



**Fall Issues Conference
12 Nov 2022
UU Fellowship, Morristown**

Immigration Justice Task Force

The Immigration Justice Task Force has worked during this year on many of the issues expected as we began the year: providing support to refugees who come to New Jersey, state legislative initiatives including, especially, the proposed Values Act, and continuing to provide support for state money to support the provision of defense attorneys for detained individuals facing deportation. Of course, other issues have arisen.

Support for Refugees. Refugees are in a very different category from immigrants and immigrant policies. But a year ago, with first Afghan and then Ukrainian refugees, our task force agreed to seek ways to provide support. We have relationships with several organizations whose work we promote to UUs who can and do provide financial and volunteer support. They include: Catholic Charities, especially in South Jersey, Interfaith RISE (I-RISE) in central New Jersey, and the Northern New Jersey Sanctuary Coalition. Working with I-RISE in the Princeton area is the Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Committee headquartered in The Jewish Center of Princeton. We seek more relationships with these groups.

State Legislative Initiatives. We have worked mostly with the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice (NJAIJ), which is a leading organization on immigration policy. The Alliance, with UUs involved, has had a huge impact and a number of accomplishments, including the program to limit the use of county jails to detain migrants for ICE. The biggest current effort is the Values Act, proposed legislation which would allow migrants to get services from state and local governments without fear of sharing information with ICE and would put into statutory law the Immigrant Trust Directive regarding police actions in New Jersey. That effort continues. Recently two other bills have started to move: a bill to provide better data on migrants in our state and a bill to assure that key forms and directives are translated into more languages. These efforts continue.

Migrant Buses. In the last few months southern governors have been sending migrants from Texas and other states to New York, DC, in one instance Martha's Vineyard, and possibly New Jersey. How should advocates for migrants respond? By providing support to those who wind up in New Jersey. Our task force has supported efforts, chiefly by the NJ Alliance, to assemble teams who would be able to receive these migrants and provide immediate support with food, key items as needed (such as diapers), and temporary housing. We are in touch and working with the NJ Alliance, the UU College of Social Justice, and others.

More info at <https://www.uufaithaction.org/immigration-reform/>

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