

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

May 8, 2023

Dear Representative,

I am writing on behalf of the AFL-CIO to urge you to oppose H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act of 2023. This bill advances a divisive agenda that would increase risks to the lives and livelihoods of workers, children, and families. Rather than punitive, enforcement-only approaches, we urge Members to pursue meaningful reforms that expand rights and protections for all.

Successive waves of immigrants and refugees have always helped to build, serve and feed our nation. Today is no different. Far from posing a threat, newly arriving migrants can make valuable contributions to our society when afforded the proper supports to allow them to effectively integrate into our communities. The labor movement is committed to welcoming more refugees, asylum seekers and other forced migrants and helping them to integrate into the workforce with good union jobs.

H.R. 2 fails to provide the effective and humane policy solutions needed to address the flaws and injustices in our immigration system. This bill would implement unbalanced policies focused on deterrence, detention, and removal that violate key principles of human and worker rights. Among many concerns, the bill seeks to severely restrict asylum, reduce protections for children, limit relief options for the administration, erode due process, expend taxpayer resources on a border wall, strip funding for humanitarian programs, and promote detention and deportation of immigrants and families.

Any serious attempt to use immigration policy to lift wages and standards must start with a broad and inclusive pathway to citizenship, not the costly expansion of a flawed mechanisms that fail to ensure basic worker protections. Unfortunately, the workforce provisions in H.R. 2 move us further in the wrong direction. The bill would mandate the use of E-Verify, which has often been used by employers as a tool to bust unions and chill the exercise of workplace rights. It would also cause significant harm to the workforce by limiting the ability of asylum seekers to obtain work authorization and stripping rules that were designed to lift standards and wages for agricultural workers in the H-2A program.

As a nation, we must uphold our humanitarian obligations and insist on strong protections and rights for all workers, children and families, regardless of immigration status. Amidst escalating displacement and exploitation, we urge you to vote NO on the Secure the Border Act.

Sincerely,



William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

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