

2024 Advocacy PRIORITIES



In 2024, CLINIC seeks to harness the power of its Affiliate Network in furtherance of the following policy objectives. Our theory of change is grounded in the Catholic social teaching principle of subsidiarity, in that we provide support to and amplify the work, asks, and recommendations of directly impacted people.



Access to Counsel

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for access to counsel for low-income immigrants through a robust recognition and accreditation program and state and local funding for access to counsel.

Objectives:

1. Ensure the R&A program is properly maintained with the necessary resources for an efficient & effective application.
2. Advocate for state and local budget, policies and practices that improve access to counsel.
3. Use strategic communications to educate decision makers on why R&A is so critical to the immigration legal system.



Asylum Access

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for access to asylum.

Objectives:

1. Advocate for regulations, policies, and practices that improve access to fair courts and due process including “dedicated dockets,” affirmative asylum, and work permit issues.
2. Focus on advocacy for the end of the asylum ban and transparency at the border for credible fear interviews and access to counsel at interviews.
3. Engage in advocacy efforts to reduce the asylum backlog and for prompt issuance of USCIS receipts.



Challenging Racism, anti-Blackness, and White-Supremacy in the Immigration System

Policy Position:

CLINIC advocates for equitable treatment of immigrants regardless of race or ethnicity.

Objectives:

1. Support and partner with Black-led immigrant advocacy organizations and other partners in strategies to address racism and white-supremacy in the immigration system.
2. Combat State and Local legislation and initiatives rooted in anti-immigrant sentiments such as policies around local law enforcement interactions with immigrant communities and people of color, and promote policies that uplift marginalized voices and issues.
3. Advocate for broad language access and cultural competency in government communications and outreach.
4. Lead in building a broad Catholic voice speaking out and taking action against racism in immigration.



Immigrant Economic Justice

Policy Position:

CLINIC advocates for a U.S. immigration system where immigration benefits are available to all, not just the wealthy.

Objectives:

1. Advocate for a fee schedule and fee waiver policies that ensure accessibility to benefits for the most vulnerable.
2. Promote the fair and just implementation of public charge policies that ensure low-income immigrants are included.
3. Advocate for the efficiency and effectiveness of the federal agencies' case processing policies and procedures.
4. Support policies that promote economic safety and justice for immigrants at the state and local level.
5. Educate and engage on the unlicensed practice of immigration law to ensure that immigrants are not being defrauded.



DACA/Status for Child Arrival

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for maintaining DACA and/or its replacement.

Objectives:

1. Engage in systemic advocacy in support of DACA protections
2. Support USCCB in promoting a fair and generous pathway to citizenship for childhood arrivals.
3. Advocate for other forms of relief if DACA is threatened.



Family Unity

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for programs and policies that keep families together.

Objectives:

1. Promote programs that reunite families and advocate for reforms to family reunification processes, including various parole programs.
2. Engage in advocacy efforts to end the SIJS backlog and expand protections for vulnerable SIJS youth.
3. Support policies at the state and local level that promote immigrant family unity that allow children to be free from the fear of deportation and detention of themselves or their family.



Naturalization Access, Integration, and Inclusion

Policy Position:

CLINIC advocates to ensure that naturalization is accessible to vulnerable populations and advocates for policies that promote integration and inclusion.

Objectives:

1. Secure updates to the citizenship test that promote access for vulnerable populations.
2. Promote immigrant integration and inclusion in state and local policy and ensure that low-income immigrants are affirmatively included in those efforts.



Protection for Immigrant Survivors of Violence

Policy Position:

CLINIC advocates at the local, state, and federal level for policies that prioritize protecting immigrant survivors of violence and minimizing retraumatization in the immigration and criminal legal systems.

Objectives:

1. Advocate to reduce the U visa backlog at USCIS, including the long wait for a bona fide determination and for travel eligibility for those awaiting adjudication for their derivative family members abroad.
2. Advocate for state and local policies and other measures that promote and build trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement



Rapid Response and Special Projects

Policy Position: CLINIC will respond to emerging issues in support of its affiliate network.

Objectives:

1. Engage in Advocacy to address emerging and unique issues
2. Continue to address unique challenges in protection for the Afghan and Ukrainian populations.



Religious Workers Program

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for an accessible religious workers program to ensure the spiritual needs of American communities are met.

Objectives:

1. Secure practices and policies at USCIS and DOS that promote access for religious worker immigrants, including policies to relieve the negative impacts of the EB-4 Visa Bulletin retrogression.
2. Advocate for equity in USCIS policy and practices to ensure religious workers are eligible for the same benefits as those in other employment categories.
3. Support USCCB in making the religious workers program for non-ministers a permanent part of immigration law.



Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure

Policy Position: CLINIC advocates for the bold and broad use of TPS and DED.

Objectives:

1. Secure review of country conditions in support of renewed and new TPS designations at DHS.
2. Ensure that implementation of TPS and DED decisions provide access to all who intended to benefit.
3. Eliminate Federal Register Notice delays.



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