

Sisters,

The following is published in Justice for Immigrants (JFI) a publication of the USCCB on Migration and Refugee Services. This was published April 17-28.

U.S. Bishops' Migration Chairman Addresses New Regional Migration Mitigation Efforts

On April 27, 2023, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of State announced a [series of actions](#) being taken in response to the anticipated end of the Title 42 public health order on May 11 and increased migration throughout the Western Hemisphere. The government's measures include doubling the number of refugees resettled from Latin America and the Caribbean, establishing regional processing centers in several countries, and intensifying immigration enforcement efforts.

Bishop Mark Seitz, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Migration, issued a statement welcoming increased refugee resettlement from Latin America and the Caribbean while expressing great concern that families and others seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border "will be subjected to rushed proceedings without meaningful due process." Bishop Seitz concluded his statement by saying, "Only through a long-term commitment to addressing root causes and promoting integral human development throughout the Americas, combined with an overhaul of our immigration system, will we be able to achieve the conditions necessary to sustainably reduce irregular migration."

U.S. House Committees Advance Harmful Immigration Bills

In recent days, three committees of the U.S. House of Representatives—Judiciary, Homeland Security, and Foreign Affairs—have worked on a partisan basis to advance bills relating to immigration. If passed as currently written, these bills would collectively:

1. Further limit access to asylum by narrowing the eligibility criteria, imposing an even stricter standard of proof, and requiring a fee;
2. Make it impossible for most asylum seekers and humanitarian parolees to work legally in the United States;
3. Require detention or removal of all those without a visa or prior authorization to enter the United States, including families with young children, asylum seekers at ports of entry with bona fide claims, unaccompanied children, and victims of torture/trafficking;
4. Prevent the government from funding legal representation for unaccompanied children (and others) in removal proceedings and subject them to expedited removal proceedings/indefinite detention by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS);
5. Severely restrict the use of humanitarian parole to the point of preventing its use in emergency situations that provide no viable alternative;
6. Criminalize visa overstays, even those that are inadvertent or based on a pending adjustment of status (for which the law currently provides flexibility);
7. Eliminate regulatory protections for noncitizen agricultural workers;
8. Require the construction of a wall along the U.S.- Mexico border;
9. Eliminate funding for alternatives to detention; and
10. Prevent DHS from providing any funds to NGOs that serve noncitizens.

The bills and recordings of their committee markups can be viewed below:

- [Border Security and Enforcement Act of 2023](#) (H.R. 2640)
- [Border Reinforcement Act of 2023](#) (H.R. 2794)
- [Regional Immigration Diplomacy and Enforcement Act](#) (H.R. 1690)

The USCCB's Committee on Migration expressed strong opposition to these measures before they were marked up in their respective committees. These bills are expected to go to the House floor for a vote by May 11. A formal letter of opposition from the Committee on Migration, action alert, and other materials will be provided soon.