

March 29, 2022

Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th St, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Re: Protecting Our Communities from DHS Collusion

Secretary Mayorkas:

As organizations working to protect immigrant communities, we know that ending collusion between localities and federal immigration enforcement is paramount to protecting our towns, cities and counties. For this reason, we stand proudly by our policies that limit collusion with DHS agencies including ICE, HSI and CBP, and we urge you to reverse course on your recent attempts to undermine these policies.

As a result of years of organizing and advocacy in immigrant communities that have shared their stories and shed light on the deep violence experienced at the hands of DHS—the nation’s largest jailer—some local leaders have taken steps to reduce these harms by ending local collusion, minimizing community members’ interactions with the criminal legal system and investing in community education on immigrant’s rights. These steps have been critical to ensuring that immigrant community members access the services they need without fear.

Conversely, tactics by DHS agencies that use local resources to push immigrants into the police-to-deportation pipeline cause lasting harm to our communities and tear families apart. For this reason, we are deeply disturbed by your recent attempts to undermine our protective policies with your comments at this past January’s U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Today, we continue to see how DHS agencies perpetuate harm on the daily lives of immigrants, through ongoing policing and prolonged detention of community members whose liberty is deprived. Our friends and families are not “public safety threats,” but ICE and CBP officers continue to see them one-dimensionally based on contact with the criminal legal system. In using past offenses as a proxy for dangerousness, the immigration system compounds dynamics of inequality, marginalization, and racism. This form of perpetual punishment moves us backwards, in a moment of widespread reckoning and change in the criminal legal system.

We have fought for years for protective policies that refuse to use our local and state resources to facilitate the detention and deportation of our community members, and their separation from their families and communities. A growing number of local leaders recognize that protective pro-immigrant policies are necessary for a vibrant, healthy and trusting community. This is the right choice and we support the ongoing efforts around the country to strengthen their local policies accordingly. To enable these efforts to succeed, we urge you to follow through on past promises of this administration to affirmatively terminate 287(g) agreements as well as the so-called Secure Communities program. Ending these programs which perpetuate the entanglement of local agencies with DHS is critical to demonstrating accountability.

Regardless of who is in the White House, our communities are clear. We must stand by and strengthen all mechanisms to stop local entanglement with DHS agencies so that our communities are able to live with dignity and respect.

Signed,

Organization

United We Dream

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Immigrant Defense Project

Project South

Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network (SIREN)

Cape Cod Coalition for Safe Communities

Cleveland Jobs with Justice

Make the Road New York

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.

National Immigration Project (NIPNLG)

DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving

RAICES

Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem

Envision Freedom Fund

Detention Watch Network

Cardozo Immigration Justice Clinic

Washington Defender Association

Mariposa Legal

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

Human Impact Partners (HIP)

National Immigrant Justice Center

Families for Freedom

Make the Road New York

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

The Legal Aid Society

American Civil Liberties Union

Legal Aid Justice Center

Church World Service

The Kansas Missouri Dream Alliance

A.Y.U.D.A. INC.

Sur Legal Collaborative

Rapid Defense Network (RDN)

Make the Road CT

Local Progress

Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible

Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative

New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)

Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice

New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)

Make the Road Nevada

ACLU of Northern California

NM Dream Team

Alliance San Diego

Justice Overcoming Boundaries in San Diego County

UnLocal
South Bay People Power
Chula Vista Partners in Courage
BORDER ANGELS
Comunidad de Apoyo San Diego
PANA (The Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans)
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
JUNTOS
Cape Cod Coalition for Safe Communities
La Resistencia
San Francisco Public Defender's Office
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
Immigrant Justice Network
Mijente
NCCPA
Community Justice Project, Inc.
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
NM Dream Team
Meyer Law Office
NM Dream Team
ProgressNow New Mexico
Equality New Mexico
NM CAFE
Washington Sun Fronteras
Hofstra Law School Deportation Defense Clinic
Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
Surveillance Technology Oversight Project
Arizona Dream Act Coalition
Gangs Coalition
La ColectiVA
CT Students for a Dream
The Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College
WeCount!
Workers Defense Action Fund
Al Otro Lado
Southern Poverty Law Center
American Friends Service Committee
New York County Defender Services
Indivisible West Phoenix
Indivisible Phoenix
Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition
Public Defenders Coalition for Immigrant Justice
The Bronx Defenders
Poder Latinx
Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
Community Asylum Seekers Project
Border Network for Human Rights
Indivisible
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

Freedom Network USA
New York Immigration Coalition
FWD.us
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Repatriate Our Patriots
Indivisible Phoenix
Youth Rise Texas
Center for Popular Democracy
Indivisible
Grassroots Leadership
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Brooklyn Defender Services
Universidad Popular
National Immigration Law Center
New Mexico Asian Family Center
San Joaquin Delta College
National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON)
TakeRoot Justice
Grassroots Leadership
Make the Road New York
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
The Platform of Hope
Calvary Episcopal Church
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
The Festival Center
American University
HIPS
Border Network for Human Rights
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Broward for Progress
Community Justice Project
Doctors For Camp Closure
Interfaith Welcome Coalition - San Antonio
DSA
National Jobs with Justice
JwJ
Beloved Community Incubator
Immigrant Action Alliance
Progressive Democrats of America - Arizona
Beyond Borders
The Good Shepherd United Church of Christ
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education
Texas Civil Rights Project
Nestor United Methodist Church
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Indivisible San Diego Persist
Care in Action
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
Miami Freedom Project
Presbytery of the Pacific

Casa Ruby
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Bend the Arc Jewish Action South Florida
Hispanic Federation
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Woori Juntos
Mi Familia Vota
Beacon Presbyterian Fellowship
St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley
St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley
RAICES
Grassroots Leadership
Hope Border Institute
Hartford Deportation Defense
Legal Aid Service of Broward County
Washington National Cathedral Sanctuary Ministry
Restaurant Opportunities Center of DC
Children's Defense Fund
Florida Rising
Justice in Motion
CT Immigrants Rights Alliance
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Unimex
Doctors For Camp Closure

