

ASYLUM, IMMIGRATION, and FAMILY SEPARATION

https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-05-12/trump-officials-coronavirus-refuse-releasing-migrant-kids?fbclid=IwAR3r0Nx56r94fsvtFAGtmCnPWfhgr1FSxnf9DrzD8aZ_uHN5BXMxHvjVQE

https://truthout.org/articles/the-courts-wont-free-migrant-children-because-of-covid-19-we-must/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=6a2fd58b-a1a1-40a5-983c-02741db79fec&fbclid=IwAR3rUIVf7M98E2D1aOgYks3RjDo6Kelf22ChVz2E_eWkVjDhNwK6cE-JfQM

https://youthlaw.org/flores_may_motiontoenforcehearing/?fbclid=IwAR3bhmvQ8mpy-iM3rSP4Qqh1Ma_ZUEdzCIPDJSh5fSWgWkZ9Ony_YEeinf

Via RLS at *News You May Have Missed*: Since the pandemic began, the U.S. has deported 900 children who arrived alone at the border, sometimes without notifying their families. Children are being sent back to their home countries—or to Mexico—alone even in the middle of the night, with no plan for what might happen when they arrive, according to the [New York Times](#). Ordinarily unaccompanied children are housed in shelters where their asylum process begins, but the U.S. border patrol has refused to follow these protocols under the guise of not spreading the coronavirus. Simultaneously, the U.S. has been hastily deporting children already in the country or waiting in Matamoros in the “Remain in Mexico” Program, [ProPublica](#) reports. Even when children have asylum cases in progress and relatives to receive them in the U.S., they have been sent away, sometimes to extremely dangerous locations. *ProPublica* speculates that their removal relates to the case being supervised by U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee, who has insisted that they be released. On May 22, Judge Gee found that the government was still not in compliance with the order, according to the [National Center for Youth Law](#); the NCYL and the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law and the Immigration Law Clinic of the U.C. Davis School of Law filed the suits that resulted in Gee’s decision. The [LA Times](#) suggests that some children who could be released are being held in the hope that they will reach the age of 18 in custody and thereby be more easily deported. [Reveal](#) describes the circumstances of some 17 year olds who have families or sponsors ready to receive them and who are covered by Judge Gee’s order—but whom the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) will not release. As Leecia Welch, senior director at the NCYL put it, “Given the growing concerns being raised about the impact of COVID-19 on children, it is unfathomable to us that ORR is letting children languish in federal custody when they have fully vetted family members ready to care for them.” (Write-up 5/23/2020)

INSIST that ORR comply with Judge Gee’s ruling and **CALL ON** your Congressmembers to monitor OSS compliance

- **Alex Azar**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20201, (877) 696-6775
- **Clarence H. Carter**, Acting Director, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 330 C St. SW, Washington DC 20201, (202) 401-9215
- **Jonathan H. Hayes**, Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 330 C St. SW, Washington DC 20201, (202) 401-9246
- **Find your Senators here:**
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>
- **Find your Representative here:**
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

CONSUMER PROTECTIONS and WORKPLACE RIGHTS

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/may/12/us-fossil-fuel-companies-coronavirus-bailout-oil-coal-fracking-giants-bond-scheme>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/coronavirus-bails-out-the-oil-patch/2020/05/18/01e29a5a-9910-11ea-ad79-eef7cd734641_story.html

<https://barragan.house.gov/rewind-act-prohibits-bailout-of-fossil-fuel-industry-with-cares-act-funds-during-public-health-crisis/>

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3611/related-bills>

<https://350pdx.org/the-rewind-act/>

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/rewind-fossil-fuel-bailouts>

Large corporations are benefitting from the federal government's bond bailout program. Originally, businesses would have to retain employees to have funds given through the program forgiven, but a rewrite while the legislation was in progress changed that to allow companies to use the money to cover existing debt instead. Basically, it's a give-away disguised as a loan and purporting to be Coronavirus relief. Among those benefitting? The *Guardian* reports that list includes over ninety fossil fuel companies and more than 150 utilities, a number of which make

use of coal-fired power plants. One analysis showed that ten out of the top forty fracking companies would be eligible for the program. The *Washington Post* says that this program “may be the biggest campaign donor payoff in U.S. history.” The ReWIND Act (the Resources for Workforce Investments, Not Drilling Act; S.3611 in the Senate; not yet numbered in the House) would prohibit funding for fossil fuel companies via the CARES Act, the Defense Production Act, and the Federal Reserve and Treasury. It would also put a moratorium on new oil and gas leases during the COVID-19 epidemic and ban the Department of the Interior from loosening oil, gas, and coal regulations during the crisis. In the Senate, the ReWIND Act is with the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

URGE leadership of the Senate’s Energy and Natural Resources Committee to take swift, positive action on S.3611 and ask your Senators to support this legislation

- **Senator Lisa Murkowski** (R-AK), Chair, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-4971

- **Senator Joe Manchin** (D-WV), Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-4971

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

[Note: you can use the last of the links above to sign an Action Network petition in support of the ReWIND Act.]

EDUCATION

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/15/us/politics/betsy-devos-coronavirus-religious-schools.html>

The CARES Act, which provides Coronavirus relief, included \$30 billion for educational institutions. Education Secretary DeVos, who has discretion over these funds, has ordered that \$180 million of this money be offered as grants to parents hoping to move their children from public to private schools, including religious schools and has earmarked \$350 million that was to be directed to struggling colleges to private, religious, and for-profit colleges. These actions both benefit private schools that are less apt to serve low-income students and threaten the wall between church and state. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

TELL DeVos to use Coronavirus relief to help the neediest schools and students and **INSIST** that she honor the church/state separation enshrined in the Bill of Rights

- **Secretary Betsy DeVos**, U.S. Department of Education, 7W301 LBJ Building, Mail Number 0100, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington DC 20202, (202) 401-3000

EXPLAIN to your Congressmembers why you object to DeVos's inappropriate allocation of Coronavirus relief monies

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

ELECTIONS

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/20/us/politics/trump-michigan-vote-by-mail.html>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nicholasreimann/2020/05/19/coronavirus-infections-spiked-in-wisconsin-after-in-person-election-study-says/#36f02c8114b3>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/04/16/universal-vote-by-mail-doesnt-benefit-any-political-party-study-finds/>

http://www.andrewbenjaminhall.com/Thompson_et_al_VBM.pdf

Trump and Congressional Republicans are fighting efforts to expand vote-by-mail during the Coronavirus pandemic, despite a spike in COVID-19 cases in Wisconsin among those who voted in-person because additional vote-by-mail provisions were clocked. *Forbes* reports that a study by the University of Wisconsin and Ball State University found a "statistically and economically significant association" between in-person voting and the spread of Covid-19 weeks after the election. Republicans, who have made disenfranchisement a key part of their 2020 election strategy claim that vote-by-mail is insecure and likely to allow election fraud; however, a recent Stanford study, the largest of its kind, determined that vote-by-mail does not unfairly benefit either political party. Nonetheless, these same legislators seem to have no

problem with tax refunds, social security payments, Coronavirus stimulus checks, draft registration, prescription drugs, passports, and driver's licenses being delivered by mail.
(Write-up 5/23/2020)

INSIST on an end to this counterfactual claim about vote-by-mail benefitting one party over another and **DEMAND** national vote-by-mail to prevent the spread of Coronavirus among those choosing to participate in the 2020 election

- **Donald Trump**, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20500, (202) 456-1111

- **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), Senate Majority Leader, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-2541

ASK your Congressmembers to support public health by supporting vote-by-mail

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

ENVIRONMENT

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has posted notice regarding the Jordan Cove Liquefied Natural Gas Project, which would allow transportation of fracked gas from the Rockies and Canada across southern Oregon to Coos Bay where it will be turned into liquefied natural gas (LNG) at a giant new terminal, put on large tankers and sent overseas. A 36-inch fracked gas pipeline called Pacific Connector would travel 229 miles from Malin to Coos Bay, cutting through Klamath, Jackson, Douglas and Coos counties. This FERC notice "Petition for Declaratory Order (Petition) finding that the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality waived its authority to issue certification for the Jordan Cove LNG Terminal and Pacific Connector Pipeline under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act," would deprive the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality of the right to weigh in on this project, corporations over

state and local environmental concerns. Comments must be submitted by June 11. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

[Note; be sure to reference the docket numbers (CP17-495-003 and CP17-494-003) with your submission]

INSIST that local voices be honored and **OBJECT** to this FERC proposal

• **Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

[If you prefer, you can comment electronically at <http://www.ferc.gov>.]

ETHICS and SEPARATION of POWERS

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-inspectors-general-internal-watchdogs-fired-list/>

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/06/politics/michael-atkinson-firing/index.html>

<https://americanindependent.com/donald-trump-inspector-general-elaine-chao-transportation-department-mitch-mcconnell-kentucky-mitch-behm/>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/trump-removes-inspector-general-who-was-to-oversee-2-trillion-stimulus-spending/2020/04/07/2f0c6cb8-78ea-11ea-9bee-c5bf9d2e3288_story.html

Over the past few weeks, Trump has fired or removed from their positions five Inspectors General (IGs) or Acting Inspectors General for various governmental departments and offices: Michael Atkinson, Inspector General for the Intelligence Community; Mitch Behm, Acting Inspector General for the Department of Transportation; Glenn Fine, Inspector General for the Department of Defense; Christi Grimm, Acting Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services; and Steve Linick, Inspector General for the Department of State. Inspector Generals are non-partisan appointees charged, among other things, with investigating claims of unethical or illegal behavior within the department or office they oversee. Atkinson is the IG who notified the House of the whistle blower complaint regarding Trump's July 2019 phone conversation with the President of Ukraine, in which Trump intimated that Congressionally allocated aid to Ukraine would not be released until an investigation of Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, was undertake. This is the phone call that launched Trump's impeachment by the House of Representative. Behm was in the process of investigating Secretary of Transportation (and wife of Mitch McConnell) for inappropriately giving preferential

treatment to the state of Kentucky (the home state of Chao and McConnell) in funding for transportation projects when Trump removed him. Fine was slated to oversee a commission charged with monitoring Coronavirus relief spending. His firing prevented him from leading that commission, a position that required status as an IG. The *Washington Post* noted that Grimm's staff had "just completed a report finding 'severe shortages' of testing kits, delays in getting coronavirus results and 'widespread shortages' of masks and other equipment at U.S. hospitals." Linick had begun two investigations at the state department: inappropriate use of staff and resources by Secretary Mike Pompeo and his wife, and, more significantly, the process by which military technology was sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates after both houses of Congress had voted to block such a sale. Trump is now filling these positions with administration loyalists, meaning that the next President who is not Trump, and will perhaps be Joe Biden, will have the job of once again ensuring that these positions are nonpartisan. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

URGE Biden to commit himself now to reappointing these IGs who were appropriately responding to whistleblower complaints when Trump "lost faith" in them

• **Joe Biden** c/o American Possibilities, 918 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20003
(202) 456-1111

GENERAL DECENCY

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/17/us/immigration-agency-uscis-budget.html>

Applications to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for citizenship, green cards, and other programs have dropped precipitously since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. As a result, USCIS, which uses application fees as a significant part of its operating budget, has now announced that it faces insolvency by the end of the summer and is asking Congress for a \$1.2 cash infusion. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is also facing insolvency—because USPS, unlike any other government agency is required to fully fund all pensions up front, meaning it must have on hand money to pay decades' worth of pensions for every one of its employees, regardless of their age or how close they are to retirement. If Congress moves to provide USCIS with the requested funding, it should also increase funding for the USPS, which provides services just as vital as those of the USCIS. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

INSIST on no money for USCIS without full funding of the USPS

• **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

• **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

<https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2020/05/19/guard-deployments-may-end-one-day-short-of-mark-needed-for-retirement-education-benefits/>

<https://thehill.com/homenews/house/498499-max-rose-slams-wh-decision-to-end-national-guard-deployments-before-they-can>

Last week, the Republican administration signaled that it was planning to pull more than forty thousand National Guard troops from their Coronavirus pandemic-related work exactly one day short of the length of time that is required for many veterans' benefits to kick in, including a three-month credit towards retirement and 40% off tuition at public colleges and universities. Congressional resistance to this move has been strenuous, and the administration now claims it has not made a final decision on this matter. National Guard members on pandemic placements have been providing support to hospitals, enforcement of stay-at-home orders, and body removal, difficult and often deeply unpleasant work. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

INSIST that the administration abandon this plan and **CALL ON** your Congressmembers to stand up for the rights of National Guard members on the frontlines of the pandemic

• **Donald Trump**, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20500, (202) 456-1111

• **Pete T. Gaynor**, Federal Emergency Management Administrator, FEMA, 500 C St. SW, Washington DC 20024, (202) 646-2500

• **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

• **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

GUNS

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/05/14/senate-democratsghost-guns-256968>

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3743?s=2&r=2>

Guns made with 3-D printers, often referred to as "ghost guns," don't meet the current legal definition of a firearm. As a result, they're not required to have serial numbers and kits to make them can be purchased without being subject to gun control laws currently on the books. The Untraceable Firearms Act, S.3743 would require that these weapons have serial numbers and establish provisions to keep them out of the hands of violent felons and domestic abusers. This legislation is currently with the Senate Judiciary Committee. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

URGE the Senate Judiciary Committee to take swift, positive action on S.3743 and **ASK** your Senators to support this important legislation

- **Senator Lindsey Graham** (R-SC), Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee, 290 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5972

- **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841 [*Note: Feinstein is a cosponsor of S.3743*]

HUMAN and CIVIL RIGHTS

<https://www.npr.org/2020/05/13/854734386/mam-im-still-hungry-in-puerto-rico-child-hunger-becomes-a-flashpoint>

In the last few years, Puerto Rico has been hit with environmental disasters, including hurricanes and earthquakes, and now it is grappling with the Coronavirus pandemic. In every one of these crises, Puerto Rico has received inadequate funding to address the full scale of the damage. With the Coronavirus, families and communities still recovering from natural disasters are facing food scarcity. Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory and deserves the same kind of disaster-response support as the individual states should be able to expect. (Write-up 5/23/2020)

URGE Congress to provide Puerto Rico with ample, timely support to address food shortages, medical needs, and remaining damage from natural disasters

- **Representative Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA), Speaker of the House, 1236 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4965

- **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), Senate Majority Leader, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-2541

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3579>

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6400>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/federal-inmate-who-gave-birth-while-ventilator-dies-coronavirus-n1194946>

<https://action.aclu.org/send-message/tell-congress-covid-19-relief-must-include-incarcerated-people>

Prisons and jails, of course, are not exempt from the Coronavirus pandemic and can become hot spots for COVID-19 due to accommodations that make no allowance for social distancing. The Emergency Community Supervision Act (S.3579 in the Senate; H.R.6400 in the House) mandates the release of inmates who are pregnant, have underlying health issues and are 50 or older. This legislation also limits the use of pretrial detention and in-person supervised release. In both houses of Congress, this legislation is currently with the Judiciary Committee.

URGE swift, positive action on the Emergency Community Supervision Act by both Judiciary Committees and **CALL ON** your Congressmembers to support this legislation

- **Senator Lindsey Graham** (R-SC), Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee, 290 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5972

- **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

- **Representative Jerrold Nadler** (D-NY), Chair, House Judiciary Committee, 2141 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6909

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvi5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

[Note: If you would like to sign the American Civil Liberties Union's petition in support of the Emergency Community Supervision Act, you can use the final link at the top of this story.]