages in essential medicines, to lagging innovation, dangerous mislabeling and misbranding, and the highest prices in the world, America's pharmaceutical sector is clearly not meeting the needs of our society. The current crisis has brought these problems into even sharper focus.

Now is the time to redesign our medicines system to effectively, equitably, and rapidly address and anticipate crises like the current pandemic. This can and must be done while also providing a safe, consistent, and affordable supply of essential medicines to all, including persons with health challenges beyond COVID-19. Four steps are offered.

Sent to: Open Letter

Sponsored by: Social Security Works

**ISSUE: OUTREACH TO ENCOURAGE CAREERS IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS.**

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Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

**ISSUE: COVID – 19 IMPACT ON HEALTH AND HOUSING FOR LOW IN-COME RENTERS**

General Content: Urge you to address in the next coronavirus relief package the urgent health and housing needs of America’s lowest-income renter households – 8 million of which were struggling to pay rent and make ends meet before the current coronavirus pandemic and who now are facing increased risks of evictions and homelessness. To avert a surge in evictions and homelessness, we urge you to include in any comprehensive coronavirus relief package the Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization

Sent to: Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy

Sponsored by: Salvation Army National Headquarters

**ISSUE: NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT**

General Content: Senator Bernie Sanders and Representatives Mark Pocan and Barbara Lee plan to offer an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 that would reallocate 10 percent of the bloated Pentagon budget toward severely underfunded human needs priorities - many of which are more critical than ever as our country continues to confront the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Network

**NAC FOCUS AREA: RACISM**

**ISSUE: OPPOSITION TO THE MOTION TO PROCEED ON THE JUSTICE ACT**

General Content: The JUSTICE Act is an inadequate response to the decades of pain, hardship, and devastation that Black people have and continue to endure as a result of systemic racism and lax policies that fail to hold police accountable for misconduct. This bill falls woefully short of the comprehensive reform needed to address the current policing crisis and achieve meaningful law enforcement accountability. It is deeply problematic to meet this moment with a menial incremental approach that offers more funding to police, but few policies to effectively address the constant loss of Black lives at the hands of police. The letter urges the Senate to oppose the JUSTICE Act and vote no on the motion to proceed when this legislation is brought to the floor.

Sent to: Senate

Sponsored by: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

**ISSUE: EXCESSIVE FORCE BY POLICE**

General Content: Letter seeking action from Congress to constrain excessive force and racial profiling by police.

Sent to: Congress

Sponsored by: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

**ISSUE: COALITION LETTER ON GEORGE FLOYD JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT**

General Content: “The Justice Act” - the bill amounts to studies, commissions, data collection, and more incentives to law enforcement to the tune of eight billion dollars. This bill is woefully inadequate. It does not include any of the eight provisions outlined in our previous letter to achieve meaningful accountability. Also, it has allocated 8 billion dollars in new funding state and local law enforcement to do things that they can do with existing Byrne JAG dollars.

Sent to: Senate

Sponsored by: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

**ISSUE: WHITE CLERGY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF ANTOI-BLACKNESS AND FOR RACIAL JUSTICE**

General Content: As White faith leaders and clergy, we are called to take responsibility for our part in the struggle against anti-blackness and for racial justice. ... we will go on a journey of transformation in the weeks and months ahead to ground ourselves in the deep truth that our own liberation and wholeness are woven into the larger struggle for racial justice. We will sojourn in deep solidarity with Black, Brown, Asian/Pacific Islander and Native clergy and faith leaders to embody the beloved community. A list of action steps is included.

Sent to: Declaration published in a variety of sources

Sponsored by: Faith in Action Together

**ISSUE: THE MURDER OF GEORGE FLOYD AND THE NEED FOR PROFOUND REFORM**

General Content: Included here is the first and last paragraph of an interfaith leadership statement: As faith leaders representing a broad array of religious beliefs and faith traditions, we are horrified and outraged by the killing of George Floyd. Yet again, we see the persistent sin of racism that resides within hearts and social structures in the United States, where some people are treated as less than human, where police are too often a source of fear in communities of color rather than a source of protection, and where the sanctity of human life is not upheld. We echo the call of the prophet Amos to “let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24).

Justice can no longer be denied. The stain of a racist system perpetuates violence on black and brown people in the United States each day. We as people of faith are duly bound to follow a spiritual call not to conform but to transform our society by the power of God’s love working through us.

Sent to: Congress

Sponsored by: Church World Service Global

**ISSUE: INVESTIGATION THE BRENNNA TAYLOR POLICE KILLING**

General Content: As part of continued efforts to push for policy reforms as well as justice in recent cases, the Department of Justice is asked to do much more. Attorney General Barr is asked to fulfill his responsibility to uphold federal civil rights laws and be held accountable for the events that led to the needless death of Ms. Taylor and so many others.

Sent to: Attorney General Barr

Sponsored by: Civil Rights.Org

**ISSUE: INVESTIGATION OF THE GEORGE FLOYD POLICE KILLING**

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Sent to: Attorney General Barr

Sponsored by: Civil Rights.Org

**ISSUE: HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HEARING ON POLICE BRUTALITY & RACIAL PROFILING – INTERFAITH STATEMENT**

General Content: A Statement by the Interfaith Criminal Justice Coalition Policing Letter includes a summary of racism and discrimination in the U.S.; and, a call to Congress to end the injustice and lists processes and regulations that could be used. It recognizes that in addition to these, more is needed. “No lives matter until black lives matter” is the conclusion.

Sent to: Congress

Sponsored by: Interfaith Criminal Justice Coalition

**ISSUE: PROTECT (POLICE RECEIVING OVERLY TRAUMATIZING EQUIPMENT CHANGES TODAY) ACT.**

General Content: This bill is an expansion of H.R. 1714. The bill creates a *Gear for Grants* Program, which incentivizes state and local police to give back their equipment by creating a new grant that will prioritize states that have (1) not received gear in the past 12 months and (2) gives back gear to the Department of Defense. It also severely any future transfers. This grant program will provide money for racial bias training, de-escalation methods, cultural sensitivity training, use of non-lethal force, and body camera purchases.

Sent to: Members of the House of Representatives

Sponsored by: Congresswoman Deb Haaland (NM-1)

**ISSUE: END MILITARY EQUIPMENT TRANSFERS TO POLICE ACT**

General Content: An increasingly militarized law enforcement increases the prevalence of police violence without making communities safer. This bill would restrict the most militaristic weapons from being transferred to or purchased by law enforcement, without prohibiting other equipment that may be needed.

Sent to: Members of the Senate

Sponsored by: Office of U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI)

**ISSUE: FY2021 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT**

General Content: Support of ending the Department of Defense's 1033 Program and associated transfers of all military equipment and vehicles to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. The military surplus equipment transfer program--known as the "1033 Program" was formally established in the 1997 FY National Defense Authorization Act. Since its inception, more than \$7.4 billion in surplus military equipment and goods --including armored vehicles, rifles, and aircraft-- have been transferred to more than 8,000 law enforcement agencies. The program came to national attention in the aftermath of the killing of Michael Brown in 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri. Since then, Congressional leaders have tried to reform or end this program that has caused an increase in militarized policing particularly in communities of color. Therefore, the letter urges the HAS Committee to use the opportunity of the full markup of the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act to support and include language to end the Department of Defense's 1033 Program.

Sent to: House Armed Services Committee Members

Sponsored by: Demand Progress

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

**ISSUE: OPPOSITION TO MEASURES AGAINST THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

General Content: The International Criminal Court exists because it is difficult to hold government officials and other powerful actors accountable when they commit grave human rights abuses. That impunity, in turn, is corrosive to the broader rule of law, the prospects of lasting peace, and respect for the dignity of all. Since the ICC's establishment in 2002 as a court of last resort, diverse coalitions of faith-based organizations, human rights advocates, legal practitioners, victims of atrocities, and other constituencies have often looked to it to complement and reinforce their work for justice. We urge the administration to reverse the steps it has announced, and we urge members of Congress to clearly and publicly oppose this policy. Letter urges the administration to reverse the steps it has announced, and we urge members of Congress to clearly and publicly oppose this policy.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Washington Working Group on the International Criminal Court

## **ISSUE: PALESTINIANS AND ISRAEL PROGRESSIVE POLICY**

General Content: A letter to Joe Biden and Donald Trump about what a progressive policy towards Palestinians and Israel would look like. What many American voters, including many Jewish voters, young voters, and voters of color are looking for in presidential candidates includes: \* explicit opposition to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and its unlawful blockade (abetted by Egypt) of the Gaza Strip; \* recognition of Israel's obligations toward the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, a protected population, according to international law; \* support for conditioning U.S. military funding to Israel on an end to Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and adherence to all relevant U.S. laws, including the Arms Export Control Act and the Leahy Law; \* support for H.R. 2407, the "Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act," sponsored by Representative Betty McCollum, to ensure that no U.S. dollars contribute to Israel's a military detention, interrogation, abuse and/or other ill-treatment of Palestinian children;\* calling on Israel's government to repeal the Jewish Nation-State Basic Law and to ensure that Palestinian citizens of Israel and other non-Jewish citizens in the country enjoy equal rights with Jewish citizens by passing a basic law guaranteeing those rights;\* opposition to the use of U.S. security assistance against protected populations, including in Gaza, and calling on Israel's government to protect civilians from settler violence; \* support for Palestinian refugee rights consistent with international law and relevant UN resolutions; \* promise to relocate the U.S. Embassy back to Tel Aviv until such time as the international status of East Jerusalem has changed from its current status as occupied territory;\* a promise to provide full U.S. cooperation with the International Criminal Court's investigation into alleged war crimes committed by all sides in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip; \* rejection of U.S. recognition of Israeli sovereignty over any territories now occupied, absent an internationally recognized final agreement with the Palestinians. \* a promise to reduce regional tensions and enhance regional stability by restoring U.S. support for and participation in the Iranian nuclear agreement (The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action).

Sent to: Former Vice President Joe Biden and President Donald Trump about what a progressive policy towards Palestinians and Israel would look like

Sponsored by: Demand Progress

## **COVID-19: US POLICIES THAT AFFECT OUR MISSION IN OTHER COUNTRIES**

### **ISSUE: AID TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

General Content: Latin America and the Caribbean are now the epicenter of the pandemic. The latest emergency package did not include global aid to address the pandemic. To make matters worse for Latin America, the Administration is actually in arrears to the Pan American Health Organization, which is both an independent organization and the affiliate of the WHO for Latin America and the Caribbean-- in essence, the CDC for the Americas. This letter to Senate and House leadership encourages inclusion of global aid, including specific aid for Latin America for health services and food security, in the next spending package.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Latin America Working Group

**ISSUE: CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD FOR JUNE 17 HEARING ON “THE 2020 TRADE POLICY AGENDA”**

General Content: Now is the time for profound change in global trade rules that prioritize the planet, and human rights and dignity over profit. We share a vision and understanding that trade and development can help lift communities out of poverty

Six Principles Lists in addressing the Trade Policy: 1) Protect Human Rights and the Earth over Corporate Rights, 2) Center the Voices of People, 3) Promote the Dignity of Work, 4) Uphold Environmental Protections as Faithful Stewards of the Earth, 5) Protect Human Health, 6) Promote Policies to End Hunger. CoVID-19 has hindered the adequate responses in our trade agreements.

Sent to: Chairman Neal, Ranking Member Brady, and Members of the House Ways & Means Committee

Sponsored by: LCWR, Network, NAC, Colomaban Center for Advocacy and Outreach, Maryknoll, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces

**NAC: OTHER RELATED AREAS**

**ISSUE: PUBLICLY DENOUNCE ANY EFFORTS TO MUZZLE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND HOSPITAL SUPPORT WORKER**

General Content: A repeat of a letter issued in March and in light of the increased number of COVOD=19 cases, urging the American Hospital Association to publicly denounce any efforts to muzzle healthcare professionals and hospital support workers. The AHA must call on its member hospitals and healthcare systems to encourage their doctors, nurses, and other hospital workers to speak freely about scarce hospital supplies, COVID-19 patient caseloads, inadequate staffing, and any other challenges that put worker safety at risk that should be immediately addressed.

Sent to: Richard J. Pollack, President and Chief Executive Officer, American Hospital Association

Sponsored by: Public Citizen

<b>SUMMARY June 2021</b>		<b>COVID-19</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Environmental Degradation	1		1
Immigration	2	3	5
Poverty	1	7	8
Racism	11		11
US Police Affecting Other Countries	2	2	4
Other Related Areas		1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>