



Coalición de Derechos Humanos
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Statement on Immigration Reform Proposals:

Demilitarize Border Communities and Stop the Deaths

(Tucson, Arizona) Human rights organization Coalición de Derechos Humanos (DH), joins immigrant rights groups across the country to call on the U.S. Congress to stop the deaths at the U.S.-Mexico border, demilitarize border communities, end the privatization of border and immigration enforcement, oppose new guest worker programs and support reunification of families and legalization with full rights for all.

For the last 12 years, DH has engaged in local and national efforts to challenge the expansion of massive walls and detention centers, military-style policing and raids, systematic racial profiling, unjustified shootings by U.S. Border Patrol agents, heightening surveillance and military troops in border communities. These so-called "border security" policies shatter families, have directly claimed the lives of more than 4,000 migrants and are generating an escalating humanitarian crisis along the border.

The federal government's militarized policies of border control have deliberately funneled migrants through the most desolate desert areas and also spurred dramatic growth in the human smuggling industry. These policies have caused increasing migrant deaths, violence, vigilantism, environmental destruction and destabilization in our communities. Border militarization jeopardizes the safety of all communities and perpetuates widespread injustice, while rewarding private security contractors with glaring records of corruption and impunity, including Haliburton, Boeing, Corrections Corporation of America and Lockheed Martin.

Non-border communities have a stake in ending the intolerable conditions at the border. Deportation without Due Process, police-ICE cooperation, vast surveillance operations and militarized policing are examples of measures first implemented on the border and now routinely used across the country, in immigrant and non-immigrant communities alike.

The call for border demilitarization, human rights and accountability in immigration law enforcement is indispensable for an immigration program that provides full legalization, enforces labor protections for all workers and includes more options for legal immigration so that migrants do not have to risk their lives crossing through the desert. Immigration reform must also address migration as a result of the unscrupulous free trade policies that are displacing and uprooting millions of people from their communities. We call on the U.S. Congress to act now to re-establish the stability, peace, safety and dignity of all communities along the U.S.-Mexico border.

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