

February 16, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Chris Murphy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairman Murphy, and Ranking Member Capitol:

As you consider the FY 2022 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations bill, we urge you to ensure funding for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP). Specifically, the humanitarian assistance funding through this program must be funded so that localities, non-governmental organizations, and shelters who provide critical services for migrants arriving at the border do not face financial difficulties and may be forced to stop their operations.

EFSP is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and was established in 1983 to help public and charitable institutions at the state and local levels better respond to the widespread homelessness and food insecurity brought about by economic crises and has provided funds to over 14,000 human service agencies in more than 2,500 communities across the country. EFSP, through supplemental funding, also provides reimbursements to local nonprofit and governmental social service organizations, as well as states, and localities, providing shelter, food, transportation and support services to migrants arriving at our southern border, who are waiting for their asylum cases to be adjudicated.

Congress appropriated \$510 million to the EFSP through the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* of which \$110 million was for humanitarian assistance to migrants. EFSP was also funded at \$4.1 million through the *Supplemental Appropriations for Humanitarian Assistance, 2019*. Unfortunately, the humanitarian assistance provision was not renewed in the Continuing Resolution that was passed in December of 2021 and as a result, every day that passes grantees of the program are grappling with how to operate and continue to provide critical support and serve this vulnerable population. Communities and organizations are on the front-lines of assisting migrants coming to our border and resources are being stretched thin as they take on the role of performing a federal government function. These local communities and organizations are showing the best of our country but they need help and relief.

Congress has an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to protecting migrants and the right to seek refugee by extending funding for EFSP. Furthermore, Congress must ensure that border communities have the tools necessary to humanely and adequately support migrants as they flee violence, and economic instability. We look forward to engaging with you to reaffirm this commitment.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,