



## **Policy Brief: Nongovernment Organizations’ Complicity in Human Trafficking and the Southern Border Invasion**

By: Wade Miller

### **Introduction**

There is a common misconception that the U.S. southern border with Mexico is chaotic and unregulated. For years, U.S. policymakers have allowed our border to become so porous that the Border Patrol reported well over two million encounters with illegal border crossers every year of the Biden administration after the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Our nation has been inundated by waves of illegal aliens. But it would be a mistake to believe this means the U.S. border is unregulated.

Indeed, before President Donald Trump began imposing much-needed controls, the southern border was meticulously managed and hyper-regulated by international drug cartels. The Biden administration claimed, against all evidence, that this was not the case. Former Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas insisted to Representative Chip Roy (R-TX) that “yes, we do” have operational control over the southern border. Roy responded to Mayorkas with a dose of reality and the terms of the law: “In this section, the term ‘operational control’ means the prevention of all unlawful entries into the United States, including entries by terrorists, other unlawful aliens, instruments of terrorism, narcotics, and other contraband.”<sup>2</sup>

No reasonable observer believed the U.S. government had operational control over our borders. But that does not mean they were uncontrolled.

A huge majority of the tens of millions of people who have illegally crossed our border in recent decades paid the cartels to do so. Once under the control of the cartels, these people are subject to deprivations and abuses, including kidnapping, forced labor, physical exploitation, extortion, and rape. Migrants are at the mercy of the cartels for almost their entire journey and often even after they arrive on American soil. Such border crossers are thus not merely illegal aliens; they are, by definition, victims of human smuggling or human trafficking. Nevertheless, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act should not be broadly applied so as to become a loophole for mass amnesty for illegal aliens even if temporarily applied.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Customs and Border Protection. “Southwest Land Border Encounters.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>.

<sup>2</sup> Kruta, Virginia. “‘You Know It’s True, Cartels Know It’s True’: Chip Roy Rebukes Mayorkas Over Claim US Has ‘Operational Control’ of Border.” *Daily Wire*, April 29, 2022. <https://www.dailywire.com/news/you-know-its-true-cartels-know-its-true-chip-roy-rebukes-mayorkas-over-claim-us-has-operational-control-of-border>.

Roughly one-quarter of sex trafficking victims in America are minors,<sup>3</sup> and human trafficking has become a multi-billion-dollar industry.<sup>4</sup> Border crossers are routinely raped; one aid worker said that “every woman we work with has been raped. Women start taking birth control before the journey because they know they might be raped.”<sup>5, 6</sup>

Children have it the worst. The Biden administration lost track of roughly three hundred thousand immigrant children who arrived in the United States.<sup>7</sup> Even those the government has kept track of endured difficulties and trauma on their journey. Before the Trump administration’s border crackdown, tens of thousands of unaccompanied minor children arrived at the U.S.–Mexico border by the hands of the cartels every single year.<sup>8</sup>

The Biden administration cannot plead ignorance or innocence for the human trafficking crisis. The open border policy under Democratic leadership directly resulted in the trafficking of children.

In September 2024, Senator Chuck Grassley (D-NY) and forty-three other members of Congress wrote a letter to President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris outlining their failure to ensure the safety of some 550,000 unaccompanied alien children who crossed the southwest border as victims of cartel sex trafficking and exploitation.<sup>9</sup> Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) also developed a report highlighting how the Biden administration intentionally weakened the sponsor vetting process, put unaccompanied minors in harm’s way, and pushed speed of processing aliens over safety.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. “10 Human Traffickers Arrested During Multiagency Operation Targeting Sex Trafficking.” Accessed February 18, 2025.  
<https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/10-human-traffickers-arrested-during-multiagency-operation-targeting-sex-trafficking#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20sex%20trafficking%20of%20minors>.

<sup>4</sup> Romo, Christine. “As Global Migration Surges, Trafficking Has Become a Multi-Billion Dollar Business.” *PBS News Hour*, March 11, 2024.  
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/as-global-migration-surges-trafficking-has-become-a-multi-billion-dollar-business>.

<sup>5</sup> Reuters. “Migrants Are Being Raped in Mexico Border as They Await Entry to U.S.” September 29, 2023.  
<https://www.reuters.com/world/migrants-are-being-raped-mexico-border-they-await-entry-us-2023-09-29/>.

<sup>6</sup> Washington Office on Latin America. “Kidnapping of Migrants and Asylum Seekers at the Texas-Tamaulipas Border Has Reached Intolerable Levels.” Accessed February 18, 2025.  
<https://www.wola.org/analysis/kidnapping-migrants-asylum-seekers-texas-tamaulipas-border-intolerable-levels/>.

<sup>7</sup> GOP.gov. “GOP Releases Report on Border Crisis.” Accessed February 18, 2025.  
<https://www.gop.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=1840>.

<sup>8</sup> Nawaz, Anna. “Thousands of Unaccompanied Children Make a Dangerous Trek to the U.S. Southern Border.” *PBS News Hour*, March 13, 2024.  
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/thousands-of-unaccompanied-children-make-a-dangerous-trek-to-the-u-s-southern-border>.

<sup>9</sup> Grassley, Chuck et al. “Grassley et al. to President Biden and Vice President Harris: Stop the HHS Cover-Up.” Letter. Accessed March 7, 2025.  
[https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_et\\_al\\_to\\_president\\_biden\\_and\\_vice\\_president\\_harris\\_-\\_stop\\_the\\_hhs\\_cover\\_up.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_et_al_to_president_biden_and_vice_president_harris_-_stop_the_hhs_cover_up.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. “The Biden-Harris Administration’s Failure to Protect Unaccompanied Children from Abuse and Exploitation.” Minority Staff Report. November 2024.  
[https://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/orr\\_minority\\_staff\\_report.pdf](https://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/orr_minority_staff_report.pdf).

Alicia Hopper, a consultant and expert on human trafficking, testified before Congress in November 2024, stating that the disastrous effects of the Biden administration’s immigration policies are fueling child trafficking.<sup>11</sup> In one particularly shocking example, law enforcement conducted a welfare check on twenty-five unaccompanied migrant children but could only locate two of them, she reported.<sup>12</sup>

The Office of Refugee Resettlement relies heavily on nongovernmental organization (NGO) contracts with groups like Catholic Charities, which often uses staffing agencies to provide personnel, to manage holding facilities. The use of staffing agencies in these holding facilities results in inadequately vetted staff without the necessary background checks or security clearances having unsupervised access to children.

Hopper also confirmed after speaking with a former sex trafficker and ex–Sinaloa cartel member that criminal syndicates drastically increased their human trafficking operations during the Biden administration. Cartels and gangs were reaping enormous profits from the open border policy through the sale of human beings.

Stories of individual abuse are horrifying. Reports have uncovered “rape trees” where traffickers hang on branches the bras and underwear of the girls they rape, some as young as age twelve.<sup>13</sup> One illegal alien was abused on U.S. soil in McAllen, Texas, by members of the cartels that control our border. She said, “They raped us so many times they didn’t see us as human beings anymore.” Other women have been forced into prostitution. Another woman was told, “You guys don’t have money, so you have to pay with your body.”<sup>14</sup>

The vast majority of these criminals will never be found or punished—and it is all because of the refusal of the leadership class to enforce the border laws.

Yet human trafficking and smuggling are not the only evils of the cartel-run illegal trafficking system. As described in the Center for Renewing America’s report on the Great Replacement Theory last year, between January 2021 and the spring of 2023 alone, more than 7.1 million illegal aliens were apprehended at the southern border alone.<sup>15</sup> Nor is there accurate data on how many “got-aways” have evaded Border Patrol. Millions of illegal aliens are flooding across the border every year, disrespecting the law, undermining U.S. sovereignty, and taxing the public services and social safety net. This is not a mere illegal immigration problem. It is an invasion.

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<sup>11</sup> Carell, J. J. “Trafficked, Exploited, and Missing: Migrant Children Victims of the Biden-Harris Administration.” Hearing testimony for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement, Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability. November 19, 2024. <https://homeland.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024-11-19-BSEOIA-HRG.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, “Management Alert: ICE Cannot Monitor All Unaccompanied Minor Children Released from DHS and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Custody.” Management Alert, OIG-24-46. August 19, 2024. <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2024-08/OIG-24-46-Aug24.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> The State Press. “Crimes of the Coyotes.” October 2010. <https://www.statepress.com/article/2010/10/crimes-of-the-coyotes>.

<sup>14</sup> Dickerson, Caitlin. “Rapes of Migrant Women Persist at the U.S. Border.” *New York Times*, March 3, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/03/us/border-rapes-migrant-women.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Center for Renewing America. “Policy Brief: The Great Replacement in Theory and Practice.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://americarenewing.com/issues/policy-brief-the-great-replacement-in-theory-and-practice/>.

Cartels and elected officials who support open borders are primarily responsible for this coordinated invasion and criminal system of illicit transportation of human beings. But they are not alone. At the border and beyond, a cadre of federally funded NGOs facilitates this system, ostensibly in the name of aiding immigrants. Offering illegal aliens housing, transportation, legal services, and the like may seem humane, but by supporting the cartel-run system of illegal immigration, these NGOs incentivize and facilitate human trafficking and smuggling.

This system allows the cartels to treat illegal aliens inhumanely and, once they are dumped on the American side of the border, enables federally funded U.S. NGOs to take over feeding them, housing them, and delivering them to their final destination, often to do jobs they have not freely agreed to do. These destinations are often far from the border, whether that be Washington, D.C.; Portland, Maine; or Springfield, Ohio.

NGOs may claim to be merely serving the needs of poor, hungry, and abused migrants, but that argument is delusional and counterproductive. It excuses the breaking of the laws of the United States and the great evil inflicted by cartels. The NGOs' behavior is at best enabling, but it is far more likely a case of direct complicity or in some cases even collusion. There can be no excuse for such participation in the cartels' exploitation of migrants and breaking of American immigration law. To engage at all with the cartels is to further their abuse. The Trump administration would be well within its rights to investigate these NGOs and bring prosecutions as appropriate.

### **Federally Funded Invasion**

A large number of NGOs that provide services to illegal aliens receive funding from U.S. taxpayers. In effect, the federal government has been forcing American citizens to pay for the invasion of their country. Below are some of the primary NGOs that also receive U.S. taxpayer funding.

#### **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is the assembly of Catholic bishops that helps set policy for the institutional Catholic Church in America.

The USCCB manages funds and provides legal representation for illegal alien minors in immigration proceedings. These minors are frequently used by cartels as drug mules or brought in to replenish the ranks of gangs. The USCCB often subcontracts to Catholic Charities USA and other entities.<sup>16, 17, 18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Corpus Christi for Unity and Peace. "USCCB Catholic Charities Received \$449 Million to Exploit Migrant Children." Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.corpuschristiforunityandpeace.org/usccb-catholic-charities-received-449-million-to-exploit-migrant-children/>.

<sup>17</sup> Barr, Luke. "Immigrant Children, MS-13 Smuggle Drugs Together: Sessions." *ABC News*, June 21, 2018. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/immigrant-children-ms-13-smuggle-drugs-sessions/story?id=56146381>.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. "Legal and Child Advocate Program." Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usccb.org/offices/children-and-migration/legal-and-child-advocate-program>.

In FY 2018, the USCCB received over \$218 million from the federal government, predominantly from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of State. During the Biden administration, the USCCB received over \$638 million from the federal government.<sup>19</sup>

### **Catholic Relief Services**

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is an international humanitarian aid agency founded by U.S. Catholics that is a subsidiary of the USCCB. CRS offers legal advocacy for illegal aliens to facilitate their entry into the United States.<sup>20</sup>

From 2013 to 2022, CRS was the No. 1 NGO recipient of federal funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), receiving \$4.6 billion over the course of those years.<sup>21</sup> In FY 2024, CRS received nearly \$700 million from the U.S. government, including grants from USAID, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department of State, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Health and Human Services.<sup>22</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax filings, CRS receives over 50 percent of its budget from government sources.<sup>23</sup>

### **Catholic Charities USA**

Catholic Charities USA is a membership organization of Catholic charitable agencies.

Catholic Charities USA acts as an end point for cartel coyotes, offering resources, legal aid, and health services to illegal aliens who have been smuggled across the border.<sup>24</sup> Catholic Charities USA also helps illegal aliens access the interior of the United States, including handing out gift cards and food packages to aliens far from the border and funding transportation to destinations within the United States.<sup>25</sup> In 2021 alone, Catholic Charities helped resettle over six hundred thousand aliens into the United States.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> USAspending.gov. "Recipient Profile: Catholic Charities USA." Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/03842c13-136c-a877-0d5f-e3021f06989d-C/latest>.

<sup>20</sup> Corpus Christi for Unity and Peace. "USCCB Catholic Charities Received \$449 Million to Exploit Migrant Children." Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.corpuschristiforunityandpeace.org/usccb-catholic-charities-received-449-million-to-exploit-migrant-children/>.

<sup>21</sup> Dorn, Sara. "These Are the Top USAID Recipients from Religious Groups to Major U.S. Companies as Trump Targets Agency." *Forbes*, February 3, 2025.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/saradorn/2025/02/03/these-are-the-top-usaid-recipients-from-religious-groups-to-major-us-companies-as-trump-targets-agency/>.

<sup>22</sup> USAspending.gov. "Recipient Profile: Catholic Relief Services - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops." Accessed March 11, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/2a706a17-b53d-3f3e-64c2-5b0166d343f1-C/latest>.

<sup>23</sup> "Catholic Relief Services USCCB." Return of an Organization Exempt From Income Tax (Form 990). 2020. Note: Tax filings do not distinguish between federal and non-federal government funding sources.

<sup>24</sup> Bensman, Todd. "United Nations Grantee Uses U.S. Tax Dollars to Fund Illegal Immigration." *The Federalist*, December 16, 2021.

<https://thefederalist.com/2021/12/16/united-nations-grantee-uses-u-s-tax-dollars-to-fund-illegal-immigration/>.

<sup>25</sup> McCaughey, Betsy. "Government Hides Money for Illegal Immigration in Charities." *New York Post*, July 22, 2022. <https://nypost.com/2022/07/22/government-hides-money-for-illegal-immigration-in-charities/>.

<sup>26</sup> Catholic Charities USA. *Policy Guide on Immigration & Refugee Services*. December 2023.

<https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/POL-001-23-Policy-Guide-Immigration-Refugee-Services.pdf>.

For the past decade, Catholic Charities USA usually received between \$1.4 to \$3.7 million from the federal government each year. In FY 2023, however, the organization received \$18.8 million from taxpayers.<sup>27</sup>

### **Jesuit Refugee Services USA**

Jesuit Refugee Services (JSF) USA is the American affiliate of an international Catholic organization of the same name that advocates for illegal aliens.

Even during the lax Biden administration, JSF USA lobbied against federal immigration policies and supported gross abuses of the U.S. asylum system, signing on to a letter saying that detaining any illegal alien who claims asylum is “inhumane.”<sup>28</sup>

JSF USA received \$14.5 million from the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security in FY 2024, including funding for providing illegal alien shelter and service programs.<sup>29</sup>

### **Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society**

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) is a Jewish nonprofit that provides services and support to illegal aliens.

HIAS has fueled the U.S. border crisis by offering purported refugees airport pickups, housing, long-term resources, and legal aid.<sup>30</sup> HIAS has reportedly also given aliens cash cards and cash vouchers.<sup>31</sup>

In FY 2024, HIAS received \$113.3 million from the federal government in part to support the resettlement of aliens in the American interior and fund other migrant programs.<sup>32</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax findings, HIAS received nearly 65 percent of its funding from government grants.<sup>33</sup>

### **FHI 360**

FHI 360 is an international nonprofit that provides staff for the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) program, a subset of Head Start funded by the Department of Health and Human

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<sup>27</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: Catholic Charities USA.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/38bc97a8-cc8b-5165-31fc-412d177e3c8a-C/latest>.

<sup>28</sup> Complicit Clergy. “50 Catholic Groups Lobby Congress to Oppose Limits on Illegal Immigration.” January 12, 2024.

<https://www.complicitclergy.com/2024/01/12/50-catholic-groups-lobby-congress-to-oppose-limits-on-illegal-immigration/>.

<sup>29</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: HIAS Inc.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/6ba58547-335e-c78d-0f4e-ec5a343fc8fa-C/latest>.

<sup>30</sup> Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. “What We Do: Resettle Refugees.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://hias.org/what/resettle-refugees/>.

<sup>31</sup> Center for Immigration Studies. “Biden Admin Sends Millions to Religious Nonprofits Facilitating Mass Illegal Migration.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://cis.org/Bensman/Biden-Admin-Sends-Millions-Religious-Nonprofits-Facilitating-Mass-Illegal-Migration>.

<sup>32</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: HIAS Inc.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/0b198253-aa78-d71b-0896-4cfb779d4f28-R/latest>.

<sup>33</sup> “HIAS Inc.” Return of an Organization Exempt From Income Tax (Form 990). 2023.

Services. MSHS is offered to any eligible child of an agricultural worker, including, reportedly, the families of illegal aliens.<sup>34, 35, 36, 37</sup>

In FY 2024, FHI 360 received \$1.5 million from USAID and the Department of Homeland Security.<sup>38</sup> From 2013 to 2022, the organization received a total of \$3.8 billion from USAID, making it the No. 3 recipient of USAID funding.<sup>39</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax filings, FHI 360 receives nearly 80 percent of its funding from government grants.<sup>40</sup>

### **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**

The Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS, aka Global Refuge) is a nonprofit immigrant settlement and service organization.

LIRS operates welcome centers at the U.S.–Mexico border to provide illegal alien asylum seekers trafficked and smuggled into the United States with health services, education services, and financial assistance. Despite the widespread abuse of the asylum system by illegal aliens as a way to bypass deportation, LIRS provides illegal aliens legal counsel to advance in the asylum and refugee process.<sup>41, 42</sup>

Ultimately, U.S. taxpayers are funding these legal services to help illegal aliens exploit our broken asylum process. According to the latest publicly available tax filings, LIRS receives over 95 percent of its funding from the government.<sup>43</sup> In FY 2024, LIRS received over \$340 million from the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State, in part for refugee assistance and aid for unaccompanied children.<sup>44</sup>

### **Church World Service**

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<sup>34</sup> FHI 360. “Migrant Farmworkers in the U.S. Need a Medical Safety Net.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.fhi360.org/blog/migrant-farmworkers-u-s-need-medical-safety-net/>.

<sup>35</sup> FHI 360. “Beyond Early Childhood Education: Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Programs Help Parents Learn.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.fhi360.org/articles/beyond-early-childhood-education-migrant-and-seasonal-head-start-programs-help-parents-learn/>.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “Policy Announcement ACF-OHS-PI-24-04.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/pi/acf-ohs-pi-24-04>.

<sup>37</sup> Migrant Clinicians Network. “Explore Migration: Migrant Seasonal Farmworker.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.migrantclinician.org/explore-migration/migrant-seasonal-farmworker.html>.

<sup>38</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: Family Health International.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/ee778ed8-1e4d-5298-dcf3-054cebd91b43-C/latest>.

<sup>39</sup> Dorn, Sara. “These Are the Top USAID Recipients from Religious Groups to Major U.S. Companies as Trump Targets Agency.” *Forbes*, February 3, 2025. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/saradorn/2025/02/03/these-are-the-top-usaid-recipients-from-religious-groups-to-major-us-companies-as-trump-targets-agency/>.

<sup>40</sup> “Family Health International Inc.” Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2022.

<sup>41</sup> Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. “2022 Annual Report.” Accessed March 7, 2025. <https://2022.lirs.org/>.

<sup>42</sup> Global Refuge. “Asylum Services and Welcome Centers.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.globalrefuge.org/what-we-do/asylum-services/welcome-centers/>.

<sup>43</sup> “Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services.” Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2023.

<sup>44</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/d36a35c0-f257-b440-6053-9dcfd7c16d67-C/latest>.

Church World Service is a coalition of thirty-seven Christian denominations providing relief services and refugee assistance worldwide.

Church World Service filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration in January 2025 to restart the federal refugee resettlement program that has flooded both small towns and major cities across America with significant influxes of illegal aliens and to overturn President Trump's freeze on refugee funding—both actions that would incentivize illegal border crossers.<sup>45, 46</sup>

Unsurprisingly, Church World Service has a financial stake in resettling illegal aliens. In FY 2024, the organization received over \$315 million from the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Homeland Security, in part for refugee entrance and resettlement services.<sup>47</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax filings, Church World Service Inc. received over 85 percent of its funding from the government.<sup>48</sup>

### **Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest**

Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest is a refugee services organization operating out of Arizona. It helps illegal aliens access public services, including the American education system, and find employment and transportation.<sup>49</sup>

According to the latest publicly available tax filings, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest receives nearly 75 percent of its funding from the government.<sup>50</sup> This includes a combined \$422,500 in FY 2024 and FY 2025 from the Department of Health and Human Services to help refugees enter the country.<sup>51</sup>

### **Upbring (Lutheran Social Services of the South)**

Upbring is a Lutheran migrant-focused organization in Texas. It works with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service to provide social services that incentivize the trafficking and smuggling of unaccompanied children across the border.<sup>52</sup>

In FY 2024, Upbring received over \$101 million from the federal government, a significant portion of which was for entrance assistance for border crossers. Its funding from the federal

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<sup>45</sup> White House. “Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program.” Presidential Actions, January 20, 2025.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/realigning-the-united-states-refugee-admissions-program/>.

<sup>46</sup> Church World Service. “CWS Challenges Suspension of Refugee Resettlement Program and Freeze of Refugee Funding.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://cwsglobal.org/press-releases/cws-challenges-suspension-of-refugee-resettlement-program-and-freeze-of-refugee-funding/>.

<sup>47</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: Church World Service Inc.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/70b34492-e072-11ee-0ddc-d902c945b122-C/latest>.

<sup>48</sup> “Church World Service Inc.” Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest. “Refugee Services.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.lss-sw.org/refugeeservices>.

<sup>50</sup> “Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest.” Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2022.

<sup>51</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/8c10392d-a877-013f-bcf8-96c663db4312-C/latest>.

<sup>52</sup> Upbring. “Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://upbring.org/unaccompanied-refugee-minors>.



government peaked under the Biden administration, when it received \$109.4 million in FY 2023.<sup>53</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax filings, Upbring received over 83 percent of its funding from the government.<sup>54</sup>

### **Central American Resource Center**

The Central American Resource Center is a nonprofit located near the U.S.–Mexico border that helps illegal aliens travel deep into the interior of the United States. The organization has multiple regional subsidiary offices as well.

Not only does the Central American Resource Center give illegal aliens gift cards, food, and hotel rooms, but it also helps these aliens buy tickets to other destinations in the United States.

In FY 2023, the Central American Resource Center received \$450,000 from the federal government.<sup>55</sup> That same year, tax filings show the organization received over 55 percent of its funding from government sources.<sup>56</sup>

### **International Rescue Committee**

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a nonprofit with twenty-nine offices throughout the United States that offers border crossers food, housing, and medical care.

Beyond providing material services that incentivize illegal immigration, IRC promotes a narrative that fuels the cartels' human trafficking machine, namely that no migrant is illegal and that authorities should presume everyone who arrives at our border with the help of the cartels is an asylum seeker. As the IRC's director of immigration wrote, "It doesn't matter how you enter the country: If you're in the U.S. or you arrive at a port of entry you can seek asylum. There's no way to ask for a visa or any type of authorization in advance, you just have to show up."<sup>57</sup>

Despite advocating for the abuse of the American asylum system, IRC received over \$411 million from five different federal agencies in FY 2024, including USAID. This includes funding to aid aliens' entrance into the country.<sup>58</sup> According to the latest publicly available tax filings, IRC received an eye-popping \$831,319,282 from government grants in 2022, nearly 62 percent of the organization's total revenue.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> USAspending.gov. "Recipient Profile: Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc." Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/d20f1aa5-5746-31c2-861e-48b863553e54-P/latest>.

<sup>54</sup> "Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc." Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2023.

<sup>55</sup> USAspending.gov. "Recipient Profile: Central American Resource Center." Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/a362ea3d-2f3b-14a8-b561-0efa1e9b5689-R/latest>.

<sup>56</sup> "Central American Resource Center." Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2023.

<sup>57</sup> International Rescue Committee. "Migrants, Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and Immigrants: What's the Difference?" Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.rescue.org/article/migrants-asylum-seekers-refugees-and-immigrants-whats-difference>.

<sup>58</sup> USAspending.gov. "Recipient Profile: International Rescue Committee Inc." Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/b6bf5d65-11a1-29f5-522f-610a32b14a8f-C/latest>.

<sup>59</sup> "International Rescue Committee Inc." Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2022.

## **U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants**

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) is a nonprofit with offices throughout the United States that welcomes aliens at airports, helping them to gain taxpayer-funded benefits such as housing, social security cards, education, health care, and employment opportunities.

USCRI coordinates with other major illegal alien–focused NGOs such as Catholic Charities and the International Rescue Committee.<sup>60</sup> The organization also coaches illegal aliens on how to exploit the legal system under the belief that “all individuals in the United States,” not just American citizens, “have guaranteed rights under the Constitution.”<sup>61</sup> It offers free legal representation to illegal aliens who appear before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, immigration courts, and Board of Immigration Appeals.<sup>62</sup> USCRI incentivizes the trafficking and smuggling of minors by advocating for the expansion of the Unaccompanied Minor Refugee program as well as other programs that aim to increase the processing and acceptance of illegal alien minors.<sup>63</sup>

As with the other organizations on this list, American taxpayers foot the bill for this subversion of our immigration laws. In FY 2024, USCRI received nearly \$400 million from the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of State, and the Department of Justice, in part to assist unaccompanied minors and refugees.<sup>64</sup> According to the most recent publicly available tax filings, USCRI receives over 97 percent of its funding from government grants.<sup>65</sup>

## **International Organization for Migration**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a UN-backed NGO with the stated goal of “facilitating pathways for regular migration.”<sup>66</sup>

IOM directly supports illegal immigration into the United States by handing out cash debit cards to illegal border crossers, including repeat crossers, just over our southern border in Mexico. In one report, IOM was giving up to \$800 a month to some of the 1,200 Central American migrants in a camp in Reynosa, Mexico, the majority of whom had already been expelled from the United

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<sup>60</sup> U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants. “Texas Refugee Health.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://refugees.org/texas-refugee-health/>.

<sup>61</sup> U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants. “Official Website.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://refugees.org/>.

<sup>62</sup> U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants. “Legal Services.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://refugees.org/legal-services/>.

<sup>63</sup> U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants. “Policy and Advocacy.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://refugees.org/policy-and-advocacy/>.

<sup>64</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants Inc.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/103e9554-416a-bcd5-75f7-126c5db8419c-C/latest>.

<sup>65</sup> “U.S. Committee for Refugees and Migrants Inc.” Return of an Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990). 2022.

<sup>66</sup> International Organization for Migration. “Who We Are.” Accessed February 18, 2025. <https://www.iom.int/who-we-are>.

States. IOM was caught handing out cash and debit cards to help would-be illegal border crossers in up to one hundred shelters in Central America and Mexico.<sup>67</sup>

IOM is directly funding the illegal alien invasion into the United States—and it does so with our tax money. In FY 2024, IOM received \$1.7 billion from federal agencies, with over \$1 billion specifically allocated for assisting aliens and those who claim refugee status.<sup>68</sup>

### **Cut Funding for Illegal Alien NGOs**

The list above only scratches the surface of federally funded NGOs that use taxpayer dollars to undermine the immigration system. For too long, the American people have been footing the bill for organizations that subvert the law, encourage the flood of illegal aliens into the country, and effectively aid cartels in the final stages of their international human trafficking operations.

As in the first Trump administration, the new Trump administration has already taken decisive actions to fix the border crisis: closing asylum loopholes, reinstating the “Remain in Mexico” policy, building significant portions of the border wall, and surging resources and personnel to the border. The results have been remarkable, with illegal border crossings plummeting 90 percent within two weeks after President Trump took office in January 2025.<sup>69</sup> The new Trump administration is well within its rights to cut off government funding to the NGOs that have facilitated human trafficking and the border invasion. The American people deserve a government that enforces the laws, and their hard-earned tax dollars should not go to NGOs that explicitly undermine that mission, which has so far been masterfully executed by the president and his team.

Under the second Trump administration’s proposed immigration reforms, immigration NGOs potentially face RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) charges due to a multitude of factors—if, for example, they have engaged in a “pattern of racketeering activity” related to federal immigration law violations. These include “fraud and misuse of visas, permits, and other documents”; “slavery” and “trafficking in persons”; “unlawful welfare fund payments”; “monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity”; and “sexual exploitation of children.”<sup>70</sup>

In February 2024, an NGO named Annunciation House was sued to have its license revoked by Texas’s Attorney General Ken Paxton. Paxton’s office alleged that Annunciation House violated

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<sup>67</sup> Bensman, Todd. “United Nations Grantee Uses U.S. Tax Dollars to Fund Illegal Immigration.” *The Federalist*, December 16, 2021.

<https://thefederalist.com/2021/12/16/united-nations-grantee-uses-u-s-tax-dollars-to-fund-illegal-immigration/>.

<sup>68</sup> USAspending.gov. “Recipient Profile: International Organization for Migration.” Accessed February 18, 2025.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/recipient/472c2dc8-009a-30c6-7578-72bf109e7057-C/latest>.

<sup>69</sup> Taer, Jennie and Chris Nesi. “Illegal Border Crossings Down 90% Under Trump: Border Patrol.” *New York Post*, February 6, 2025.

<https://nypost.com/2025/02/06/us-news/illegal-border-crossings-down-90-under-trump-border-patrol/>.

<sup>70</sup> 18 U.S.C. § 1961 (2018).

state law with “legal violations such as facilitating illegal entry to the United States, alien harboring, human smuggling, and operating a stash house.”<sup>71</sup>

The Attorney General’s Office requested specific business records from Annunciation House to evaluate the claims against the organization. In response, the NGO not only refused to show their records but sued the Attorney General’s Office to prevent any enforcement.<sup>72</sup> The case was argued before the Texas Supreme Court earlier this year.

To maximize the efficiency of its border efforts, the Trump administration could open investigations into the complicity of these NGOs in aiding cartels and circumventing immigration laws. The Department of Government Efficiency has already made great progress at USAID and other agencies, and much of the funding to these organizations and others like them has been curtailed. But as this report shows, hundreds of millions of dollars earmarked for alien resettlement, asylum assistance, and unaccompanied minor services also flow through the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of State, and other agencies. These funding sources could also be restricted.

Likewise, tracking down and accounting for the individuals who have been trafficked and smuggled into the United States with the aid of these NGOs—especially those who have committed other crimes beyond illegally entering the United States—would mitigate the success of illicit human transportation networks. If NGOs are discovered to have been aiding such criminals, they should also face prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

The federal government can continue to make every effort to find the hundreds of thousands of children trafficked into the United States by the cartels, many of whom were then received by federally funded NGOs. As White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller put it, the government should “investigate every instance of child trafficking, labor trafficking, sex trafficking, child smuggling, and all the attendant crimes involved in that.”<sup>73</sup>

## **Conclusion**

As this report shows, many NGOs facilitating migration across the southern border, contributing to the abuse of our asylum system, and even incentivizing human trafficking and smuggling by the cartels receive a majority of their funding from the government, with some obtaining well over 90 percent of their annual revenue from U.S. taxpayers.

If funding for these organizations were to be reduced, many would cease to exist or be forced to dramatically curtail their operations. Already, Houston’s Catholic Charities has cut 20 percent of

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<sup>71</sup> Office of the Attorney General of Texas. “Attorney General Ken Paxton Sues to End NGO’s Operations in Texas After Discovering Potential Efforts to Facilitate Illegal Immigration.” Press Release. February 20, 2024. <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/attorney-general-ken-paxton-sues-end-ngos-operations-texas-after-discovering-potential-efforts>.

<sup>72</sup> Serrano, Alejandro and Robert Downen, “Judge Denies Texas’ Attempt to Shut Down El Paso Migrant Shelter.” *Texas Tribune*, July 3, 2024. <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/07/02/texas-el-paso-annunciation-house-ruling/>.

<sup>73</sup> X (formerly Twitter). “BehizyTweets: February 18, 2025.” <https://x.com/BehizyTweets/status/1883236371558543728>.

its staff, and Catholic Relief Services was expected to cut its budget by 50 percent after its government grant funding from USAID was reduced.<sup>74</sup> This response shows that these entities had vested financial interests in the continuation of the border invasion and all the human suffering that comes with it. Now is the time to hold them accountable.

As long as cartels control the flow of illegal immigrants across the southern border, programs that fund NGOs facilitating illegal border crossings and circumvention of U.S. laws can be targeted, reduced, frozen, or cut altogether in order to stop the border invasion and human trafficking that enrich some of the most depraved criminal organizations in the world. Shining more light on these NGOs, especially through investigations into the administrative state's abuses, will reduce attempts to undermine the Trump administration's successful border security policies.

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<sup>74</sup> The Pillar. "Houston Catholic Charities Cuts 20% of Staff." *The Pillar*, February 8, 2025. <https://www.pillaratholic.com/p/houston-catholic-charities-cuts-20>.