

**Director of Litigation Jesse Bless, Esq**  
**American Immigration Lawyers Association**  
**Suite 300, 1331 G Street, NW**  
**Washington, DC 20005-3142**



Dear Director Bless,

I am writing on behalf of the Organization for World Peace to draw your attention to the egregious injustices asylees face due to the Prompt Asylum Claim Review (PACR) program. I urge you, as the American Immigration Lawyers Association's (AILA) Director of Federal Litigation, to provide financial and legal aid to ongoing lawsuits challenging the legality of PACR.

Since its inception in October of 2019, the PACR program has infringed upon more than 1000 asylees' right to due process. The program itself allows for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to hold asylees in their custody for five-to-seven days, much longer than the three days traditionally allowed for in CBP facilities. In addition, asylees are denied access to their families or lawyers. Most asylees that qualify for the PACR program aren't eligible to apply for asylum. This is largely due to the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice's recent interim final rule barring eligibility for asylum for anyone who travelled through a third-party country and entered the U.S. across the southern border. Instead, the asylees must apply for withholding of removal or protection under the United Nations Convention Against Torture, neither of which offers a pathway to citizenship. Both programs also have a much higher bar to demonstrate asylees face persecution in their home country.

Expedited removals under PACR are forcing hundreds of migrants out of the country without regard for their safety. Many of those applying for protections face violence and even death in their home countries. As a student who has lived in Texas, in communities predominantly made up of migrants, the real, tangible impact of these policies is hard to describe. Reading about faceless statistics is different from hearing your friend tell you

they may never see their grandfather again. Asylum seekers deserve due process in their cases. This includes access to language services, a competent lawyer, and freedom from undue, extended detention.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center have filed a lawsuit against the PACR program and to challenge the violation of the rights of asylum seekers. These lawsuits require your support to restore the rights of thousands of people.

Given AILA's impressive history litigating the abuse of immigrants' rights, I am confident you will investigate the issue further and protect the rights of thousands of vulnerable people.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Eckert

Advocate, The Organization for World Peace