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ORGANIZERS TAKE TWO DAYS OF REST AFTER COVID-19 EXPOSURE AND PROTEST BIDEN AND BOWSER'S CONTINUED FAILURE TO SUPPORT MIGRANTS BEING BUSED TO DC FROM TEXAS AND ARIZONA

Washington, DC. Jul 13, 2022 — On July 12th, organizers supporting migrants bused to DC from Texas and Arizona took their second day off in three months to 1) rest and recover after many months of mental and physical exhaustion, 2) quarantine after a significant portion of the volunteers were exposed to COVID-19 over the weekend, and 3) protest the unsustainable conditions created by the lack of government response.

Organizers communicated this plan to SAMU USA, the only nonprofit receiving federal funding to do this work, and DC council offices in advance to ensure basic needs like reception, housing, and food for migrants be met on this day. Volunteers first attempted to take a day of rest [two months ago](#), but before the day ended, the nonprofit apparatus crumbled without the labor and resources provided by mutual aid. Organizers will continue to support the hundreds of migrants who have chosen to make DC their home during this time—by helping them find long term housing and accompanying them to medical and immigration accompaniments, among other things.

For over three months Governor Abbott of Texas has been busing migrants from the southern border to Washington, DC as part of a cruel and racist publicity stunt. Since this began on April 13th, 2022, Texas has sent ~120 buses carrying around three thousand people, including children and infants. Two months ago, Governor Ducey joined Abbott and began busing people from Arizona as well. In response, DC, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) community members, part of the migrant solidarity mutual aid network, have been showing up for migrants—receiving the buses at all times of day, sorting donations, finding housing, and spending over \$260,000 of grassroots raised money to support them while the DC and federal governments do nothing.

Governors Abbott and Ducey's stunt that aims to strand asylum-seekers at Union Station to make a point to President Biden has been largely [deemed a failure](#). However, it is not the government that has caused Abbott's plan to fail. In fact, the Biden administration has either ignored the situation or made [dismissive, glib remarks](#) about it. The DC government has been equally absent—Delegate Norton went as far as to say that [“there's been “no strain” on the city's resources”](#) due to the newly arrived migrants. Or they have taken credit for the mutual aid groups' work, like [Councilmember Pinto](#).

“DMV area community organizations and volunteers have shown up every day for over three months to support migrants but we are exhausted, burned out, and do not have the resources that the government does,” said Madhvi Bahl, from Sanctuary DMV and Free Them All VA. “DC, a self proclaimed sanctuary city, has a Mayor that refuses to even acknowledge the migrants

arriving in this city. It is time for Mayor Bowser to wake up, [meet our demands](#), and provide the resources that our new neighbors so desperately need.”

Abbott and Ducey’s publicity stunt, coupled with Biden and Bowser’s apathy, is harmful to the Black and brown migrants arriving on the buses. Additionally, it is harmful to Black and brown residents of DC who rely on the mutual aid networks and organizing community who have been greatly strained by this endeavor. With the number of migrants arriving daily increasing exponentially, mutual aid is no longer able to keep housing people, which means that newly arrived migrants are now using beds in shelters, thereby straining already over-stretched unhoused support organizations. This will result in less resources for the DC’s under-resourced unhoused community who continue to be [harassed and evicted](#) by a hostile local and federal government.

“What we have been doing as local organizers and volunteers was never supposed to be a long term solution. Our desire to support our community members has been exploited by the DC government for far too long as a way to ignore a growing humanitarian crisis in this city,” said Bianca Vazquez from Beloved Community Incubator. “**We urge Mayor Bowser to [meet our demands](#) and provide the dignified support our new neighbors deserve.**”

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***The migrant solidarity mutual aid network** comprises over 20 DMV area community organizations and hundreds more individual volunteers who are committed to supporting migrants being bused to DC by Governors Abbott and Ducey.*