



American Immigration Lawyers Association Chicago Chapter

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AILA Chicago Immigration Attorneys Travel to Southern Border to Ensure Asylum Due Process Rights are Protected

CHICAGO, IL – Over a dozen members of the Chicago Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) will travel to Dilley, TX this week to volunteer in representing immigrants facing deportation, including asylum seekers. This timing could not be more critical as asylum applicants must present their own cases to an asylum officer or in front of an immigration judge, whether or not they have access to legal representation. The government does not provide or pay for any such legal representation, further complicating the chances of a non-U.S. citizen navigating and winning a complex legal matter like asylum.



The timing of the Chicago legal volunteers also coincides with President Trump's recent announcement that his administration would seek to significantly curtail the ability of immigrants who reach the southern border from claiming asylum, and the interim final regulations released last week to have immediate effect in foreclosing the opportunity to seek asylum on the Southern border. These developments present serious due process concerns, conflict with domestic and international law, and ignore our country's proud history of offering protection to those who face persecution in their home countries.

Kristen Harris, Chair of AILA Chicago, said "While not everyone qualifies for asylum or to remain in the U.S., our procedures and laws as to due process must be respected and people's claims must be heard." Harris continued, "Any blanket policy or executive order that minimizes an individual's right to claim asylum or does not align with current U.S. and international law will be forcefully rejected and challenged by members of the immigration bar."

AILA Chicago has over 600 attorney members and is a Chapter of the national AILA organization, which has over 15,000 attorney and law professor members. More is available at aila.org.

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