

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for the Immigration Defense – Family Unity Program in the fiscal year 2023. The entity to receive funding for this project is Catholic Legal Services (CLS), Inc., located at 28 West Flagler Street, 10th Floor, Miami, FL 33130.

The funding will provide pro bono legal services to immigrants from the Republic of Haiti, Guatemala, Honduras, and nationals from other parts of Central America. The requested funding would establish an office within CLS to address the new immigration issues to educate the immigrant communities, offer consultations for immigrants under existing laws, and represent individuals facing deportation to keep families together. The unity of families is at stake, and the time to act is now. Catholic Legal Services in the Archdiocese of Miami (CLS) provides immigration services to South Florida's refugees and immigrants. The mission of CLS is to provide: (1) legal representation and immigration services; (2) assistance to those who cannot afford to obtain legal help; and (3) services to all those who need it. CLS focuses exclusively on helping poor immigrants obtain asylum, establish legal residency, become citizens, and reunite families.

In recent years, CLS has had a 50% increase in those seeking immigration assistance. More significantly, the nature of the requests has changed. Individuals are now seeking help to prepare for the possibility of deportation, including custody of their children. Currently, there are not enough resources within CLS to have an attorney focusing exclusively on family unity.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,



Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (FL-20)
Member of Congress