Statement from Immigrant Justice Network Calling for Bold and Inclusive Action on Immigration

The Immigrant Justice Network (IJN) and undersigned organizations call on President-elect Biden to take strong executive action on behalf of all immigrants. Immigration policies cannot be fair or just if they rely on outcomes from a criminal legal system that is fundamentally unjust, racialized, and built to target Black and brown people.

Throughout the campaign, President-elect Biden recognized the decades-long damage done by his support of the 1994 Crime Bill, the dog whistle politics of “superpredators,” biased policing, and the “tough on crime” policies that led to the mass incarceration of Black people and communities of color. These damaging policies ushered in the brutal 1996 immigration laws that created automatic and mandatory deportation and detention for immigrants. Immigration enforcement is not “broken” - as evidenced by the systematic rounding up of primarily working-class Black immigrants and immigrants of color who have had contact with the criminal legal system - but proceeding as designed. Our communities require bold solutions, like The New Way Forward Act, to root out deep systemic problems of racism and xenophobia infesting the immigration and criminal legal systems.

We hope this administration will commit to new policies that include people facing the devastating consequences of deportation and criminalization. We cannot go back to the Obama-era "felons not families" framework that led to millions of deportations and countless families separated. We must end the cruel practice of granting deportation
relief for some, in exchange for harsher punishments and criminalization for others. The militarized and racialized policing by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, that crescendoed during the 2020 uprisings must also end.

We demand that the new administration:

- Ensures that any moratorium on deportation or detention does not exclude people who have been criminalized, have had contact with the criminal legal system or have criminal records;
- Ensures that any prosecutorial discretion policy does not exclude people who have been criminalized, have had contact with the criminal legal system or have criminal records;
- Ensures that any “legalization” bill or administrative policy supported by the Biden Administration does not exclude people who have been criminalized, have had contact with the criminal legal system or have criminal records.

Sincerely,

Adelante Alabama Worker Center
Adhikaar
Advancement Project
Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus
Advocate Visitors with Immigrants in Detention
Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.
Advocating Opportunity
African Communities Together
Aldea - The People’s Justice Center
Alianza Americas
Allies for Knoxville’s Immigrant Neighbors
American Gateways
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Border Crit Institute
Brooklyn Defender Services
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ)
California Immigrant Policy Center
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition (CAIR)
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Popular Democracy
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante
Church World Service
Cleveland Jobs with Justice
Community Justice Exchange
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
Daily Kos
Desert Support for Asylum Seekers
Detention Watch Network
Earl Carl Institute
Empowering Pacific Islanders Communities
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement
Families for Freedom
Freedom for Immigrants
Freedom Network USA
FL International Solidarity Collective
Grassroots Leadership
Haitian Bridge Alliance
HIAS PA
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Action Alliance
Immigrant Defence Advocates
Immigrant Defenders Law Center
Immigrant Defense Project
Immigrant Health Justice Working Group, Doctors of America
Immigrant Justice Network
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Immigrant Legal Defense
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Indivisible
Innovation Law Lab
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)
ISLA: Immigrant Services and Legal Advocacy
Just Futures Law
Justice Strategies
Kickapoo-Guatemala Accompaniment Project
La ColectiVA
Laredo Immigrant Alliance
LBIRC
Legal Aid Justice Center
Migrant Center for Human Rights
Mijente
Muslim Justice League
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Employment Law Project
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG)
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)
Never Again Action
New York Immigration Coalition
Oregon Justice Resource Center
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition
Poder Latinx
Public Counsel
Puente Human Rights Movement
RAICES
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Rio Grande Valley Equal Voice Network
San Antonio Coalition for Police Accountability
San Francisco Immigrant Legal & Education Network (SFILEN)
Siembra NC
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Southeast Immigrant Rights Network
Texas Civil Rights Project
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Bronx Defenders
Trans Queer Pueblo
Transformations CDC
UndocuBlack
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United We Dream
Washington Defender Association
Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Workers Defense Project
Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights