June 19, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC  20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Democratic Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
1705 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC  20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Republican Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

This year marks 23 years since President Clinton signed the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act into law (herein “the 1996 laws”). These laws put a chokehold on pathways to legalization and naturalization by massively expanding the number of disqualifying criminal grounds for legal permanent residents and other immigrants, and removing opportunities for individuals to seek deportation relief before a judge.

As with the widely condemned and punitive welfare “reform” and crime bills from this era, these laws relied on racialized stereotypes to create policies and laws that treat people of color as disposable and criminal until proven otherwise. These laws are the blueprint for the sweeping enforcement and deportation machine that we see in full force today.

We call on you to support legislation that begins to undo the harms of the 1996 laws by:

- Ending immigration detention without bail;
- Ending the automatic deportation of individuals who have had contact with the criminal legal system;
- Ending the entanglement of local policing and immigration enforcement; and
- Decriminalizing migration by repealing laws that make migration a crime.

An entire generation of people in this country have never experienced immigration apart from criminalization, as law enforcement and immigration enforcement functions have merged to arrest, detain, surveill, punish, and exile people of color. The abuses of these criminal legal and immigration systems have devastated our communities.

We have come together around a different vision: communities that are healthy and thriving, instead of ones torn apart by biased policing, incarceration, and deportation. We know that our community members who happen to not have been born in this country have no less dignity or value than those who were.
We seek transformational change in our criminal legal and immigration systems that will achieve this vision. One key step toward achieving this change is repealing the 1996 laws that laid the foundation for our mass immigration detention and deportation crisis. We urge members of the 116th Congress to take this critical step to protect and support immigrant communities.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Advancement Project, National Office
African Communities Together
Alianza Americas
American Civil Liberties Union
American Friends Service Committee
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Campaign for Youth Justice
Center for Popular Democracy
Church World Service
Columbia Law School Immigrants' Rights Clinic
Conference of Presentation Sisters
Defending Rights & Dissent
Detention Watch Network
Emgage Action
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement
Families Belong Together (FBT)
Families for Freedom
Food Empowerment Project
Free Migration Project
Freedom for Immigrants
Freedom to Thrive
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights Watch
Immigrant Defense Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Indivisible Sausalito
InterReligious Task Force On Central America and Colombia
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice for Muslims Collective
Justice Strategies
Laotian American National Alliance
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
LaUnidad11
Lỗi Sống Tin Lành Ministry
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
Mijente
NAACP
National Action Network
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National LGBTQ Task Force
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
NETWORK Lobby
New American Leaders
New Sanctuary Coalition
NNAAC
NYU Immigrant Rights Clinic
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
PeaceHost.net
PIVOT - The Progressive Vietnamese American Organization
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
Quixote Center
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
South Asian Americans Leading Together
Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
SURJ Marin
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Black Alliance for Just Immigration
The East Coast Asian American Student Union
The Jus Semper Global Alliance
The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
The Sentencing Project
UndocuBlack Network
Union of North American Vietnamese Student Associations
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo
United We Dream
US Human Rights Network
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
Yemeni American Merchants Association

Regional Organizations

Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee
Southern Poverty Law Center
United Confederation of Taíno People

State and Local Organizations

Alaska

Alaska Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League

Arizona

Arizona Asian & Pacific Islander Americans Vote Table
Asian Pacific Community in Action
OCA - Greater Phoenix Chapter
Organized Poder, LLC.

California

AFRICAN ADVOCACY NETWORK
APIENC (API Equality - Northern California)
APIROC, APSC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Prisoner Support Committee
AYPAL: Building API Community Power
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area
California For Progress
Center for Empowering Refugees & Immigrants
Coastside Immigrant Advocacy Group
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area (CAIR-LA)
Creative Acts
Dolores Street Community Services
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa
Equality California
Florin JACL-Sacramento Valley
Fools Mission
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)
Hmong Cultural Center of Butte County
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity
JACL - Contra Costa Chapter
Justice Reinvestment Coalitions of Alameda County
Khmer Girls in Action
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
San Diego Chapter of the JACL
San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League
San Francisco Peninsula People Power
Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN)
Silicon Valley De-Bug
SIREN
Stone Soup Fresno
The Fresno Center
The Jus Semper Global Alliance
Vietnamese American Organization
Vietnamese American Roundtable
VietRISE
VietUnity East Bay
VietUnity-SoCal
VietUnity South Bay
WE RISE SF

Colorado

Mile High JACL

Connecticut

CT Shoreline Indivisible
Unidad Latina en Accion (ULA)

District of Columbia

Central American Resource Center
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)

Florida

Friends of Broward Detainees
Florida Immigrant Coalition

Georgia
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta
Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights

Illinois
Access Living
Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Chicago Religious Leadership Network On Latin America - CRLN
Durango Unido en Chicago
HANA Center
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Latino Union of Chicago
OCA Greater Chicago
Organized Communities Against Deportations
PASO-West Suburban Action Project

Iowa
Sisters of the Presentations

Massachusetts
Asian American Resource Workshop (AARW)
Beyond Borders-Sin Fronteras, First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc.
Dominican Development Center
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Muslim Justice League

Maine
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

Maryland
Montgomery County (MD) Civil Rights Coalition

Minnesota
Asian American Organizing Project (AAOP)
Coalition of Asian American Leaders
Filipinx for Immigrant rights & Racial justice MN (FIRM)
Hmong American Partnership
ReleaseMN8

**Nebraska**

Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community

**Nevada**

Silver State Equality

**New Mexico**

Albuquerque Center For Peace and Justice
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center

**New York**

Adhikaar
African Communities Together
Atlas DIY
Columbia County Sanctuary Movement
CPC - Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
Indivisible of Rockville Centre
Legal Services Staff Association, NOLSW/UAW 2320
Make the Road NY
Mekong NYC
MinKwon Center for Community Action
Neighborhood Defender Service
New American Leaders
New York Immigration Coalition
OCA - NY
Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)
S.T.O.P. -- The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project.
UnLocal

**New Jersey**

Reformed Church of Highland Park
North Carolina

Comunidad Colectiva
Southeast Asian Coalition

Ohio

Cleveland Jobs with Justice
Dayton Chapter Japanese American Citizens League
InterReligious Task Force On Central America and Colombia
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Urban Connections
Transformations CDC

Oregon

APANO
Portland JACL

Pennsylvania

Asian Americans United
Casa San Jose
Immigrant Rights Action Doylestown
JACL Philadelphia Chapter
Juntos
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition

Rhode Island

Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education
Providence Youth Student Movement

Tennessee

AKIN - Allies of Knoxville's Immigrant Neighbors

Texas

American Gateways
Central American Resource Center/CRECEN
Chinese Community Center of Houston, TX
Interfaith Welcome Coalition
Interfaith Welcome Coalition
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #60
Justice For Our Neighbors East Texas
Mano Amiga SM
RAICES
Texas Organizing Project
Wilco Justice Alliance (Williamson County, TX)
Workers Defense Project

Utah

JACL Salt Lake City Chapter
National Tongan American Society
OCA Asian Pacific Islander American Advocates Utah
Southeast Asian United Students at the University of Utah
University of Utah

Virginia

La ColectiVA
Legal Aid Justice Center
SURJ Northern Virginia

Vermont

Migrant Justice

Washington

Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington
Casa Latina
Entre Hermanos
Faith Action Network
Formerly Incarcerated Group Healing Together (FIGHT)
International Community Health Services
Jefferson County Immigrant Rights Advocates
Khmer Anti-deportation Advocacy Group (KhAAG)
Khmer Health Board
LIFT
MAPS-AMEN (American Muslim Empowerment Network)
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Raiz of Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho
University of Washington
University Unitarian Church
Wallingford Indivisible
Washington Defender Association
Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network