The undersigned 230 racial justice, immigrant rights, humanitarian, good governance, and faith-based organizations write today to ask that you reject the White House’s request for additional funding for detention and border militarization. This request, which comes only ten weeks after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) received significant funding increases in the final Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) appropriations and the administration misappropriated billions for border wall construction, would only exacerbate harms to immigrant communities and continue to divest taxpayer dollars from critical social programs that increase our collective well-being.
Despite being cloaked in the language of humanitarian aid, the funding sought for ICE and CBP would instead increase human suffering by ensuring more people are detained in inhumane conditions, blocked from accessing due process, and criminalized through politically motivated prosecutions. In fact, comparing harmful, anti-immigrant policies to real humanitarian aid is an insult to the communities and organizations that are actually offering this support all across our country every single day. In stark contrast to this community solidarity, the Department of Justice under this Administration has criminalized real community-based assistance, infamously bringing charges last year against No More Deaths volunteers who were providing basic humanitarian assistance like water and food.¹

The Trump administration’s total request for $4.5 billion would span the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), Justice (DOJ), Defense (DOD) and Health and Human Services (HHS). This funding request is not about true solutions, but rather a deeply cynical move by an Administration that has continually shown callousness toward immigrant suffering, recklessly expanded detention infrastructure, and widened the deportation pipeline by reaching deep into communities and workplaces to target unprecedented numbers of people in the interior of the country.

We raise particular concern about the following components of the request:

- $342 million to grow the immigration incarceration system, despite a long track record of abuse and negligence within ICE’s jails, including recent deaths,² insufficient medical care,³ a rise in the number of detained women enduring miscarriages,⁴ and sham inspections that breed impunity.⁵
- $82 million to expand the notorious Dilley Family Detention Center,⁶ allowing DHS to jail nearly 1,000 more parents and children in family jails each day. DHS’s own medical experts have used whistleblower protections to warn that the continued use of family detention puts children’s lives and wellbeing at risk.⁷ Any continued use of these facilities, not to mention expansion, is unconscionable.

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¹ They left food and water for migrants in the desert. Now they might go to prison; January 20, 2019; Washington Post; https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/01/20/they-left-food-water-migrants-desert-now-they-might-go-prison/?utm_term=.0629f716c1e1
² An immigration detainee fell into a coma and died at 27. His family wants to know why; April 10, 2019; Los Angeles Times; https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-adelanto-detainee-death-20190410-story.html.
⁴ Immigrant Miscarriages in ICE Detention Have Nearly Doubled Under Trump; March 1, 2019; Daily Beast; https://www.thedailybeast.com/immigrant-miscarriages-in-ice-detention-have-nearly-doubled-under-trump.
$273 million for CBP detention centers to hold families. The request includes funding for CBP processing centers, used to hold families along the border. The “hielera” centers are known for deplorable conditions and abuses, leading to children dying in custody. CBP should be moving away from detaining migrant children, and funds should be directed towards alternative housing programs, rather than giving more funds for guards and equipment for inherently dangerous facilities.

$377 million for border militarization and harmful surveillance. The request includes an increase in funding for “Operation Guardian,” a joint operation opposed by many state leaders that utilizes the National Guard to support CBP, furthering the militarization of the border to the detriment of humanitarian efforts underway. Funding is also requested for increased surveillance and intelligence support for CBP, including new technology to process and “track migrants in CBP custody.” The increase in surveillance technology raises serious concern in the wake of growing scandals involving spying and harassment of journalists and lawyers at the border and DHS monitoring of family separation protests. It’s also concerning given the existing lack of privacy protections and the extent to which this surveillance could supercharge existing immigration enforcement.

$15 million to expand ICE programming billed as “counter-smuggling” but used under this Administration to target sponsors of unaccompanied children. Newly released FOIA documents demonstrate the extent to which CBP and ICE are using funds earmarked for human smuggling and trafficking to disrupt the reunification of unaccompanied children with their families; one recently uncovered document, for example, describes a “smuggling disruption initiative,” which led to the arrest of more than 400 people between June and August of 2017 who were targeted after coming forward to sponsor unaccompanied children, with devastating effects including coercion, misrepresentation, and circumvention of due process rights, and permanent separation of families.

$155 million for DOJ U.S. Marshals to allow for more prosecutions of migration-related offenses, including for many people seeking asylum. The request would increase funding for the U.S. Marshals to detain individuals for migration related offenses, including

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12 Documents Detail ICE Campaign to Prosecute Migrant Parents as Smugglers; April 29, 2019; The Intercept; https://theintercept.com/2019/04/29/ice-documents-prosecute-migrant-parents-smugglers/
criminal prosecution for “illegal entry” or “illegal re-entry,” which are the most prosecuted federal crimes and weigh down the entire legal system despite the administration’s policies forcing many people to cross without authorization to seek asylum protection. Through programs such as “Operation Streamline,” the administration has ratcheted up illegal-entry prosecutions along the southwest border districts, and used the increase in prosecutions to criminalize migration and demonize immigrant communities.

The Trump administration demonstrates daily that its approach to migration is rooted in hate and cruelty. This request is just the latest attempt to grab funds outside of the normal budget process to expand a punitive deterrent-oriented system, without any plan in place to actually address the human needs of refugees arriving at our border fleeing well-documented human rights abuses. Congress should reject further divestment from our communities and instead support community responses that welcome asylum seekers and migrants.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations**

Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus  
Advocates for Youth  
African Americans Ministers In Action  
Alianza Americas  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)  
American Friends Service Committee  
Americans for Immigrant Justice  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
ASISTA  
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Athlete Ally
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
Bridges Faith Initiative
Center for American Progress
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center For Popular Democracy
Center for Victims of Torture
Center on Privacy and Technology at Georgetown Law
Church World Service
Conference of Superiors of Men (Catholic)
Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
CREDO
Defending Rights & Dissent
Detention Watch Network
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Dominicans of Sinsinawa
Earthjustice
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Faith in Action
Faith in Public Life
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement
Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA)
Franciscan Action Network
Freedom for Immigrants
Freedom Network USA
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Hispanic Federation
Hope Border Institute
Immigrant Defense Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Immigration Equality Action Fund
Immigration Hub
Indivisible
Japanese American Citizens League
JASS (Just Associates)
Jobs With Justice Education Fund
Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission of the Priests of the Sacred Heart
LA RED, Faith in Action
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
MoveOn
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Council of Jewish Women
National Employment Law Project
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala/NISGUA
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment(NACCE)
NYU Immigrant Rights Clinic
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Pax Christi USA
Project South
Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator
Pueblo Sin Fronteras
Rabbinical Assembly
RAICES
Sierra Club
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team
Sisters of Mercy South Central
Sisters of ST. Francis Justice, Peace and Care for Creation Committee
Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Southern Border Communities Coalition
Southern Poverty Law Center
Tula's Indivisible Critical Response Team
Ujima Inc: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
UndocuBlack Network
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Methodist Women
United We Dream
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Win Without War
Women's Refugee Commission

State and Local Organizations

ACLAMO
Advocate Visitors with Immigrants in Detention in the Chihuahuan Desert
Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.
AFSC Colorado
Al Otro Lado
Alliance San Diego
American Gateways
Angry Tías and Abuelas of the RGV
APANO
Arab American Association of New York
Arizona Justice For Our Neighbors
Asian American/Pacific Islander Christians for Social Justice
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA
Asian Law Alliance
Beyond Borders-Sin Fronteras, First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist
Border Patrol Victims Network
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC, Inc.
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition
Casa Esperanza
Catholic Charities of West TN
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) DC
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos: The United Workers Center
Chhaya Community Development Corporation
Chicago Religious Leadership Network On Latin America - CRLN
CIYJA
Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist
CPC - Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.
CT Shoreline Indivisible
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
DC-MD Justice For Our Neighbors
Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Don't Separate Families
End Streamline Coalition
Equality California
Equality North Carolina
Erie Neighborhood House
Eva Mayhabal Davis, UNLOCAL, INC.
Faith In Action Bay Area
Faith in Indiana
Faith in New York
Faith in NJ
Florida Asian Services
Franciscans for Justice
Freedom House Detroit
Fuerza Del Valle Workers center
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Allies of Marshalltown
Immigrant Defenders Law Center
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)
Inter-faith Coalition on Immigration
Interfaith Action for Human Rights
International Institute of New England
International Institute of the Bay Area
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence
ISLA
Jefferson County immigrants Rights Advocates
Justice For Our Neighbors East Texas
Kino Border Initiative
La Resistencia
LALMA/La Asociación Latino-Musulmana de America
Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Legal Aid Justice Center
Make the Road New Jersey
Make the Road New York
Massachusetts Communities Action Network
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project
Migrant Center for Human Rights
MinKwon Center for Community Action
Mississippi Center for Justice
Missouri Faith Voices, A Faith in Action Federation
Montana Women For...
Muslim-Jewish Solidarity Committee
National Lawyers Guild - DC Chapter
New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice
New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center
New Santuary Movement of Philadelphia
New York Immigration Coalition
NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe (CAFe)
No More Deaths/No Mas Muertes
North County Immigration Task Force
North Georgia Immigrant Justice
Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
OCA South Florida Chapter
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Open Immigration Legal Services
OutFront Minnesota
Pangea Legal Services
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition
Pilgrim United Church of Christ
Princeton Progressives
Public Counsel
Resilience Orange County
RGV Equal Voice Network
San Diego Border Dreamers
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
Silver State Equality
SIRAG (Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Action Group)
SIREN (Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network)
Sisterhood of Salam/Shalom Takoma Park-Silver Spring Chapter
Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
Southside Worker Center
Southwest Environmental Center
St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA)
St. Luke United Methodist Church
The Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
Together We're Indivisible Nevada
United Valley Interfaith Project
University of California, Los Angeles Department of Chicana & Chicano Studies
University YMCA New American Welcome Center
UnLocal, Inc.
Vermont Interfaith Action
Viola Katusiime
Wallingford Indivisible
Wilco Justice Alliance (Williamson County, TX)
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice