

AIS Opposes amendments related to limiting access to asylum

The [Alliance for Immigrant Survivors](https://www.immigrantsurvivors.org/) (AIS) advocates for a future where everyone, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, country of origin, or differing ability can live in safety and thrive. We defend and advocate for policies that ensure immigrant survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault, rape, human trafficking, and other gender-based violence have access to safety, autonomy, and life-saving protections.

Every year, we see anti-immigrant amendments introduced in legislative and budgetary processes that would hinder immigrants' access to legal status and increase their vulnerability to exploitation. We strongly oppose any amendment that interferes with the ability of immigrant survivors to seek safety and provide for themselves and their families, including the example described below. For questions, follow-up, and media inquiries, please contact us at info@immigrantsurvivors.org.

AIS strongly opposes amendments related to limiting access to asylum.

We oppose any efforts to increase barriers to survivors seeking the right to asylum as recognized in international and federal law. This includes opposing the inefficient and inhumane expedited removal system, which results in fast-tracking deportations of even more individuals seeking protection, including children fleeing violence and even death, without a meaningful court hearing.

Asylum and refugee protections in U.S. law are critical lifelines for those fleeing gender-based persecution. Asylum seekers arrive at the border and in the U.S. from all over the world fleeing from domestic violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, rape, honor violence, and human trafficking. They might not realize that their experience would qualify them for asylum or how to present their asylum claims. Amendments that increase barriers to eligibility, or that result in increased detention or time waiting outside the United States, exacerbate the trauma they have experienced and make it even more difficult for individuals to present their asylum claims.

As Congress has recognized in passing the Violence Against Women Act, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the Victims of Crime Act, and various other laws, domestic abuse, sexual assault, rape, human trafficking, and other gender-based violence are legitimate concerns that merit state interventions. As such, the U.S. must continue to signal that the right to live free of gender-based violence is a fundamental human right.

ALLIANCE FOR IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS

Instead of supporting these anti-immigrant amendments, Members of Congress can choose to stand with immigrant survivors of violence by enhancing immigrant protections, including those featured in our [top 5 asks for immigrant survivors](#):

1. Lifting the cap on the number of U visas annually available – currently limited to 10,000 – to meet the need;
2. Funding USCIS to ensure they can grant timely employment authorization to VAWA self-petitioners, U and T visa applicants;
3. Preventing detention and deportation of survivors seeking asylum and eligible VAWA self-petitioners, U and T visa applicants;
4. Explicitly including survivors of gender-based violence in asylum law; and
5. Ensuring access to economic supports for immigrant survivors.