

# Policy Platform

Tahirih's policy work is rooted in our core values and in our specific theory of change. Inspired by the Bahá'í faith and grounded in our belief in the oneness of humanity, we reach for a society that embraces our diversity and guarantees everyone's human rights. Our mission is to advance policies and laws that enable immigrant survivors of gender-based violence to pursue legal immigration status, live in safety, and forge their own paths. Everything we do is in service of that goal.

The immigration system is shattered. Survivors are denied access to safety because of policies and practices that could be fixed. The Tahirih Justice Center is prioritizing the following policy goals to immediately improve protections for immigrant survivors while simultaneously seeking long-term, systemic change.



## REFORM ASYLUM LAW TO NAME GENDER AS A PROTECTED GROUND

RIGHT NOW, MANY SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE ARE DENIED PROTECTION FROM PERSECUTION BECAUSE THE LAW DOES NOT CLEARLY STATE THAT THEY QUALIFY. WE CAN CHANGE THAT BY URGING CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION TO NAME GENDER-BASED PERSECUTION AS A REASON FOR PROTECTION.



## END THE ILLEGAL MIGRANT PROTECTION PROTOCOLS (MPP) ALSO KNOWN AS THE "REMAIN IN MEXICO" POLICY

MPP HAS SENT MORE THAN 67,000 ASYLUM SEEKERS TO MEXICO TO WAIT OUT THE REMAINDER OF THEIR CASES, WHERE THEY ARE AT RISK OF KIDNAPPING, ASSAULT, AND TORTURE. WE MUST ALLOW PEOPLE ARRIVING AT THE BORDER TO SAFELY SEEK ASYLUM FROM WITHIN THE U.S., A RIGHT PROTECTED UNDER U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW.

## REPEAL TITLE 42

TITLE 42 SHUTTERED THE BORDER AND DENIED REFUGEES THE RIGHT TO SEEK ASYLUM UNDER THE GUISE OF UNFOUNDED PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS.

## IMPROVE U VISA ACCESSIBILITY

SURVIVORS ARE EXPERIENCING EGREGIOUS DELAYS IN THE PROCESSING OF THEIR U VISAS, WITH NEARLY 280,000 INDIVIDUALS IN THE BACKLOG. THESE DELAYS SUBJECT SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO ADDITIONAL RISKS OF VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION, MANIPULATION, AND TRAUMA. WE MUST FUND USCIS TO ADDRESS THE BACKLOG AND RECAPTURE THOUSANDS OF UNUSED U VISAS FROM THE EARLY YEARS OF THE PROGRAM.



## PREVENT DETENTION AND DEPORTATION OF SURVIVORS

NO SURVIVOR SHOULD FEAR DETENTION OR DEPORTATION IN SEEKING A PATHWAY TO SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.



## FUND USCIS TO ENSURE TIMELY EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR SURVIVORS

VAWA SELF-PETITIONERS, U AND T VISA APPLICANTS, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS MUST HAVE TIMELY ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION AS THIS IS CRITICAL TO IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS' ABILITY TO ESCAPE VIOLENCE AND PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

## STRENGTHEN STATE LAWS ON THE AGE OF CONSENT TO MARRY

THE DEVASTATING IMPACTS OF CHILD MARRIAGE ON IMMIGRANT AND OTHER SURVIVORS ARE WELL DOCUMENTED. DESPITE THE KNOWN HARMS, ONLY 6 STATES SET THE MINIMUM MARRIAGE AGE AT 18. TO BETTER PROTECT CHILDREN THE LEGAL AGE TO MARRY SHOULD BE SET AT 18 (OR ABOVE, IF THE AGE OF MAJORITY IS HIGHER) IN ALL STATES.

## CLOSE LOOPHOLES IN MARRIAGE BASED VISA PROGRAMS THAT FACILITATE AND SANCTION CHILD MARRIAGE

THOUSANDS OF MARRIAGE BASED VISA PETITIONS THAT INCLUDE CHILDREN AS SPOUSES AND FIANCES HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY USCIS. CONGRESS MUST FIX IMMIGRATION LAWS THAT INCENTIVIZE CHILD MARRIAGE.



## RESTORE DUE PROCESS IN OUR IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

OVER THE YEARS, PROCEDURAL CHANGES IN THE COURTS HAVE MADE IT HARDER FOR IMMIGRANTS TO FIND LEGAL COUNSEL, BLOCKED ACCESS TO RELIEF, CREATED SIGNIFICANT INEFFICIENCIES AND COMPOUNDED DELAYS. ATTEMPTS TO FORCE TRAUMA SURVIVORS TO MEET ARBITRARY, EXPEDITED DEADLINES WILL NOT CURE BACKLOGS IN IMMIGRATION COURT AND WILL NOT RESULT IN EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE. ONLY SYSTEMIC REFORM TO REPEAL OR STOP SUCH PROCEDURAL CHANGES CAN DO SO.

**TAHIRIH JUSTICE CENTER**

WWW.TAHIRIH.ORG  
WWW.PREVENTFORCEDMARRIAGE.ORG  
571-282-6161