

Justice in Motion

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

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Visa Pages

News & Media

More

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Al Otro Lado and Justice in Motion Call on President-Elect Biden to Take Concrete Steps to Reunify and Support Separated Families

Al Otro Lados Family Reunification Program has successfully returned 36 parents who were separated from their children and then deported, more than any other organization. We continue to represent deported parents in their bid to reunify with their children in the United States. These efforts have been supported by Justice in Motion, whose network of human rights defenders in Central America and Mexico is using their local knowledge, indigenous language skills, and transnational legal expertise to locate separated parents after they were deported and connect them to U.S. lawyers.

Together, we have borne witness to the devastating personal toll of family separation, a policy defined by Physicians for Human Rights as torture. We are committed not only to finding these parents and fighting to reunify them with their children, but to ensuring these families are not subjected to further trauma.

Our experience with reuniting families has taught us that locating and bringing the parents back to the U.S. is just the beginning. It is not enough to reunify these parents with their children. It is not enough to give them another chance to seek asylum. Placing them in court proceedings would force families to once again relive the horrors they fled and the trauma of separation in a legal environment that has become ever more hostile to asylum seekers. That is not justice. Justice is restitution, safety, and the opportunity for a new life in the United States.

As President-Elect Biden works to assemble his family separation task force, we call on him to commit to the following actions:

Return all parents, children, and legal guardians who were deported after being separated who wish to reunify in the United States.

Provide legal status and work permits for all who were separated under Zero Tolerance and under the secretly implemented pilot program that preceded it.

Allocate funds for ongoing supportive resources to families to cover all essential needs.

Allocate funds for ongoing mental health care.

Taking these actions will not erase the harm suffered, but they are the necessary first steps toward the justice and healing these families deserve.

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[Al Otro Lado](#) (AOL) is a bi-national non-profit providing direct legal aid and representation to deportees, asylum seekers, detained migrants and separated families. AOL also employs impact litigation and policy advocacy to promote lasting and systemic changes that protect immigrants rights.

[Justice in Motion](#) protects migrant rights by ensuring justice across borders. Our unique network of on-the-ground human rights

defenders in Mexico and Central America partner with U.S. advocates to make sure that wherever migrants go, their rights will follow.

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