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TAHIRIH AND AYUDA FILE LAWSUIT CHALLENGING SWEEPING REGULATIONS THAT WOULD END ASYLUM

Yesterday, the [Tahirih Justice Center](#) and [Ayuda](#) filed a [lawsuit](#) challenging the outgoing administration's sweeping regulations that would overturn U.S. asylum law. Finalized in December 2020, the rule would make it effectively impossible for people fleeing persecution to obtain protection in the United States, gutting years of progress to create bridges to safety. Moreover, the rule would eliminate gender-based asylum—shutting the door to anyone fleeing life-threatening persecution due to their gender, while undoing decades of legal precedent. The regulations would also strip away protection from children, families, and other individuals escaping gang violence, whose home governments could not and would not protect them from torture and death.

The lawsuit was filed in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Tahirih and Ayuda are represented in the action by a team including lawyers from the Constitutional Accountability Center. The rule's implementation is currently stayed by an order of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, so the rule has no definite effective date at this time.

"The last four years of cruel and dehumanizing anti-immigrant policies have culminated in a regulation so sweeping that it would end asylum as we know it in the United States," said Richard Caldarone, Tahirih Litigation Counsel. "Rather than extending an arm of refuge to those fleeing unfathomable violence, our government has cut off all possible avenues to safety and justice. We must ensure that the rule is permanently struck down so that asylum seekers are no longer sent back to violence, torture, and death, without the slightest regard for their humanity."

"The final months of 2020 included a dizzying array of anti-immigrant regulations and policies, but this rule is perhaps uniquely harmful. It undermines 40 years of implementation of the U.S. Refugee Act," said Laurie Ball Cooper, Legal Director at Ayuda. "The rule seeks any excuse to deny individuals fleeing persecution the protection which U.S. law has long extended to them and which they deserve. Beyond the technicalities, which are critically important, this rule undermines the very promise of the United States to provide a safe home to those 'yearning to breathe free.'"

Richard Caldarone and Laurie Ball Cooper are available for comment on this topic. Please contact rachelp@tahirih.org or media@ayuda.com to arrange an interview.

About the Tahirih Justice Center

The Tahirih Justice Center is a national, nonprofit organization that serves immigrant survivors seeking safety and justice. We amplify the voices of survivors in communities, courts, and Congress to create a world where women and girls enjoy equality and live in safety and with dignity.

About Ayuda

Ayuda provides legal, social, and language services to help vulnerable immigrants in our neighborhoods access justice and transform their lives. Since 1973, we have served more than 150,000 low-income immigrants throughout Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. Ayuda's expert and dedicated professionals help immigrants from anywhere in the world navigate the immigration and justice systems and access the social safety net. Ayuda is grateful to the Washington D.C. Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs for supporting our work.