



Officers
Chair

Judith L. Lichtman
National Partnership for
Women & Families

Vice Chairs

Thomas A. Saenz
Mexican American Legal
Defense and Educational Fund
Hilary Shelton
NAACP

Secretary/Treasurer

Lee A. Saunders
American Federation of State,
County & Municipal Employees

Board of Directors

Kevin Allis
National Congress of American Indians
Kimberly Churches
AAUW

Kristen Clarke
Lawyers' Committee for
Civil Rights Under Law
Alphonso B. David
Human Rights Campaign

Rory Gamble
International Union, UAW
Lily Eskelsen Garcia
National Education Association

Fatima Goss Graves
National Women's Law Center
Mary Kay Henry
Service Employees International Union

Sherrilyn Ifill
NAACP Legal Defense and
Educational Fund, Inc.
David H. Inoue
Japanese American Citizens League

Derrick Johnson
NAACP
Virginia Kase
League of Women Voters of the
United States

Michael B. Keegan
People for the American Way
Samer E. Khalaf
American-Arab
Anti-Discrimination Committee

Marc Morial
National Urban League
Janet Murguia
UnidosUS

Debra L. Ness
National Partnership for
Women & Families
Rabbi Jonah Pesner
Religious Action Center
Of Reform Judaism

Lisa Rice
National Fair Housing Alliance
Anthony Romero
American Civil Liberties Union

Maria Town
American Association of
People with Disabilities
Richard L. Trumka
AFL-CIO

Toni Van Pelt
National Organization for Women
Randi Weingarten
American Federation of Teachers

John C. Yang
Asian Americans Advancing Justice |
AAJC

President & CEO
Vanita Gupta

July 15, 2020

Dear Representative:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 220 national civil and human rights advocacy organizations, we write to express our strong support for H.R. 2214, the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants Act (the “NO BAN Act”) and advise you vote “yes” when it comes to the House floor next week on July 22, 2020. The NO BAN Act would overturn the discriminatory Muslim Ban instituted by the Trump administration in 2017, as well as the recently-announced expansions of the policy to ban immigrants from additional countries. As the NO BAN Act is scheduled for a floor vote next week, *it is essential that no further changes be made to the bill*. Given the importance of this vote to the civil and human rights community, we intend to include your position in our voting record and scorecard for the 116th Congress.

While the Trump administration may wrap its policy in a feigned cloak of national security, its true motives are clearly revealed through his actions and rhetoric. Early on in his presidential campaign, then-candidate Donald Trump called for a “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States.”¹ While his proposal was widely condemned at the time, including by several other presidential candidates in his own party, a version of his Muslim Ban was first announced shortly after he took office and finalized in 2018. President Trump’s white supremacist intent remained clear in early 2018, when during a meeting with a bipartisan group of senators, he asked why the United States allows immigrants from “shithole countries,” referring to Haiti and African nations.²

The effects of the Muslim Ban have also been clear. While the true intent of the policy is discriminatory, its reach is truly indiscriminate and goes well beyond what is necessary to protect national security. The number of people affected by the Muslim Ban is estimated to be more than 135 million and applies regardless of whether such individuals have been found to pose any threat to the United States or its interests. A bare 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court may find such a sweeping, discriminatory, overly-broad policy to be permissible. The House of Representatives, however, must not.

The NO BAN Act would bring our nation back in line with our longstanding principles. It would repeal each version of the Trump administration’s Muslim Ban, Refugee Ban, and Asylum Ban, as well as the administration’s 2020 expansion to the people of six additional

¹ Johnson, Jenna, “Trump calls for ‘total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States,’” *The Washington Post*, Dec. 7, 2015.

² Ali Vitali, Kasie Hunt and Frank Thorp V, “Trump referred to Haiti and African nations as ‘shithole countries,’” *NBC News*, Jan. 11, 2018, at <https://nbcnews.to/2usxO2e>.



countries with significant Muslim populations, including two countries in Asia as well as four countries in Africa. This expansion banned over a quarter of all Africans from the United States. To prevent the Trump administration – or any future administration – from adopting similar policies in the future, the bill would explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion under the Immigration and Nationality Act. The bill would also make clear existing law that any subsequent administrative ban on classes of immigrants be narrowly tailored to address a compelling government interest using the least restrictive means possible. Furthermore, it would ensure that classes of immigrants who are harmed by blanket exclusions can challenge discriminatory actions in court.

The latest version of the bill includes a “clarification” that a President may bar entry to groups based on public safety in order to contain a “communicable disease.” This language, obviously added in response to the current pandemic, is wholly unnecessary, as the original language of the NO BAN Act already gave a President adequate authority to act to protect public health. Instead we fear it only serves to feed the Trump administration’s racist stereotypes and derogatory language surrounding Asian-Americans and immigrants. We expect Congress to make clear that there will be zero tolerance for such bigotry, and that any restrictions related to COVID-19 or other health issues must be based on objective science and public health considerations, not irrational fear or xenophobia.

Still, the NO BAN Act as a whole represents a long-overdue statement of our national values. We urge you to vote “YES” on the NO BAN Act in its current form and vote “NO” on any amendments or other changes.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Iman Boukadoum, at boukadoum@civilrights.org or Rob Randhava at Randhava@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,



LaShawn Warren
Executive Vice President for Government Affairs