

Minute in Support of Immigrants and Refugees

Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends believes in the inherent sacredness of every person, from every place. As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), love of neighbors and enemies and the imperative to care for immigrants, widows, and children is central to our faith tradition. Our testimony of peace leads us to do what we can to help heal harms from war, including creating safe communities and building relationships with those whose lives have been upended by militarism, violence, and imperialism, such as those seeking refuge. We also hold concern for those displaced by the climate crisis. These values of care are particularly important because it is our own country that has caused many of these harms due to war, imperialist extraction, exploitation, and emissions leading to climate change, which are causing harm the world over.

Immigrants, refugees, and displaced people should be treated with dignity and have their human rights respected. We condemn the raids across the United States and plans for mass deportation that put families and beloved community members at risk of separation, violate human and civil rights, and expand detention and deportation.

Meanwhile, resettlement of refugees fleeing dangerous situations has been stalled. This deeply affects our communities, as we continue to support refugees and have prepared to support new families seeking refuge from violent and unsafe situations.

We urge our members of Congress to keep the United States open to all refugees and asylum seekers, and to treat people with kindness and compassion regardless of where they were born. We acknowledge that most of our families are also immigrants here, living on stolen land. Extending hospitality and sharing what we have can begin to heal some of the harms caused by unjust laws and practices of empires past and present. We call for an immediate halt to mass deportations and detention. We also call for the reinstatement of protected places from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids at places of worship, workplaces, schools, and hospitals.

We support immigrants, refugees, and displaced people at each stage of their journey.

We support the Witness for Religious Freedom Lawsuit against the United States Department of Homeland Security, with plaintiffs from New England Yearly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and other Friends, which affirms the Constitutional right of all people to attend worship without fear, including immigrants, refugees, and displaced people in this land, regardless of their country of origin.

Sources:

- <https://afsc.org/resisting-mass-detention-and-deportation>
- <https://afsc.org/action/stop-deportations-now>
- <https://afsc.org/issue/migration-immigrant-rights>
- <https://columbiafriendsmeeting.org/minute-regarding-refugees-and-immigrants/>