

**The undersigned organizations urge Members of Congress to oppose S.1473, introduced by Senators Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) and Thom Tillis (R-NC), as well as the House companion bill H.R. 3234. This bill would effectively end the right to asylum at our southern border. People seeking safety at our borders—including children traveling alone or with their families—would be expelled back to the very dangers they fled.**

**This legislation would actively harm people seeking protection, including children and families.**

As organizations who are committed to the well-being of children, we oppose legislation that would subject children to expulsion and detention without a fair process or adequate protections. This legislation would establish increased legal standards required to avoid being expelled, which would block children and their families from a fair chance at seeking asylum. It would subject children and families to the cruelty of mandatory detention and rapid expulsion procedures, sending children back to the very danger they are fleeing. This bill does not improve the safe reception of asylum seekers at our border and continues to put children and families at risk by threatening their legal right to claim asylum.

**The bill would create a new detention and expulsion regime and narrow humanitarian exceptions.**

Since 2020, the Department of Homeland Security has used the Title 42 policy more than 2.8 million times to expel people—many of them asylum seekers—to Mexico or their home countries. Seeking asylum has become nearly impossible, in contravention of U.S. law, international obligations, and our national values. The creation of a new expulsion authority modeled after Title 42 will mean hundreds of thousands of vulnerable children and families will continue to be put into [harm's way](#) or [separated](#). Data obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request show that between March 2020 and May 31, 2022, CBP expelled 30,806 children ages 3 and under to Mexican border cities— with about 41 percent of these expulsions occurring at midnight or later. The consequences have been horrific, with [a report](#) tracking more than 13,000 violent attacks against migrants and asylum-seekers returned to danger. These devastating consequences must not become the law of the land in the United States.

The legislation would also require family detention. No amount of detention is appropriate for children and families, as research has found that detention results in developmental regression and toxic stress for children, depression and anxiety for parents, and strains family bonds. Furthermore, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is not equipped to provide safe custody of these vulnerable populations.

**The bill would exacerbate—not minimize—disorder and confusion at the border.**

While members of Congress and media outlets have used the language of “crisis” to describe people and families who arrive at the border to seek protection, the truth is Title 42 has caused a humanitarian crisis with [tens of thousands](#) enduring rape, assault, and violence while living in vulnerable conditions in Mexico due to this expulsion policy. Title 42 [actually increased the flow of individuals at the border](#) because people quickly return to attempt reentry when their cases are not considered appropriately. The link between Title 42 and an increased rate of repeat crossings has been repeatedly acknowledged by [DHS officials](#). Blocking access to asylum does not stop border crossings, it just causes families to attempt more dangerous routes.

Deterrence has never worked to prevent people fleeing persecution from seeking protection. The United States has consistently relied on punitive immigration policies to try to limit the number of immigrants and asylum seekers coming to the United States. These policies [do not deter](#) people from fleeing violence, nor do they dissuade parents of U.S. citizen children living in the U.S. from attempting to reunite with their families. Immigrants and people seeking safety continue to come to the United States, even in [the face of existing asylum restrictions](#).

**Better border solutions are possible.**

Fortunately, there are [immediate steps](#) the government can take to restore asylum right now. There are clear, [common-sense border solutions](#) that advance the health, safety, family unity, and development of children and that, in fact, create a fair, orderly, and humane immigration system. More work must be done to ensure the prioritization of [children's rights and well-being in U.S. border](#) and immigration policy, as well as to consider [children's best interests](#) in every decision that might affect a child.

Restricting access to asylum is [cruel and potentially deadly](#). It is time to try something new, and provide support for humane processing of immigrants and asylum seekers arriving at our border. We cannot continue to build on top of a failed policy, which is actively causing harm to millions of children and families, and expect a different result. Families and children seek asylum because [their lives depend on it](#). They deserve protection, not rejection.

Signed,

**National Organizations**

African Communities Together (ACT)  
Alianza Americas  
America's Voice  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Immigration Council  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
American Muslim Health Professionals  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)  
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
Bethany Christian Services  
Bridges Faith Initiative  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Center for Human Rights & Constitutional Law  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Popular Democracy (CPD)

Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Center for Victims of Torture  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's HealthWatch  
Church World Service  
Coalition for Juvenile Justice  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Communities United for Status & Protection (CUSP)  
Community Change Action  
Detention Watch Network  
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities  
Family Centered Treatment Foundation  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom Network USA  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Futures Without Violence  
Government Accountability Project  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
HIAS  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Watch  
Immigrant Justice Network  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Immigration Equality Action Fund  
Immigration Hub  
Indivisible  
Innovation Law Lab  
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)  
International Rescue Committee  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
Justice Action Center  
Justice for Migrant Women  
Justice in Motion  
Kids in Need of Defense  
Latin America Working Group  
Lawyers for Good Government  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)  
MomsRising/MamásConPoder  
MPower Change Action Fund

National Association of Counsel for Children  
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)  
National Center for Youth Law  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Immigration Project (NIPNLG)  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice  
National Partnership for New Americans  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Oxfam America  
Partners In Health  
Prevention Institute  
Project On Government Oversight  
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)  
Refugee Congress  
Refugee Council USA  
Refugees International  
Save the Children  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Southern Border Communities Coalition  
Tahirih Justice Center  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
The Shalom Center  
The Workers Circle  
UndocuBlack Network  
UnidosUS  
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice  
United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries  
United Farm Workers  
United We Dream  
USAHello  
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)  
Value our Families  
Voice for Refuge Action Fund  
We Are All America  
Welcoming America

#WelcomeWithDignity Campaign For Asylum Rights  
Witness At The Border  
Women's Refugee Commission  
World Relief  
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

**State and Local Organizations**

ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE (CA)  
Adhikaar (NY)  
Ahri Center (CA)  
Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice  
Aliento Education Fund (AZ)  
AltaMed Health Services (CA)  
Americans for Immigrant Justice (FL)  
Asian Resources, Inc. (CA)  
Brazos Interfaith Immigration Network (TX)  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Central American Resource Center of Northern CA - CARECEN SF  
CHILDREN AT RISK (TX)  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice (OH)  
Coalición de Derechos Humanos (AZ)  
Children's Defense Fund-Texas  
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (NY)  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) (CA)  
Colorado Children's Campaign  
Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Inc (TX, NM)  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant (CA)  
El Vínculo Hispano (NC)  
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project (AZ)  
Freedom House Detroit (MI)  
Give for a Smile (CA)  
Global Urban Cultural Community (CA)  
HISPANIC SERVICES COUNCIL INC (FL)  
Hispanic Unity of Florida  
Human Rights Initiative (TX)  
Immigrant Alliance for Justice and Equity (MS)  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (CA)  
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ME)  
Indivisible Brooklyn (NY)  
Jesuits West CORE AZ  
Jewish Community Action (MN)  
Justice for Our Neighbors Michigan

La Semilla Food Center (TX, NM)  
Latino Action Network Foundation (NJ)  
Latino Community Fund INC (LCF Georgia)  
Legal Services of South Central Michigan  
Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants  
Make the Road Connecticut  
Make the Road Nevada  
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition  
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Michigan United  
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center  
Northwest Health Law Advocates (WA)  
Oasis Legal Services (CA)  
Ohio Immigrant Alliance  
PASOs (SC)  
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN)  
Rural Arizona Engagement  
Ser Familia, Inc. (GA)  
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (NJ)  
STRANGERS NO LONGER (MI)  
The Advocates for Human Rights (MN, SD, ND)  
The Children's Partnership (CA)  
Trauma Informed Education Coalition (PA)  
Voices for Utah Children  
Voices for Vermont's Children  
Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights (MI)  
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center (NJ)  
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice  
Woori Center (PA)