

June 24, 2020

Lauren Alder Reid, Assistant Director  
Office of Policy  
Executive Office for Immigration Review  
5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 1800  
Falls Church, VA 22041

Re: Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice; U.S. Citizenship and  
Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security  
RIN 1125-AA94 or EOIR Docket No. 18-0002

Dear Assistant Director:

I am writing to express my concern and strong opposition to this proposal.

The right to protection from persecution, the right to asylum, is a basic human right that the U.S. has upheld for many decades and that has made our country a beacon of hope for many across the world. Anyone who cannot return to their home country “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” has the right to ask for protection and to seek safe haven in the U.S. With the proposed law, however, survivors of domestic violence, members of the LGBTQ community, and gang violence survivors would not qualify for asylum anymore. People being persecuted for their political opinion will only qualify if they can prove they were intent on overthrowing the regime in their home country. Due process, the credible fear interview and torture screenings would be even more compromised, rushed and at the discretion of people who are ultimately not best qualified to make these momentous decisions. Being denied asylum is very often a decision of life or death for the applicant. Please place that decision in the hands of well-trained professionals and allow the process the time and in-depth inquiry that every human life warrants.

People seeking asylum had to flee their countries to save their lives. They are very often change makers, highly educated people who risked their lives to stand up for democracy, human rights and gender equality in their home countries. They have been able to reach our shores because of their courage, resilience, strength and often embody the most beautiful of the human spirit.

History has judged us for returning Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany to their persecutors. We need to learn from history and we need to continue to be a safe haven for those who would be imprisoned, tortured or killed in their home countries if they were sent back from our borders without due process and without a chance to make their stories heard.

Please do not enact this proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,