

June 16, 2004

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kennedy:

The undersigned organizations write to express our support for the Civil Liberties Restoration Act (CLRA) of 2004. Our organizations represent a diverse and growing movement in communities nationwide who believe that the United States can meet new security demands while preserving fundamental liberties and American values of fairness and equal treatment for all. Although we differ in our missions and mandates, we come together around these principles to endorse this important legislation.

Many of the actions taken by Congress, the Administration, and law enforcement in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks represent reasonable responses to the terrorist threat. However, other measures violated basic liberties. For example, after September 11th, hundreds of Arab and Muslim immigrants with no connection to terrorism were arrested and detained for weeks and months. The jailed individuals' names were withheld from the public and their deportation hearings kept secret – in short, a system of secret detention that fosters abuse. A Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General report subsequently confirmed that many were held for prolonged periods without charge; that the DOJ adopted a policy of denying bond to every detainee without any evidence of connections to terrorism or risk of flight; that many were denied access to a lawyer and held in excessively harsh conditions; and that some were physically and verbally abused by prison guards.

These and other measures do not enhance national security; rather, they violate our tradition of due process, alienate immigrant communities, and undermine U.S. efforts to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law abroad. The CLRA will help protect core values at home while demonstrating to the world that the United States takes seriously the rights of people it detains. The CLRA will:

- End the government's ability to issue a blanket order closing all deportation hearings to the public and to family members of detainees, while permitting the closure of hearings or a portion of hearings on a case-by-case basis to preserve the confidentiality of asylum applications or when national security interests so require.
- Provide minimum due process safeguards to individuals who are jailed on suspicion of immigration violations by giving them timely notice of the charges against them and assure that immigration authorities and judges make fair, individualized bond determinations.
- Establish an independent immigration court within the Department of Justice and promote fair hearings by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal.
- Facilitate better law enforcement practices by requiring that the National Crime Information Center database relied upon daily by state and local law enforcement complies with minimum accuracy requirements.

- Terminate the troubled National Security Entry-Exit Registration System while encouraging fairness and a concentrated focus on those who pose a threat to the national security or safety of Americans.
- Assign reasonable penalties, commensurate to the technical nature of the violations, for non-citizens' failure to register or provide timely notification of address changes.
- Ensure that people who are charged with a crime based upon national security surveillance will see the evidence against them in the same manner as people charged with a crime based upon other kinds of classified information.
- Require the government to submit a public report to Congress on data-mining activities in order to protect the privacy and due process rights of individuals and to ensure accurate information is collected and used.

The CLRA promotes the integrity of the American system of justice and reaffirms our commitment to core constitutional values. The CLRA moves the United States forward at this important time with a clear understanding that upholding basic rights and the rule of law is essential to our long-term success in countering terrorism and creating a safer and more stable world. We commend your leadership in introducing this critical piece of legislation and look forward to working with you in moving this measure to enactment.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations**

605 Citizenship Project  
 American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
 American Civil Liberties Union  
 Alliance For Justice  
 American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)  
 American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)  
 American Library Association  
 American Muslim Council  
 American Muslim Voice  
 American Voices Abroad (AVA)  
 Americans for Religious Liberty (ARL)  
 Amnesty International USA  
 Arab American Institute (AAI)  
 Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
 Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
 Asian Law Caucus  
 Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America (APPNA)  
 Association of Research Libraries  
 Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC)  
 Center for American Progress  
 Center for Constitutional Rights  
 Center for Democracy & Technology  
 Center for National Security Studies  
 Code Pink Women for Peace  
 Consumer Action

Council on American-Islamic Relations  
Freedom of Information Center  
Freedom to Read Foundation (sister organization to the American Library Association)  
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)  
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)  
Hmong National Development, Inc. (HND)  
Homeland Democracy  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Watch  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Indian American Center for Political Awareness  
Interfaith Alliance  
International Association of Educators for World Peace (U.S. Branch)  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
Korean American Coalition  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights  
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR)  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)  
The Multiracial Activist (TMA)  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC)  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (NCAPACD)  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA)  
National Immigration Forum  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Lawyers Guild  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
National Writers Union/UAW L.U. 1981  
Open Society Institute  
Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee (PAKPAC)  
PeaceRoots Alliance  
People For the American Way  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Privacy Activism  
Rhetoricians for Peace  
Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC  
Sikh Coalition  
Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (SMART)  
Society of American Law Teachers  
South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT)  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUAC)  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
UNITED SIKHS  
VotersUnite!

## **Local Organizations**

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Los Angeles/Orange County Chapter, Anaheim, California  
American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado, Denver, Colorado  
American Civil Liberties Union -- Douglas County Chapter, Lawrence, Kansas  
American Civil Liberties Union of Texas, Austin, Texas  
Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, Dearborn, Michigan  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California, Los Angeles, California  
Big Sky Civil Liberties Committee, Montana  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Bastrop County, Texas  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Benton County, Corvallis, Oregon  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Conway, Massachusetts  
Blazing Ballerina Productions, Brooklyn, New York  
Brazilian Immigrant Center, Allston, Massachusetts  
Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War, North Brunswick, New Jersey  
Coalition Against War and Injustice (CAWI), Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California  
Concord (Massachusetts) Civil Liberties Committee, Concord, Massachusetts  
Council of Pakistan Organizations (COPO), Brooklyn, New York  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Arizona Chapter (CAIR-AZ), Phoenix, Arizona  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Florida Chapter (CAIR-Florida), Davie, Florida  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Michigan Chapter (CAIR-Michigan), Southfield, Michigan  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, New Jersey Chapter (CAIR-NJ), New Jersey  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, New York Chapter (CAIR-NY), New York, New York  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Ohio Chapter (CAIR-OH), Columbus, Ohio  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, San Antonio, Texas Chapter, San Antonio, Texas  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, San Diego, California (CAIR-San Diego), San Diego, California  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter (CAIR, SFBA), San Francisco, California  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Southern California Chapter (CAIR-LA), Anaheim, California  
Dharma Megha, Okemos, Michigan  
Durham Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Durham, North Carolina  
East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), Oakland, California  
Estes Valley Multicultural Connections/Las Conexiones Multiculturales, Estes Park, Colorado  
Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Miami, Florida  
Guilderland Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Guilderland, New York  
Hate Free Zone Washington, Seattle, Washington  
Human Rights, Education and Law Project Inc. (HELP), Newark, New Jersey  
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights, Chicago, Illinois  
Idaho Patriots, Boise, Idaho  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), Chicago, Illinois  
Illinois Single Pagans, Aurora, Illinois  
Immigrant Initiatives, CUNY School of Law, Flushing, New York  
India Foundation Inc., East Lansing, Michigan  
Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights, San Francisco, California  
International Service Society, Okemos, Michigan

Japanese American Services of the East Bay (JASEB), Berkeley, California  
Korean American Resource & Cultural Center, Chicago, Illinois  
Korean Resource Center, Los Angeles, California  
Libertarian Party of San Joaquin County, California  
Littletonians for Civil Liberties (LCL), Littleton, Massachusetts  
The Lorax Society, Tulare, California  
Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center, Chicago, Illinois  
Na Loio - Immigrant Rights and Public Interest Legal Center, Honolulu, Hawaii  
New York Immigration Coalition, New York, New York  
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Seattle, Washington  
Northwest Workers' Justice Project, Cornelius, Oregon  
Peace Action WI, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Port Orford Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Port Orford, Oregon  
Rights for All People/Derechos Para Todos, Denver, Colorado  
Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, Boulder, Colorado  
Sakhi for South Asian Women, New York, New York  
Save Our Rights Coalition of the Tri-Valley (SAVOR), Tri-Valley, California  
Seva International, East Lansing, Michigan  
South Asian Network (SAN), Artesia, California  
Strength Through Peace, Fort Collins, Colorado  
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), Nashville, Tennessee  
Texas Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, San Antonio, Texas  
Thai Community Development Center, Hollywood, California  
University Peace Initiative (UPI), Honolulu, Hawaii  
Vaishnava Center for Enlightenment, Lansing, Michigan  
Vedanta Society of East Lansing, East Lansing, Michigan  
Washington Defender Association's Immigration Project, Seattle, Washington  
Washington Watch Inc. Lansing, Michigan  
Women For: Orange County, Irvine, California  
Worldview, Ltd., Peterborough, New Hampshire  
YKASEC - Empowering the Korean American Community, New York

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