

## **We Need Migration Policies that Recognize the Humanity of All People**

The American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, institutions guided by the tenets of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), seek policies that uplift that of God in every human being.

As such, we adamantly oppose the Secure the Border Act of 2023 (H.R. 2). This legislation dishonors the Spirit of God that dwells within asylum seekers and migrants—as well as long-recognized human rights under international law—by willfully endangering those fleeing persecution and harm.

H.R. 2 proposes imprisoning and deporting children by re-establishing family detention and casting out unaccompanied children from the United States. It withholds basic necessities to displaced families by eliminating funding for aid groups who lovingly and faithfully provide humanitarian relief and care to the stranger. Distressingly, it also resurrects measures such as the Remain in Mexico policy, an initiative that left many vulnerable to assault and even death.

The bill furthers a false presumption that those seeking protection by physically presenting themselves in the United States to apply for asylum—as the nation’s laws mandate—threaten the vitality and safety of the country.

It’s indisputable: advancing the Secure the Border Act of 2023 would deny the divine value of every human life seeking protection at the U.S. border.

The United States’ migration policies need reform and must prioritize community safety. But H.R. 2 fails to offer meaningful solutions. Instead, it villainizes asylum seekers and migrants as invaders who disregard order when, in truth, they are our neighbors. Our neighbors who risked everything to undertake perilous journeys in the desperate hope that the United States might truly be a place that lives its stated values of justice, liberty, and prosperity for all.

We call on Congress to break down walls of hostility, lead with peace, and uplift solutions that serve us all (Ephesians 2:14; Romans 14:19). As [\*A Quaker Statement on Migration\*](#) attests:

*Migration justice is ensuring welcome, inclusion, dignity, shared security, sanctuary, love, and compassion, as needed, because we are all part of the same human family whether we migrate or not.*

*Migration justice sees each of us as unique and precious and recognises the individual journeys, gifts, and struggles of every migrant and enables their specific needs to be met, gifts to be nurtured, and dignity to be upheld.*

Policymakers must create migration solutions that safely and efficiently process new arrivals. The U.S. government should also invest in a sustainable, community-based infrastructure of welcome. This should include wraparound services, housing, legal representation, and work authorization. Nationwide investments in these services would allow asylum seekers and migrants awaiting a determination on their claims to find stability in the United States—with less strain on compassionate and generous border towns. While continuing to address root causes, the U.S. government must also create pathways that consider the reasons people migrate and respond appropriately with updated processes to address the human right to migrate.

Passing the Secure Border Act of 2023 would forsake our shared humanity and the promises of a nation rooted in democracy. It would fail to cherish the Inner Light of all people.

Anika Forrest

*Legislative Director, Domestic Policy*  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
[afortrest@fcnl.org](mailto:afortrest@fcnl.org)

Imani Cruz

*Migration Policy Coordinator*  
American Friends Service Committee  
[icruz@afsc.org](mailto:icruz@afsc.org)