

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Gabrielle Seiwert

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:02 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** We urge the Council to approve an amendment allowing LAJF attorneys to take on new clients. The current language restricting funding to existing cases would mean creating a waiting list—which is unacceptable in the middle of a pandemic, and with the Trump Administration continuing its assault on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. This amendment also ensures the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, and increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Rabeya Sen

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:03 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Los Angeles City Council, On behalf of Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, I am writing to express my full support for, and urge you to approve, item 5 to ensure the continued operation of the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) for current and new cases in the City of Los Angeles. We urge you to approve this item, including supporting language to ensure the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, which also ensures increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities. At Esperanza, we work alongside the community in South Central Los Angeles and have seen how ICE and the xenophobic immigration system have been tearing apart families, neighbors, and entire communities. No one should have to live in daily fear of such attacks -- with children wondering whether their parents will be taken, families worried about loved ones detained and with no avenue to check on their well-being or provide support to help them. No Angeleno should have to endure this, which is why we are asking for your strong support for this item and to ensure that LAJF providers have the flexibility to provide legal support to both current and new cases. With nearly 3.5 million immigrants living in Los Angeles and growing numbers of COVID 19 positive cases in California detention centers, including the Adelanto Detention Center where most LA residents are transferred to, it is imperative that the Los Angeles City Council approved funding today with no restrictions on taking on new cases. Amongst the many challenges that the immigrant community faces as a result of the COVID 19 is the increased likeliness of being sent to inhumane and medically unsafe detention centers if our city does not take action for the long-haul. As COVID-19 rages on, the Los Angeles City Council should and must not deny legal representation to new cases. The Trump Administration has built an expanded deportation machine, as well as a culture of hate and racism in our community, that will last long after (and if) Trump is someday gone. Since 2017, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has continued removal operations in Los Angeles. Unlike criminal proceedings, individuals in the immigration system are not provided court-appointed counsel to assist and represent them in their case. In Los Angeles County approximately 68% of detained

individuals and 26% of non-detained individuals lacked legal counsel. Evidently detained and released immigrants in Los Angeles who had legal counsel were five times more likely to win their case than those without legal representation. Among non-detained immigrants who had access to legal representation were four times more likely to win their case than those who were unrepresented. It is important to note that the LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing the changing policies, and developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others facing similar circumstances. Both the CAO and the independent evaluation team, VERA, report that not only has LAJF met expectations, but also exceeded them AND that there still remains a critical need for this program to protect immigrant Angelenos. We need the LAJF renewed at its full level of \$1 million to ensure a just recovery for all Angelenos and to counter this administration's cruel detention and deportation machine. Today, in the middle of a pandemic, LAJF attorneys continue doing the work. Despite our call to the federal government to free all individuals from detention that has not been the case. In complete opposite, detention centers like Adelanto are still considering expanding their number of beds. As a result, we write to respectfully urge your support for the funding allocated for the LAJF to ensure the protection of non-citizen Angelenos caught in the deportation machine. We cannot stand by and watch our neighbors and families torn apart when we know that we have the ability to do something to protect them. Thank you.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Ann English

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:11 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am writing to express my full support for, and urge you to approve, item 5 to ensure the continued operation of the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) for current and new cases in the City of Los Angeles. LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing the changing policies, and developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others facing similar circumstances. Importantly, Both the CAO and VERA, an independent evaluation team have reported that LAJF has met and exceeded expectations and that there remains a critical need to continue funding to protect vulnerable immigrant Angelenos. I strongly urge the council to renew and fully fund LAJF at \$1 million dollars to protect families from the ongoing assaults of this administration.

## **Communication from Public**

**Name:** Mariana Magana  
**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:12 AM  
**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please view letter attached.



2533 W. Third Street, Suite 101  
Los Angeles, California 90057

213.353.1333

1.888.624.4752

[www.chirla.org](http://www.chirla.org)

August 19, 2020

Los Angeles City Council  
200 N Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

**RE: Council File: 17-0046-S2 in SUPPORT of the Los Angeles Justice Fund**

On behalf of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), I am writing to express my **full support** for, and urge you to approve, item 5 to ensure the continued operation of the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) for current and new cases in the City of Los Angeles. We urge you to approve this item, including supporting language to ensure the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, which also ensures increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities.

Founded in 1986 CHIRLA is a California leader, with national impact, made up of diverse immigrant families and individuals who act as agents of social change to achieve a world with freedom of mobility, full human rights, and true participatory democracy, fully inclusive of refugees and immigrants. CHIRLA prides itself in its work to serve the immigrant community through civic engagement, community education, organizing, the provision of legal immigration services, and advocacy at the forefronts of local, state, and federal government.

With nearly 3.5 million immigrants living in Los Angeles and growing numbers of COVID 19 positive cases in California detention centers, including the Adelanto Detention Center where most LA residents are transferred to, it is imperative

**HEADQUARTERS**

2533 W. 3rd Street, Suite 101  
Los Angeles, California 90057

**STATE OFFICE**

1225 8th Street, Suite 240  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**NATIONAL OFFICE**

740 15th Street NW, Suite 331  
Washington, DC 20005

**OFFICES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES • SOUTH LOS ANGELES • EAST LOS ANGELES • SAN FERNANDO VALLEY • SAN BERNARDINO  
ORANGE COUNTY • CENTRAL VALLEY

**PRESENCE IN YOUR AREA**

ANTELOPE VALLEY • HIGH DESERT • FRESNO



that the Los Angeles City Council approved funding today with no restrictions on taking on new cases.

Amongst the many challenges that the immigrant community faces as a result of the COVID 19 is the increased likeliness of being sent to inhumane and medically unsafe detention centers if our city does not take action for the long-haul.

As COVID-19 rages on, the Los Angeles City Council should and must not deny legal representation to new cases. The Trump Administration has built an expanded deportation machine, as well as a culture of hate and racism in our community, that will last long after (and if) Trump is someday gone.

Since 2017, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has continued removal operations in Los Angeles. Unlike criminal proceedings, individuals in the immigration system are not provided court-appointed counsel to assist and represent them in their case. In Los Angeles County approximately 68% of detained individuals and 26% of non-detained individuals lacked legal counsel. Evidently detained and released immigrants in Los Angeles who had legal counsel were five times more likely to win their case than those without legal representation. Among non-detained immigrants who had access to legal representation were four times more likely to win their case than those who were unrepresented.

It is important to note that the LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing the changing policies, and developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others





**CHIRLA**

Coalition for Humane  
Immigrant Rights



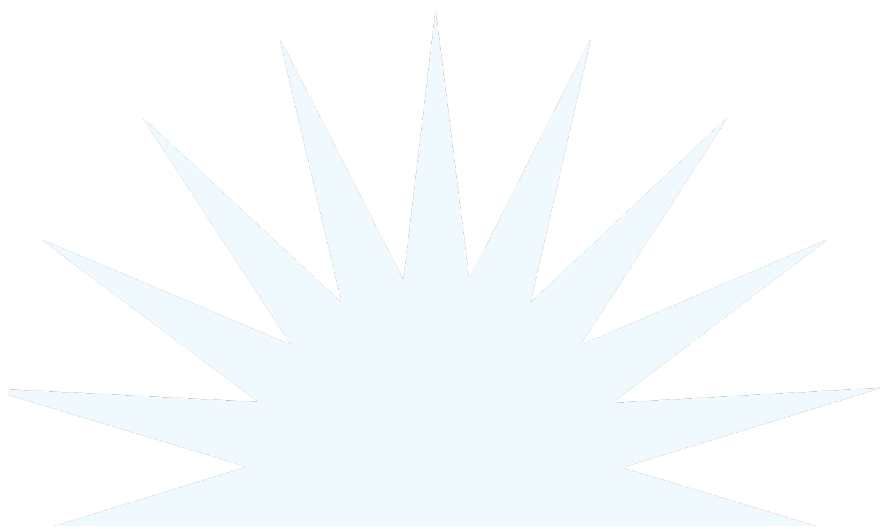
facing similar circumstances. **Both the CAO and the independent evaluation team, VERA, report that not only has LAJF met expectations, but also exceeded them AND that there still remains a critical need for this program to protect immigrant Angelenos. We need the LAJF renewed at its full level of \$1 million to ensure a just recovery for all Angelenos and to counter this administration's cruel detention and deportation machine.**

Today, in the middle of a pandemic, LAJF attorneys continue doing the work. Despite our call to the federal government to free all individuals from detention that has not been the case. In complete opposite, detention centers like Adelanto are still considering expanding their number of beds. As a result, we write to respectfully urge your support for the funding allocated for the LAJF to ensure the protection of non-citizen Angelenos caught in the deportation machine. **We cannot stand by and watch our neighbors and families torn apart when we know that we have the ability to do something to protect them.**

Respectfully,

Mariana Magana  
CHIRLA Policy Advocate

Joseph Villela  
CHIRLA Policy and Advocacy Director







## Communication from Public

**Name:** Diane Lefer

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:19 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** I first visited detainees in area detention centers in 1999. Conditions were horrendous then. They are deadly now. Please provide renewed funding for the LA Justice Fund and approve the amendment to allow attorneys to accept new cases. The current language restricting funding to existing cases would mean creating a waiting list—which is unacceptable in the middle of a pandemic, and with the Trump Administration continuing its assault on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. This amendment also ensures the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, and increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities. Immigrants are traumatized in their home countries and en route to the US. Detention conditions are equally - sometimes more - traumatizing. Please act with thoughtful compassion.

## **Communication from Public**

**Name:** Camila Alvarez  
**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:27 AM  
**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached public comment from CARECEN



CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

August 19, 2020

Los Angeles City Council Hearing  
Hearing Date: 8/19/2020

**Re:** Agenda Item #5, Council File 17-0046-S2, Los Angeles Justice Fund

Dear City Councilmembers,

I am writing on behalf of the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN). CARECEN is a non-profit, community-based organization with a mission to promote the human and civil rights of Central Americans and other immigrant communities through legal and educational services, and by advocating and organizing to transform immigration, worker rights and education policies. The organization has been in business since 1983.

CARECEN has a well-documented 34-year history providing legal services and advocating for Central American refugees and other immigrant communities, including traumatized children who have experienced the horrors of abuse, war, trafficking, violence, and persecution. CARECEN has advocated extensively for the needs and rights of Central American refugees and immigrants since its inception. CARECEN began large-scale representation of individuals detained at the Adelanto Detention Center in 2017 thanks in large part to funding through the Los Angeles Justice Fund. Since 2017, we have been able to grow our removal defense work and expand representation of Los Angeles County and City residents detained in Adelanto.

We are writing in regards to Council File 17-0046-S2. We want to thank We also want to recognize the strong support we have received from both the Mayor's office and from several City Council Members – Councilmember Cedillo, Councilmember Krekorian, and Councilmember Bonin -- in ensuring that renewal of LAJF has kept moving forward. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has taken the next step to renew the LAJF and we urge the City Council to do so as well.

We urge the Council to approve an amendment allowing LAJF attorneys to take on new clients. The current language restricting funding to existing cases would mean creating a waiting list—which is unacceptable in the middle of a pandemic, and with the Trump Administration continuing its assault on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. This amendment also ensures the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, and increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities.

As COVID-19 continues to take a toll on immigrant communities, immigration continues to operate business as usual. While the non-detained immigration court docket has been postponed, the detained immigration court docket has continued throughout the entire Safer from Home

2845 West 7th Street, Los Angeles, California 90005-3907; 468 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 204, San Bernardino, CA 92401

tel: 213-385-7800 / fax: 213-385-1094 / web: [www.carecen-la.org](http://www.carecen-la.org)





CARECEN

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

period. This means that detained individuals remain detained and that their cases continue to move forward in court. For this reason, continued representation is more critical than ever to ensure that detainees have access to zealous advocates fighting for their release.

In May alone, ICE newly booked 5,580 people into detention 5,580 people. The conditions individuals are facing inside detention centers like Adelanto and inhumane. Most recently, individuals inside the Adelanto detention center have reported that as COVID cases continue to increase, Individuals currently detained inside Adelanto have reported that people entering the facility do not wear masks and that hand sanitizer stations are often empty. Inside the detention center, there is no policy in place for testing anyone other than new arrivals, so even if an outbreak was rampant in the general population no one would know. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Adelanto is increasing. As of today, there are 10 confirmed cases of detained individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19.

In addition to the dangers posed by COVID-19, individuals detained in Adelanto have reported increased abuses against them by GEO. Since mid-April, GEO has been using a very harsh chemical called "HDQ Neutral" to disinfect the facility, causing detainees to experience difficulty breathing, bloody noses, and burning eyes. ([https://laist.com/2020/05/22/advocates\\_file\\_complaint\\_over\\_chemical\\_use\\_at\\_adelanto\\_detention\\_center.php](https://laist.com/2020/05/22/advocates_file_complaint_over_chemical_use_at_adelanto_detention_center.php)) Despite multiple complaints filed, GEO continues to utilize these harsh chemicals.

Detainees imprisoned in Adelanto also continue to experience extreme use of force. On June 12, 2020, GEO officers dressed in full riot gear pepper spray, pepper bullets, and other "non-lethal" weapons against peaceful detainees in 5 dorms in Adelanto West, causing some detainees to lose consciousness and multiple detainees to be hospitalized. Multiple detainees our Attorneys spoke to described that officers beat up at least one detainee until there was blood all over the floor. Now, anywhere from one to two dozen detainees are in solitary confinement for 30 days in retaliation for "resisting." The five dorms remain on extremely restrictive lockdowns. The confrontation happened after GEO told detainees they had to go into lockdown because of protests outside the facility that the detainees had nothing to do with. (<https://laist.com/2020/06/22/adelanto-detention-facility-immigrant-detainee-protest.php>; <https://capitalandmain.com/immigrant-detainees-accuse-guardians-of-chemical-attacks-0625>).

It is crucial the Los Angeles Justice Fund continues to be funded and allows for Legal Service Providers to accept new cases to serve members of our Los Angeles community that are languishing in immigration detention.

It is important to note that the LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing the changing policies, and

2845 West 7th Street, Los Angeles, California 90005-3907; 468 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 204, San Bernardino, CA 92401

tel: 213-385-7800 / fax: 213-385-1094 / web: [www.carecen-la.org](http://www.carecen-la.org)





CARECEN

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others facing similar circumstances. **Both the CAO and the independent evaluation team, VERA, report that not only has LAJF met expectations, but also exceeded them AND that there still remains a critical need for this program to protect immigrant Angelenos. We need the LAJF renewed at its full level of \$1 million to ensure a just recovery for all Angelenos and to counter this administration's cruel detention and deportation machine.**

Today, in the middle of a pandemic, LAJF attorneys continue doing the work. Despite our call to the federal government to free all individuals from detention that has not been the case. In complete opposite, detention centers like Adelanto are still considering expanding their number of beds. As a result, we write to respectfully urge your support for the funding allocated for the LAJF to ensure the protection of non-citizen Angelenos caught in the deportation machine. **We cannot stand by and watch our neighbors and families torn apart when we know that we have the ability to do something to protect them.**

//s// Camila Alvarez

Managing Attorney

Central American Resource Center

2845 West 7th Street, Los Angeles, California 90005-3907; 468 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 204, San Bernardino, CA 92401

tel: 213-385-7800 / fax: 213-385-1094 / web: [www.carecen-la.org](http://www.carecen-la.org)



## Communication from Public

**Name:** Chelsea Bell

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:35 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Los Angeles City Council Members, I am a Removal Defense Attorney at the Immigrant Defenders Law Center representing almost exclusively LAJF clients. I am writing to express my full support for, and urge you to approve, item 5 - to ensure the continued operation of the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) for both current and new cases in the City of Los Angeles. We urge you to approve this item, including supporting the amendment language to ensure the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, which also ensures increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities. LAJF has established an invaluable infrastructure for detained removal defense in Los Angeles - an infrastructure that was sorely lacking prior to LAJF. Funding for detained removal cases is extremely limited given the immense challenges associated with representing detained clients, regardless of where they are. For us, here in Los Angeles, that means at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center, one of the largest and most poorly run immigration facilities in the nation. The UN and DHS' own Office of the Inspector General have decried the disgusting treatment people receive while detained at Adelanto. It has been critical for organizations to be able to send their attorneys into the Adelanto detention facility to expose some of the violations that occur there, violations that are being committed against LA City residents. Los Angeles has almost 3.5 million immigrant residents and as ICE continues to snatch people from their homes, families, work places, and communities, we are also seeing growing numbers of COVID 19 positive cases in California detention centers, including the Adelanto Detention Center where LA residents in ICE custody will be detained. LAJF has been the only consistent and structured response trying to protect those in ICE custody during a global pandemic. We know that ICE Direct Gabriel Valdez at Adelanto refused to use 1900 COVID tests on those detained at Adelanto out of fear of the numbers they would then have to report. This is unacceptable. LA residents are being exposed and put in a life and death situation that LAJF can help mitigate, please vote to fully fund LAJF's ability to take on new cases as the need is only growing. Unlike criminal proceedings, individuals in the immigration system are not provided court-appointed counsel to assist and represent them in their case.

In Los Angeles County approximately 68% of detained individuals and 26% of non-detained individuals lacked legal counsel. Statistically, an individual in the detained immigration court in Los Angeles with legal counsel is FIVE times more likely to win their case than those without legal representation. It is important to note that the LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing the changing policies, and developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others facing similar circumstances. Both the CAO and the independent evaluation team, VERA, report that not only has LAJF met expectations, but also exceeded them AND that there still remains a critical need for this program to protect immigrant Angelenos. As COVID-19 rages on, the Los Angeles City Council should and must not deny legal representation to new cases. We need the LAJF renewed at its full level of \$1 million to ensure a just recovery for all Angelenos and to counter this administration's cruel detention and deportation machine. Today, in the middle of a pandemic, LAJF attorneys continue doing the work. Despite the dangers we know about COVID-19, detention centers like Adelanto are still transferring people around the country and trying to expand. As a result, we write to respectfully urge your support for the funding allocated for the LAJF to ensure the protection of non-citizen Angelenos caught in the deportation machine. We cannot stand by and watch our neighbors and families torn apart when we know that we have the ability to do something to protect them. Thank you.



## Communication from Public

**Name:** Gina Viola

**Date Submitted:** 08/19/2020 09:46 AM

**Council File No:** 17-0046-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** On behalf of Trade Show Temps and HealthyLA I am writing to express my full support for, and urge you to approve, item 5 to ensure the continued operation of the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) for current and new cases in the City of Los Angeles. We urge you to approve this item, including supporting language to ensure the increased flexibility to serve all eligible cases, current and new, which also ensures increased efficiency in use of funds to maximize the benefit to our immigrant communities. With nearly 3.5 million immigrants living in Los Angeles and growing numbers of COVID 19 positive cases in California detention centers, including the Adelanto Detention Center where most LA residents are transferred to, it is imperative that the Los Angeles City Council approved funding today with no restrictions on taking on new cases. Amongst the many challenges that the immigrant community faces as a result of the COVID 19 is the increased likeliness of being sent to inhumane and medically unsafe detention centers if our city does not take action for the long-haul. As COVID-19 rages on, the Los Angeles City Council should and must not deny legal representation to new cases. The Trump Administration has built an expanded deportation machine, as well as a culture of hate and racism in our community, that will last long after (and if) Trump is someday gone. Since 2017, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has continued removal operations in Los Angeles. Unlike criminal proceedings, individuals in the immigration system are not provided court-appointed counsel to assist and represent them in their case. In Los Angeles County approximately 68% of detained individuals and 26% of non-detained individuals lacked legal counsel. Evidently detained and released immigrants in Los Angeles who had legal counsel were five times more likely to win their case than those without legal representation. Among non-detained immigrants who had access to legal representation were four times more likely to win their case than those who were unrepresented. It is important to note that the LAJF has been critical in responding and spearheading efforts to mitigate the draconian and inhumane policies of the Trump Administration. LAJF attorneys and advocates have provided and can continue to provide support and respite, as they are on the ground, in detention centers, and in immigration courts tracking cases, seeing

the changing policies, and developing real-time solutions that can be best-practice models for others facing similar circumstances. Both the CAO and the independent evaluation team, VERA, report that not only has LAJF met expectations, but also exceeded them AND that there still remains a critical need for this program to protect immigrant Angelenos. We need the LAJF renewed at its full level of \$1 million to ensure a just recovery for all Angelenos and to counter this administration's cruel detention and deportation machine. Today, in the middle of a pandemic, LAJF attorneys continue doing the work. Despite our call to the federal government to free all individuals from detention that has not been the case. In complete opposite, detention centers like Adelanto are still considering expanding their number of beds. As a result, we write to respectfully urge your support for the funding allocated for the LAJF to ensure the protection of non-citizen Angelenos caught in the deportation machine. We cannot stand by and watch our neighbors and families torn apart when we know that we have the ability to do something to protect them. Thank you.