

March 29, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger

Chair

Committee on Appropriations

H-307 The Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro

Ranking Member

Committee on Appropriations

1036 Longworth HOB

Washington, DC 20515

David Joyce

Chair

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Homeland Security

2006 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC

Henry Cuellar

Ranking Member

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Homeland Security

1036 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC

Dear Committee Chair Granger, Subcommittee Chair Joyce, Committee Ranking Member DeLauro, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Cuellar:

As you make considerations for the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Homeland Appropriations bill, we strongly urge you to support \$800 million in funding for the newly established Shelter and Services Program (SSP) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which is consistent with the level of funding provided in Fiscal Year 2023. Doing so will ensure that migrants, many of whom are families with children, receive necessary lifesaving resources in a timely manner. Coordinating between federal, state, and local partners is critical to affirm safe housing and access to appropriate social and legal services for asylum seekers.

The SSP was created in the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23 Omnibus) to provide communities in the United States with the funding necessary to care for newly processed asylum seekers once they are released from custody. Beginning in 2019, state and local governments in communities that regularly receive migrants and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who assist in providing food, shelter, and resources to migrants became eligible to receive reimbursements for their services through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Emergency Food and Shelter Humanitarian Program (EFSP-H). This novel approach has allowed communities and NGOs – especially those on the U.S.-Mexico border – to address the vital needs of asylum seekers and still be made whole by the federal government for their services.

However, following a historic year of asylum seeker arrivals to the United States, the SSP was created to give communities and NGOs direct assistance through grants, rather than subjecting them to a lengthy reimbursement process. This program is currently in its nascent stages, but it could be *transformational* for the way that state and local governments and NGOs deliver services to vulnerable asylum seekers in their communities, potentially increasing the scope of the services they provide. Through direct grant assistance, which is disbursed upfront, state

agencies and NGOs will be able to better plan for securing and maintaining shelter space, providing orientation services, and arranging transportation – creating a vastly superior alternative to having them submit reimbursement requests and waiting to be repaid.

As the country prepares for the end of the public health emergency and the winddown of Title 42 on May 11th, the Department of Homeland Security, Border Patrol Sectors along the Southwest border, and immigration advocacy groups are expecting increased migrant arrivals at the Southwest border. Asylum seekers arriving in states like Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and even Florida often relocate to different places like New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver, and Seattle and other smaller communities– a trend that is expected to continue into FY24 and beyond. The federal government must ensure that both border communities and the other communities around the nation who are welcoming these migrants with open arms have the resources necessary to receive, process, and continue providing services for migrants released from CBP custody. We ask that you support the SSP program with \$800 million in funding for expected border encounters in FY24, consistent with its FY23 funding. Thank you.

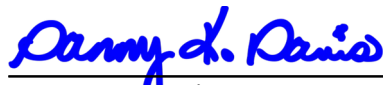
Sincerely,



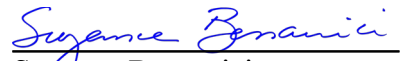
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Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
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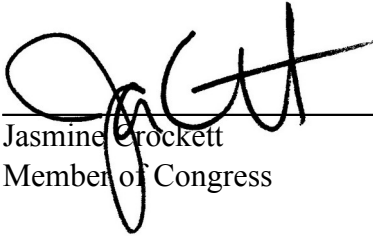
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Member of Congress



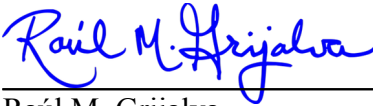
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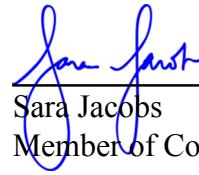
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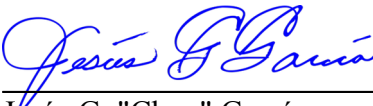
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Member of Congress



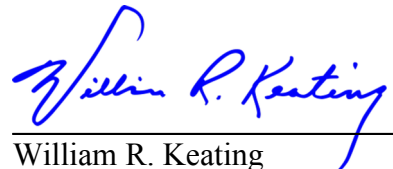
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



MIKE LEVIN
Member of Congress



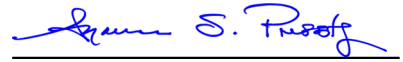
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Member of Congress



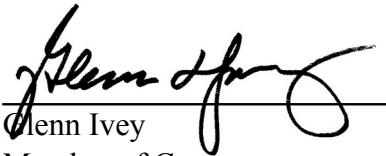
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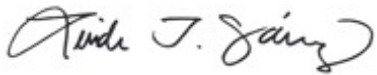
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