

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

Prepared by Brigid Lawlor, RGS

COVID – 19 RELATED

NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

ISSUE: DEPORTATIONS AND EXPULSIONS

General Content: 1) Halt all deportations and expulsions, which are occurring in violation of U.S. law and international treaties and end the misuse of Title 42 public health authority and other border policies that block Black asylum seekers from requesting U.S. refugee protection. 2) Release individuals and families from immigration detention centers using existing parole and other legal authority so that they can safely shelter with family and communities as they wait for their cases to be decided. 2) Designate or redesignate Temporary Protected Status for people from countries experiencing civil, political, or humanitarian crises that make it unsafe for them to return, including for the majority Black countries of Haiti, the Bahamas, Cameroon, Guinea, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan, and ensure the fair and efficient administration of the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness program. 4) Revoke illegal Trump administration asylum policies and rulings to restore U.S. asylum protections and ensure that asylum claims are fully and fairly adjudicated and that members of our communities are afforded their due process rights. 5) Ensure that people seeking safety in the United States who were unjustly or unlawfully deported or expelled can return to seek protection without delay or other roadblocks to their due process rights.

Sent to: President Biden and DHS Secretary Mayorkas and Acting Secretary Cochran

Sponsored by: Communities United for Status and Protection (CUSP)

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY/FAMILIES

ISSUE: PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE SAVES LIVES ACT

General Content: The Public Health Infrastructure Saves Lives Act would establish a Core Public Health Infrastructure Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), awarding grants to state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments to ensure they have the tools, workforce, and systems in place to address existing and emerging health threats and reduce health disparities. Specifically, the bill would provide dedicated funding for SLTT public health capabilities, ramping up from \$750M in FY22 to \$4.5B per year by FY26. The program would provide formula and competitive grants to health agencies to invest in core public health infrastructure, in areas such as assessment, all-hazards preparedness, policy development, communications, community partnership, organizational competencies, accountability, and equity. These are the cross-cutting capabilities that enable public health departments to successfully implement a range of programs and services across the public health spectrum, as well as strengthen the pandemic response.

Sent to: Members of the Senate

Sponsored by: Trust for America's Health

ISSUE: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

General Content: Letter to HHS as it implements COVID response funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, to continue to prioritize funding for communities that have been disproportionately impacted.

Sent to: Newly confirmed HHS Secretary Becerra and CDC Director Walensky

Sponsored by: Trust for America's Health

ISSUE: RECOVERY ACT PRIORITIES

General Content: Letter to the White House, articulating priorities for the next recovery/infrastructure/jobs bill. The request highlights 1) Support workers and families; 2) Invest in sustainable infrastructure, specifically housing infrastructure and access to high-speed internet; and, 3) Create good jobs.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Friends Committee on National Legislation

ISSUE: PAID LEAVE

General Content: Paid leave undergirds other care systems and supports. It is an issue of racial justice, gender equity, disability rights, small business support, public health, economic growth and justice. It's important to rural workers, frontline workers, parents, caregivers, and every working family in this country. It has broad bipartisan support. It is both transformative

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

Sponsored by: Paid Leave for all and Catholic Labor Network

ISSUE: THE RECOVERY PLAN

General Content: Letter to President Biden and VP Harris, seeking fair revenues so that the Recovery Plan to come is of the scope needed, including strengthening of our human infrastructure. this request is very important for three reasons: 1) The more revenue BBB raises the more money there will be for investments. 2) Raising taxes on the rich and corporations -- a fair share tax system -- is central to creating a just economy that provides racial and gender equity. 3) It is good politics: if we can get a BBB agenda passed that begins to create a fairer tax system, we are further discrediting the supply-side trickle-down tax cuts narrative of the last 40 years and creating a new narrative centered on a government that invests in people and communities by making the rich and corporations pay their fair share of taxes.

Sent to: President Biden and Vice-President Harris

Sponsored by: Americans for Tax Fairness

ISSUE: CDC'S REACH PROGRAM FUNDING IN FY 2022

General Content: The letter request that both the Senate and House Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education committees promote the health of all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, urge you to provide at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program. More specifically, we request \$75.5 million for CDC's REACH grant program and \$27 million for its

affiliated program Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) to address the disproportionate impact of chronic disease on racial and ethnic populations in urban, rural and tribal areas.

Sent to: Chairwomen DeLauro and Murray and Ranking Members Cole and Blunt

Sponsored by: Society for Public Health Education

- Also addresses racism

ISSUE: CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING RECOVERY LETTER

General Content: A letter to the administration thanking them for their heir leadership to secure the more than \$50 billion total in child care relief, and laying out what's needed to build back better in the recovery to ensure that children can thrive, early educators—virtually all women and disproportionately BIPOC women--are valued, and that parents—especially mothers—are able to fully participate in our economic recovery. This investment is not only essential for our nation's economic recovery, it's a critical part of racial and gender justice.

Sent to: President Biden and Vice President Harris:

Sponsored by: CLASP

NAC FOCUS AREA: RACISM

ISSUE: COVID-19 RELIEF PACKAGE

General Content: Congress faces one question: Will we allow this pandemic to further increase longstanding racial and geographic disparities, or will we finally make the choice to prioritize an equitable rescue and recovery for our communities and our nation? The House Bill addressed these injustices and paves the way for states to expand Medicaid access.

Sent to: Members of the Senate

Sponsored by: NETWORK

- Also Poverty Focus area

ISSUE: FUNDING THAT SUPPORTS ALL PEOPLE

General Content: Letter showing support for the CDC's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program in previous years and urging Congress to fund at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, including \$75.5 million to continue scaling to all states and U.S. territories and support grantees in building capacity for collaboration and disseminating evidence-based strategies in communities for the CDC REACH funding and GHWIC at \$27 million to expand Tribal Epidemiology Centers for Public Health Infrastructure and continue the program's important work. Letter ends with thanking them for their support for the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities to create a healthy and equitable future for all.

Sent to: Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman and Tome Cole, Ranking Members of Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education and Committee on Appropriations Committee - U.S. House of Representatives, and Patty Murray Chairwoman, Roy Blunt, Ranking Member of Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education and Committee on Appropriations Committee – U.S. Senate

Sponsored by: Society for Public Health Education, Tom Cole, Ranking Member,

NON COVID-19

NAC FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

ISSUE: CLEAR AIR ACT

General Content: The Clean Air Act petition is designed to cut methane and ethane emissions from the fossil fuel industry, which are precursors to smog. While other precursors to smog have been regulated under the CAA for years, methane and ethane have received a free pass despite their contribution to climate change and serious public health harms. Smog can cause asthma, which afflicts 1 in 13 Americans. It is time for the EPA to close this loophole by regulating methane and ethane as volatile organic compounds under the Clean Air Act.

Sent to: Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Assistant Administrator Office of Air and Radiation

Sponsored by: Center for Biological Diversity

ISSUE: JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST, BERTA CACERES

General Content: Letter expresses concern about the repeated delays in the trial of David Castillo, who is accused of being the mastermind behind the assassination of Honduran indigenous leader and environmental activist Berta Cáceres five years ago. There is equal concern for the safety of the Cáceres family and members of the organization she founded, COPINH. We urge that you request that the Secretary of State impress upon the Honduran government the importance of a transparent, expeditious trial in this case and to guarantee the safety of the Cáceres family and their lawyers during the trial.

Sent to: The Hon. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State

Sponsored by: OXFAM

NAC FOCUS AREA: IMMIGRATION

ISSUE: END THE PUBLIC CHARGE RULE

General Content: Letter urging the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to end the Trump Administration's public charge rule by directing the Department of Justice to withdraw its appeals on litigation challenging the Trump DHS public charge regulations, while DHS moves forward on regulatory action.

Sent to: Hon. Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Sponsored by: Protecting Immigrant Families

ISSUE: PROTECTION FOR REFUGEES

General Content: The Biden administration has already proposed and met with Congress to discuss increasing the refugee admissions goal for this year to 62,500 to meet the unprecedented

and ever evolving refugee crisis. It is vital that President Biden sign the revised refugee admissions goal for FY21 and restore regional allocations based on vulnerability and need as soon as possible. Urgently signing the new refugee admissions goal will prevent the cancelation of travel for hundreds of refugees scheduled to arrive over the coming weeks and reverse much of the damage done to the resettlement program under the previous administration.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Church World Service

ISSUE: UNJUST CONFINEMENT BY ICE

General Content: Letter in support of Wilmer Elias-Mendoza, a disabled Honduran asylum-seeker and victim of trafficking who has been held in solitary confinement for nearly 3 weeks. He has been detained for over 2 years after being unjustly criminalized under the ICE priorities set by the Trump Administration, and has experienced medical and mental health neglect. Wilmer's situation is emblematic of how the new Biden guidelines regarding immigration enforcement are not being properly applied to those who are already detained. For Wilmer, and for many migrants who have endured prolonged detention under the cruel Trump policies, nothing has changed.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

- Also Human Trafficking focus area

ISSUE: COMMUNITIES NOT CAGES

General Content: A call on this administration to begin the long overdue process of phasing out the use of detention from our immigration system. Letter asking the administration to urge Congress and the new administration to take swift moral action towards ending immigration detention, beginning with ending the contracts and closing the first ten detention centers listed below, and move our nation in the direction towards humane treatment and effective community alternatives to detention.

Sent to: President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Mayorkas,

Sponsored by: Immigration for Human Integrity

ISSUE: DIGNITY FOR DETAINED IMMIGRANTS ACT OF 2021

General Content: To provide standards for facilities at which aliens in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security are detained, and for other purposes such as: Seeking alternatives, restrictions on construction, appearance of detained aliens for other legal matters. procedures for detaining aliens, apprehension and detentions, prohibition of solitary confinement.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Amnesty Int'l USA

ISSUE: PHASING OUT DETENTION

General Content: Request to the Biden administration to begin the long overdue process of phasing out the use of detention from our immigration system in order to create community-based alternatives to detention during their first 100 days in office.

Sent to: Biden Administration

Sponsored by: Church World Service

ISSUE: REFUGEE ADMISSIONS GOAL

General Content: Letter to President Biden urging that the administration promptly sign an updated refugee admissions goal for FY21 and lift the restrictive allocations currently in place. The revised FY21 refugee admissions goal of 62,500 and restore regional allocations based on vulnerability and need. Each day that passes without this signed executive action is another day that hundreds of particularly vulnerable refugees are forced to wait to be resettled. Urgently signing the new refugee admissions goal will honor President Biden's promise to protect refugee families - and reverse much of the damage done to the resettlement program under the previous administration.

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Refugee Council USA

ISSUE: END DISENTANGLEMENT BETWEEN ICE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

General Content: Letter petitioning to end three programs and practices by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that harm our families and jeopardize community bonds: the 287(g) program, Secure Communities, and ICE detainers. Families should not have to live in fear that local officials meant to help them in emergencies could actually send them or a loved one to ICE to be deported. It's time to end ICE's use of state and local resources and our faith support will be important.

Sent to: Secretary Mayorkas

Sponsored by: Faith in Public Life and the ACLU

NAC FOCUS AREA: POVERTY/FAMILIES

ISSUE: SUMMER MEALS ACT

General Content: Key provisions of the Summer Meals Act include: improve the area eligibility test by lowering it from 50 percent to 40 percent to allow more low-income communities to provide summer meals; allow nonprofit and local government agencies to provide meals year-round through the Summer Food Service Program; allow all sites to serve three meals; and provide grant funding to support efforts to reach underserved areas.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

ISSUE: CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

General Content: Letter to Congress urging them to support the Congressional Review Act that challenges the OCC's final rule, "National Banks and Federal Savings Associations as Lenders," which will unleash predatory lending in all fifty states. It will eviscerate the power of state interest rate caps and rid state regulators of the single most effective tool to protect consumers from predatory lending.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: National Consumer Law Center

ISSUE: EVERY CHILD DESERVES A FAMILY ACT

General Content: Together, we can help increase the access of all children to affirming, loving and stable homes. Currently, LGBTQ+ parents are four times more likely to have our children removed by the state, simply due to discrimination. And, one in three foster children identify as LGBTQ+, but have much worse experience in care, with fewer family placements and higher rates of residential facility placement, homelessness, being trafficked, and aging out of care without a family. Civil rights icon John Lewis was the lead sponsor of the Act for eight years.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: NETWORK

ISSUE: MAKE THE CTC EXPANSIONS PERMANENT AND REACHING ALL KIDS IN NEED

General Content: In a letter to the Administration is urged to include critical improvements and reforms to expand it to all children who need it and to ensure that the money follows the child to create a true, direct child allowance program. This is a public investment deeply connected to racial justice, child and family well-being, and families and children living in poverty and hard to reach populations.

Sent to: President Biden and Secretary Yellen

Sponsored by: Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)

NAC FOCUS AREA: RACISM

ISSUE: JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT OF 2020

General Content: This bill is a revision to one that NAC/RGS signed on to previously. It addresses a wide range of policies and issues regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability. It includes measures to increase accountability for law enforcement misconduct, to enhance transparency and data collection, and to eliminate discriminatory policing practices. The bill also creates a national registry—the National Police Misconduct Registry—to compile data on complaints and records of police misconduct. It establishes a framework to prohibit racial profiling.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: House Democratic Caucus, Chairman Hakeem Jeffries

ISSUE: FOR THE PEOPLE ACT (H.R.1)

General Content: Faith -based advocates and congregations strive for policies that diminish inequality, support the most vulnerable, nurture human potential, root out systemic racism, and protect the health and well-being of all members of our society and of creation. A broken democracy has clear and detrimental impacts on the issues important to us. The democratic systems that underlie our advocacy no longer seem capable of contending with the big problems facing our country, our communities, and our congregations.

Sent to: Members of the House of Representatives

Sponsored by: NETWORK

ISSUE: NO BAN ACT

General Content: The No Ban Act would: 1) Require the executive branch to meet a more stringent and reasonable standard before issuing future bans. Under current law, the executive branch claims the authority to bar the entry of large groups of people, including entire nationalities, without effective accountability or regard for the policies codified in other parts of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Rather than continue to use this dangerously overbroad standard, the NO BAN Act would require the executive branch to meet a standard based on "specific and credible facts" that any suspension of or restriction from entry must be connected to "specific acts" that have actually occurred. Furthermore, the bill requires that any such suspension or restriction meet a compelling government interest and that the government use the least restrictive means in doing so. 2) Establish a system of checks and balances whereby Congress would be routinely notified and briefed on the status, implementation, and constitutional and legislative authority of executive branch actions. 3) Expand the non-discrimination provision of the INA by prohibiting discrimination based on religion. This bill is a significant step forward for Muslim and African communities and others who could be targeted and discriminated against in the future.

Sent to: Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer

Sponsored by: National Immigration Law Center

- Also: Immigration Focus Area

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

ISSUE: FY 22 PROPOSED PENTAGON BUDGET CUTS

General Content: bipartisan letter/ identifying approximately \$80 billion in savings from the Pentagon budget in the next fiscal year. The letter is addressed to Congress and CCd to Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks as the Biden admin is finalizing its first budget, Hicks is leading DOD in a priority-setting exercise, Experts in are hoping to expand the political space/pressure for Congress and the Administration to lower Pentagon spending.

Sent to: Members of Congress and CCd to Deputy Sec Def Kathleen Hicks

Sponsored by: People over Pentagon

NAC FOCUS AREA: VIOLENCE

ISSUE: TO PREVENT AND REDUCE VIOLENT CONFLICT AND BUILD PEACE IN THE UNITED STATES

General Content: Request for the allocation of dedicated and robust funding to reduce and prevent violent conflict, rebuild our democratic institutions, and build sustainable peace. Proliferation of misinformation, systemic injustice, and economic inequality exacerbated by the global pandemic are driving the grievances and conflict in the United States. Recommended amounts and usage: \$40 million in terrorism prevention grants; allocating \$10 million for research and pilot programs to support trauma and mental health program linked to the commission of violent extremism; \$40 million for Community Relations Services; \$31 million per year for five years to support a pilot program within the Department of Justice modeled upon the U.S. Agency for International Development's acclaimed "people to people reconciliation program.;" \$10 million for this research and pilot programming aimed at understanding the impact of policing on communities, changing police culture and community-based education around policing.

Sent to: Members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations

Sponsored by: Alliance for Peacebuilding

ISSUE: MILITARY STRIKE IN IRAN

General Content: In response to the recent strike in Iran by the US military in which 22 people were killed, a letter was sent by faith groups to President Biden. "As people of faith, we have a deep sense of the sacred dignity of all people. We also have a clear conviction of our sacred call as human beings to seek all possible creative, nonviolent approaches to transform conflict and meet the needs for accountability." The need for a broader more adequate moral analysis to determine strategy and action in such situations was demanded. "It is not a coincidence that our Black, indigenous and people of color community in the U.S. suffers from this retributive focus in our criminal justice system, and that people in the Middle East, particularly Iran and Syria, have been consistently suffering from these retributive acts of human destruction. Our habits, policies, and institutions of systemic racism are a notable aspect of this reality. With your Administration's commitment to addressing racial justice and equity, we ask you to apply that in foreign policy as well and shift away from these patterns."

Sent to: President Biden

Sponsored by: Justice and Peace Studies at Georgetown University

- Also: Racism, and U.S. Policies that affect other countries focuses

ISSUE: STOP MILITARIZING LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2021

General Content: The Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement language would preserve the important distinction between our military and our police by ending transfers of certain destructive and aggressive military equipment to local law enforcement. This text is the very same language included in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 and 2021, excepting a small technical change to conform to the codification of the FY21 NDAA.

Decades of militarization of our police forces have led to our local police looking more like an occupying army than a community-based regulatory arm of state and local governments. The

images from the civil rights demonstrations last summer show irrefutable proof of our police forces' increasing aggression and brutality – images of local police in military formations, with military-style weaponry trained on citizens exercising their constitutional rights. While this is a multi-layered issue, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act language goes a long way in demilitarizing our police forces while not sacrificing the safety of our communities.

Sent to: Members of the House for affirmation to send to President Biden

Sponsored by: Rep. Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr.

NAC FOCUS AREA: OTHER RELATED CONCERNS

ISSUE: NO TAX BREAKS FOR OUTSOURCING ACT

General Content: The act includes: The No Tax Breaks for Outsourcing Act (NTBOA) would ensure that U.S. multinational companies pay at least the U.S. statutory rate on income in every country in which they operate. In doing so, the NTBOA is expected to raise at least \$770 billion in taxes over the next ten years.

Sent to: House of Representatives

Sponsored by: The FACT Coalition, Americans for Tax Fairness, the AFL-CIO, Oxfam America, and Public Citizen

ISSUE: PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE (PRO) ACT

General Content: The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. The PRO Act would go a long way toward restoring workers' right to organize and bargain collectively by streamlining the process for forming a union, ensuring that new unions are able to negotiate a first collective bargaining agreement, and holding employers accountable when they violate workers' rights.

Sent to: Members of Congress

Sponsored by: Economic Policy Institute and National Employment Law Project

ISSUE: HUMAN RIGHTS - MYANMAR

General Content: The letter was initiated by the Women's Peace Network an organization in Myanmar which seeks to "...protect the rights, enhance the status, and increase the inclusion of marginalized women, youth, and communities in the Rakhine state and across Myanmar, so that they can live peacefully and prosperously."

Sent to: UN Security Council - Commission on the Status of Women

Sponsored by: Congregation of St. Joseph

ISSUE: OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

General Content: The proposed office would be tasked with facilitating engagement with faith leaders and communities from the US and globally to offer input and moral reflection focused on DOD policy, strategy, programs, and training from perspectives outside the chain of command. Such exchange would benefit all parties and improve the methods of defense. The office would do this by allowing key decision-makers within the Department of Defense

to connect to faith leaders; exchange information about relevant meetings, events, and conferences; as well as offer a point of contact with other faith-based offices such as State, USAID, and the White House.

Sent to: White House Office of Faith-Based Partnerships, Ms. Melissa Rogers, Ex Dir, and Mr. Josh Dickson, Deputy Director

Sponsored by: Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

ISSUE: 1033 REPEAL BILL (DEMILITARIZING LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT)

General Content: Support for reintroducing a bill to end the Pentagon's 1033 Program and helping to build support for it. The bill would repeal the military surplus program.

Sent to: House of Representatives through the office of Rep. Velasquez who designed the bill.

Sponsored by: Rep. Velasquez

ISSUE: HOLD MYANMAR MILITARY ACCOUNTABLE FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

General Content: Letter urging the UN Security Council to hold the Myanmar military and security forces accountable by adopting a resolution to 1. Refer the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court in order hold the Myanmar military and security forces accountable for committing crimes, including rape and sexual violence, under international law. 2. Dispatch a monitoring and mediation body to Myanmar in response to the Myanmar military and security forces' increasing use of violence against peaceful protesters, including women. 3. Impose targeted economic sanctions and financial penalties and restrictions on the junta leadership and businesses that are owned and controlled by the Myanmar military. 4. Impose a comprehensive and global arms embargo on Myanmar.

Sent to: President and Members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council

Sponsored by: Women's Peace Network

STATEMENTS

Joint Statements with other Advocacy Organizations:

DEMOCRACY IN MYANMAR

U.S. Catholic Organizations Raise Our Voices for Democracy in Myanmar. We, the undersigned national Catholic organizations in the United States, stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in their fervent hope for democracy and peace. We call on President Biden and Congress to hear their cry and issue targeted sanctions against businesses owned by the military and work with other countries to impose a global arms embargo to support the nonviolent resistance to the military coup.

‘As Catholic sisters, brothers, priests, and laity in the United States, we join our voices as well to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, who have members in Myanmar.’

Coordinated by: Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS

Statement by organizations in response to the eight people killed at three different spas in North Georgia including six Asian women. Signers stand firm in decrying misogyny, systemic violence, and white supremacy. Call to invest in long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence and hate in our community. Signers reject increased police presence or carceral solutions as the answers.

Coordinated by: Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Justice – Atlanta and Georgia NAACP

Joint Statement by Religious Leaders

CALL FOR PEOPLE'S VACCINE

As religious leaders, we bear witness to the personal stories behind the Covid statistics. We hear the cries, shared with us each day, of the suffering, the frightened and the bereaved.

We witness to the profound love shown by those working on the frontlines, and by those who reach out to help their neighbors.

The Covid crisis reminds us all of our interdependence, and of our responsibilities to care for one another. We can each only be well when all of us are well. If one part of the world is left to suffer the pandemic, all parts of the world will be put at ever-increasing risk.

People's access to life-saving vaccines cannot depend on our wealth, status, or nationality. We cannot abdicate our responsibilities to our brothers and sisters by imagining that the market alone can resolve this crisis, or pretend that we do not have obligations to people beyond our borders. Every life has equal value.

Right now, we are greatly alarmed by the terrifying shortage of vaccine doses needed to end the pandemic. While wealthy nations are ramping up vaccination efforts and starting to see deaths decline, in low- and middle-income countries, vaccines are barely beginning to trickle in. At the current pace, much of the world may not be vaccinated until 2024. The consequences for the poorest individuals, families, and communities will be devastating.

This historic global emergency calls, above all, for human solidarity. The same spirit of unity and common purpose that drove scientists to develop Covid vaccines at breathtaking speed, and that drives the care of those tending to the sick, must also inspire leaders of government, the private sector and civil society to scale up vaccine production and ensure rapid, equitable access. This must include the open sharing of successful vaccine recipes. We cannot put intellectual property and the monopolies of pharmaceutical companies ahead of the lives of millions.

As religious leaders, we join our voices in an urgent call for a People's Vaccine – a vaccine that is available to all as a global common good. This is the only way to end the pandemic. Let us work together to build a more just and peaceful world.

To love is to take action.

Coordinated by: Various coalitions including NETWORK

(Public Statement will go to various press outlets by mid-April)