



NNEDV
NATIONAL NETWORK
TO END DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE

1325 Massachusetts Ave NW
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-4188

NNEDV.org
phone: 202.543.5566
fax: 202.543.5626

**Jean Treuthart, Interim President and CEO,
National Network to End Domestic Violence:**

**U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security Hearing:
“The Consequences of Criminal Aliens on U.S. Communities”**

July 13, 2023

The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and our 56 state and U.S. territory coalitions against domestic violence respectfully submit this statement to the United States House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, as it considers “The Consequences of Criminal Aliens on U.S. Communities.”

NNEDV is a national voice for domestic violence victims and survivors, including immigrant survivors, and advocates. As a membership and advocacy organization of state and territorial domestic violence coalitions, allied organizations and supportive individuals, NNEDV works closely with its members to understand the ongoing and emerging needs of domestic violence victims and advocacy programs.

Immigrant victims and survivors of gender-based violence are often too afraid to seek help or come forward and have an increased fear of deportation, retaliation by their abusers, and separation from their children.¹ Abusers often hold immigrant status over a victim as a tactic to maintain control and to trap a victim in the abusive relationship.

Federal policies should support victims in accessing help without fear of being criminalized to help victims and their families and keep communities safer. For instance, sanctuary cities play a crucial role in providing safety and support for victims and survivors. By limiting cooperation between local law enforcement and immigration authorities, these policies foster community trust with local law enforcement and empower immigrant victims to come forward and report perpetrators of crime without fear of being criminalized themselves.

Any proposals that further entangle local law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement would exacerbate victims’ fear and increase the risk the risk of harm to victims of all crimes. It is vital for immigrant victims and survivors to be able to access law enforcement, and utilize the civil legal and criminal justice systems without fear of detainment and deportation. Policies that hinder immigrant survivors’ pathways to justice and safety reduce the likelihood of immigrant victims or witnesses reporting crimes,

empower abusers and perpetrators, create extreme fear for immigrant families and communities, and undermine public safety. We urge the Committee to consider the unique needs of immigrant survivors and to invest in policies that promote victim-centered approaches to public safety.

ⁱ May 2019 Findings: Immigrant Survivors Fear Reporting Violence. Tahirih Justice Center. Retrieved from <https://www.tahirih.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Advocate-Survey-Final.pdf>