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Border Bill and Government Shutdown Both Negatively Impact Immigrant Survivors

Congress Must End Shutdown, but not at the Expense of Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Facing the longest government shutdown in American history, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell says he will bring a bill before the Senate on Thursday that follows the outline of various immigration-related proposals delivered by the President over the weekend.

The following is a statement from Grace Huang, Co-chair of the Alliance of Immigrant Survivors:

“The government shutdown is causing harm to immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Survivors seeking critical protections in immigration court are being penalized by the cancellation of tens of thousands of court hearings, with devastating consequences. Victim advocacy programs are being forced to reduce services due to the uncertainty of continued federal funding or when funding is frozen as a result of the shutdown, making it even harder for survivors to access vital supports, overcome abuse, and find safety.

“After weeks of inaction, Senator McConnell has announced a vote on the End the Shutdown and Secure the Border Act, but this proposal includes further attacks on immigrant communities that would keep safety out of reach for many immigrant survivors. The proposal’s massive increase in funding for enforcement and detention will result in fewer survivors seeking critical services and protections that help them seek safety. The bill proposes changes to the nation’s asylum system that puts harmful barriers in the way of survivors. Additionally, changes to the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act will prevent children from being able to apply for protections in the United States, put lives in danger, and create profit incentives for traffickers.
Even the proposals to provide temporary status for those at risk of losing DACA or Temporary Protected Status include increased hurdles for survivors seeking such protections, and do not provide an adequate resolution to the ongoing uncertainty and harm facing those immigrants.

“The Alliance for Immigrant Survivors opposes the *End the Shutdown & Secure the Border Act* and any effort to end the government shutdown at the expense of immigrant survivors. We call on Congress to show leadership by opening our government and working to adopt real, permanent solutions for immigrant communities and for our nation.”

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The *Alliance for Immigrant Survivors* (AIS) is a network of advocates and allies across the country dedicated to defending and advocating for policies that ensure immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other gender-based abuses have access to life-saving protections that all survivors of violence deserve.