## JOINT STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT TACTICS DIRECTED AT CHILDREN IN THE OUTDOORS

\*Letter is open for <u>sign ons</u>\*

In recent weeks, we have watched with growing concern the proliferation of aggressive immigration enforcement tactics specifically targeting children in California and in other parts of the country. According to press reports, children have been targeted by immigration agents in places such as parks, outdoor spaces, elementary schools, on school field trips, in school drop-off lines, and at school graduation ceremonies.

These aggressive enforcement tactics appear to be designed to traumatize and intimidate children and their families and make them feel afraid as they move through their daily lives in schools and in their communities.

In order to develop into healthy adults, children need to feel safe in the places where they learn and grow. This includes the outdoors. Numerous scientific studies demonstrate that providing children with healthy outdoor time positively contributes to their development and reduces the childhood anxiety currently plaguing younger generations. When we ensure the safety of children in places like parks, forests, schools and community centers, we make a vital investment in our future. When families live in fear of immigration enforcement, children cannot fully participate in outdoor programs, environmental education becomes inaccessible, and outdoor spaces transform from healing sanctuaries into places of potential surveillance and threat.

Directing immigration enforcement actions at the environments in which children need to feel safe will have a profoundly negative effect on all children regardless of their immigration status. Targeting children during outdoor time will force children back indoors before they can even discover the connections to nature that are so beneficial to their development. Targeting kids in schools will transform safe spaces into places of fear and make it impossible for teachers and parents to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The undersigned organizations are coming together to call upon the U.S. government to discontinue these aggressive enforcement tactics and stop targeting children in ways that traumatize them and undermine their growth.

The undersigned organizations call upon the U.S. government to:

- Immediately end immigration enforcement actions at schools, parks, and outdoor educational spaces
- Ensure safe passage for all families accessing educational and outdoor programs
- Protect schools and outdoor spaces as sanctuary environments where children can learn and grow without fear
- Commit to policies that guarantee children's access to environmental education regardless of documentation status

The time to act is now—every day we delay action is another day children lose access to the outdoor experiences that are fundamental to their healthy development.

## Signatories:

350.org

350 Bay Area Action

Active San Gabriel Valley

Adventure Risk Challenge

Alianza Coachella Valley

Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance

Amado Khaya Initiative (AKI)

Amigos De Los Rios

Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement

Association of Chinese Americans for Social Justice

Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education

Audubon Canyon Ranch

AZ(LAND) Fund

Baltimore County Progressive Democrats Club

Bay Area Wilderness Training

Bike Maryland

Border Workers United

**Brown People Camping** 

CactusToCloud Institute

California Environmental Voters

CalWild

Camp Ocean Pines

**CASA** 

Center for Biological Diversity

Central Coast State Parks Association

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Children & Nature Network

**Climate Communications Coalition** 

Climate Generation

Climate Justice Alliance

Clockshop

**Color My Outdoors** 

Cool Heron LLC

**Community Nature Connection** 

**Craig Strang Consulting** 

Day One

Earthroots Field School

EPIC (Environmental Protection Information Center)

**Episcopal Diocese of Maryland** 

Fix Maryland Rail

Food & Water Watch

Fortaleza Familiar

Frederick Vigil For Palestine

Frontera de Cristo

GreenLatinos

GirlVentures

Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

Good Neighbor Steering Committee of Benicia

Great Basin Resource Watch

Groundwork Richmond

Harrisburg Inspiring Connections Outdoors, Sierra Club

**Headwaters Science Institute** 

Healthy Contra Costa

Hearts For Sight Foundation

Hidden Villa

**Inclusion Outdoors** 

Indivisible Central Maryland

Indivisible MoCo Women

Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice

**Inner City Bliss** 

Interfaith Coalition for Black Lives (IC4BL)

Justice Outside

KABOOM!

**Kentucky Conservation Committee** 

Latino and Latina Roundtable

Latino Outdoors

Laurel Resist

Lopez Urban Farm

Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust

Los Padres ForestWatch

Madrean Archipelago Wildlife Center

Maine Environmental Education Association

Maine Local Living School

Make the Road Nevada

Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club

Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU)

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Native Voters Alliance Nevada

**Nature Detectives** 

Nature for All

Nature Forward

Nature Worthy

Next 100 Coalition

New Mexico Wild

North Central Florida Indivisible

Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project

Oakland Goes Outdoors

Outdoors Empowered Network

Outerlands Medics & Rescue

Outward Bound Adventures - OBA

Parks Now

Pogo Park

Point Molate Alliance

Prince George's Peace and Justice Coalition (PGPJC)

Progressive Harford County

Project Feed the Hood - Southwest Organizing Project

**QUEER SURF** 

Refugee Women's Network

Rhode Island Environmental Education Association

Richmond Outdoors Coalition

**Rising Juntos** 

Salted Roots

San Pedro 100

Save Del Puerto Canyon

Sembrando Lab, LLC.

Sierra Club

Sierra Club Missouri Chapter

Sierra Nevada Alliance

South County Environmental Justice Coalition (SCEJC)

Southern Border Communities Coalition (SBCC)

Southern Maryland Sierra Club Group

Stand.earth

**Standing Trees** 

Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI)

Ten Strands

Terra Cultura

Teton New Media, Inc.

The Little Blue Creche

The Mountaineers

The Ocean Project

The Stony Run Peace & Justice Committee of Stony Run Meeting

Three Oaks Outdoor Science School

**Together for Brothers** 

TreePeople

Tuleyome

**UCLA** 

**Unbounded Associates** 

Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Washington Trails Association
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Wild Cumberland
Wilderness Workshop
Wilderness Youth Project
Wildlife for All
Women's Democratic Club of Montgomery County
World Ocean Day
Wyoming Wilderness Association