



Tahirih Statement on Recent Anti-Immigrant Legislation in Texas

The Tahirih Justice Center is dismayed by the recent Texas legislation that targets immigrants, people seeking asylum, and Texans of color for arrest, deportation, and further criminalization. These new laws - SB4 from the 3rd Special Session adding a penalty enhancement for smuggling, and SB3 and SB4 from the 4th Special Session, on appropriations and unlawful entry perpetuate racist and xenophobic narratives about immigrants. These laws will also have a devastating and disproportionate impact on immigrant survivors of gender-based violence by cutting off access to the U.S. asylum system, enabling law enforcement officers to deport survivors of crime rather than provide assistance, and creating conditions in which immigrants are increasingly vulnerable to violence.

Enacting these policies will exacerbate the risk of gender-based violence along the U.S. southern border, as women and girls are left vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in increasingly precarious conditions. The impact of these laws will be felt statewide and will serve to cultivate a climate of fear among survivors of gender-based violence seeking asylum in the U.S. while undermining protections guaranteed to survivors under federal law.

Texas has a legal and moral obligation to protect all asylum seekers and immigrants, particularly women, children, and all who experience gender-based violence, from further harm. The Tahirih Justice Center calls on Texans to join in solidarity with immigrant survivors of gender-based violence to support humane and trauma-informed immigration policies.