

October 19, 2015

Hon. Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Vote NO on Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act (S. 2146)

Dear Senators McConnell and Reid,

On behalf of the undersigned immigrant, civil rights and labor organizations and the millions of immigrant families we serve, **we urge you to join us and oppose Senator Vitter's Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act (S. 2146)**, and any similar legislation that may come to the Senate floor that jeopardizes public safety and the good will forged in communities across the country between local police and its residents.

As Congress continues to drag its feet on comprehensive immigration reform and a solution for 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country, we are left with the status quo--an enforcement-only approach that only tears apart families and keeps people in the shadows. Despite the gridlock in Congress, localities across America still have the responsibility to uphold safety and peace in their communities. In order to achieve that, local police and residents have fostered mutual trust to root out crime. More than 350 diverse localities have already adopted policies that limit their involvement in immigration enforcement to restore community trust in the police.

The Vitter bill achieves nothing. It is simply another enforcement-only bill that does not offer any solutions and instead targets localities that have adopted community trust policies by taking away millions of dollars in federal funding for programs including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grants that could be used to make communities stronger. This bill adds a mandatory minimum sentencing provision of five years that would tie the hands of judges, put thousands of non-violent offenders behind bars at a high premium to taxpayers. Faith leaders and advocates against domestic violence have all come out in opposition to this extreme proposal that targets essential federal funding and curtails effective policing.

Now more than ever, Congress must find a way to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Yet until then, they cannot presume this mass deportation approach being offered by Senator Vitter is an acceptable substitute. The real solution to our broken system is immigration reform which would make

our nation safer, bring people who are already part of our communities more completely into our society, and allow the government to prioritize enforcement against those who pose a real danger to our national security and public safety.

We urge the Senate to reject S. 2146.

Sincerely,

Alliance for a Just Society

Alliance for Citizenship

Alliance for Latina Leadership

Alliance San Diego

America's Voice Education Fund

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

American Immigration Lawyers Association

Anti-Defamation League

Arkansas United Community Coalition

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC

Bend The Arc

Church World Service

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)

Coalition on Human Needs

Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

CREDO

Dream Action Coalition

El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos

Equality New Mexico

Farmworker Justice

First Focus Campaign for Children

Florida Immigrant Coalition, Inc. (FLIC)

Gamaliel
Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy
Idaho Community Action Network
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Jesuit Conference
Jobs With Justice
Korean American Resource and Cultural Center
Korean Resource Center
Latin America Working Group
League of United Latin American Citizens
Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Make the Road New York
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Korean American Service and Education Consortium
National Latin@ Network: Casa de Esperanza
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund

Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
NQAPIA: National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
OneAmerica
People for the American Way
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Rights for All People
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
SC Progressive Network
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Survivors of Torture, International
Tahirih Justice Center
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
The Advocates for Human Rights
UFW Foundation
UNITE HERE
United We Dream
VACOLAO - Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Voto Latino
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
We Belong Together
Workers Defense