

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 12, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to you today to express Illinois' continued need for support to address the ongoing influx of asylum-seekers. Since you received our October 2023 letter outlining this concern, buses have begun to drop off migrants in numerous suburbs surrounding Chicago, further exacerbating this safety and humanitarian crisis.

Illinois has experienced an influx of migrants as Texas Governor Abbott continues his partisan stunt, "Operation Lone Star," busing migrants from Texas with limited notice or coordination. This has led to a sharp increase in city and state resources dedicated to essential services for arrivals. Since August 2022, the City of Chicago has received over 30,000 immigrants, with costs rising to \$138 million in 2023.¹² We applaud the City of Chicago's coordination with the State of Illinois and the Biden Administration for their efforts to work with community partners to create and fund the infrastructure needed to support new arrivals and provide emergency shelter.

As we requested in October 2023, we continue to urge the Biden Administration to streamline government-wide coordination and data sharing, expedite the work authorization process, and target support from the Shelter and Services Program to interior states like Illinois. To that effect, we appreciate the Administration highlighting the need for additional funding for this program in its supplemental appropriations request. Furthermore, as suburban communities have begun to receive new arrivals, these communities also need additional coordination and support.

In response to unscheduled bus arrivals, a Chicago ordinance recently went into effect to prevent bus operators from dropping off migrants outside of set approved hours and locations.³ Alarming, to circumvent this ordinance, bus operators have begun to drop off migrants outside the city. Migrants are left miles away from Chicago's designated "Landing Zones" or other welcome centers equipped to serve them, without regard for weather conditions and with complete indifference to their health, safety, and welfare.⁴ Many of our suburbs lack the financial means, expertise, and resources to support these migrants, and immediate assistance is needed.

¹ Official Website of the City of Chicago, "New Arrivals Situational Awareness Dashboard," updated as of January 8, 2024. [Official City of Chicago Website](#).

² Official Website of the City of Chicago, "Cost Dashboard," December 15, 2023. [Official City of Chicago Website](#).

³ Chicago Tribune, "More migrants arrive in Chicago after being flown from Texas to Rockford. Mayor Johnson says Gov. Abbott continues to sow seeds of chaos," A.D. Quig, Robert Channick, and Joe Mahr, December 31, 2023. [Chicago Tribune Article](#).

⁴ ABC7Chicago, "Chicago migrants: Johnson to use \$95M in COVID funds for crisis; more suburbs pass regulations," Jessica D'Onofrio, December 30, 2023. [ABC7Chicago Article](#).

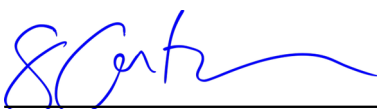
While we understand the complexities of the situation, the Biden Administration must take swift and comprehensive action to alleviate the strain on our local communities. The federal government has a responsibility to provide Illinois and other affected states with resources, technical assistance, and coordination, to proactively manage the influx of migrants and to continue our commitment to a safe, orderly, and humane immigration process. We also urge the administration to review ongoing operations at the southern border to assess current policies and protocols that could be streamlined and enhanced by increased federal resources and staffing.

We urge the administration to use all available tools to support both the City of Chicago and its suburbs as we navigate these challenges. We are grateful for your attention to this critical issue on behalf of our constituents.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



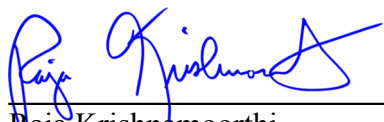
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



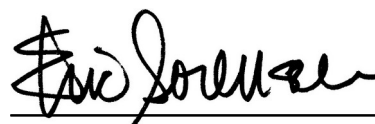
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security