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## **Congress Should Boldly Expand on White House Proposed Budget Reforms to Immigration Detention**

The proposed White House FY2023 federal budget released on March 28 does not go far enough in slashing funding for policies of detention and deportation that devastate Latin American migrant families, migrant-led coalition Alianza Americas, and its digital organizing powerhouse Presente.org, said today.

The proposed budget does include several promising provisions on reforming immigration policy. This includes [a drop](#) in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention beds, proposed [Department of Justice funding](#) that would invest [an undefined amount in legal counsel](#) for those facing deportation, and [a moderate increase in funding](#) for United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), an agency that is facing significant backlogs in processing services applications. There is also a \$75 million increase in funding for alternative-to-detention programs (although advocates [have expressed concerns](#), backed up [by research](#), over the harmful impact of incorporating dehumanizing surveillance technology like ankle bracelets into these programs). Additionally, the budget proposal also [funds the task force](#) created to reunite migrant families separated under the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy.

But the budget increases ICE funding overall to over \$8 billion. There is also \$65 million in increasing Border Patrol staffing, funds that would have been better spent in investing in personnel and physical infrastructure at the border — aka, processing centers staffed with trained asylum managers and social workers, not uniformed law enforcement.

**“There is promising stuff in this budget proposal, but it does not deliver the bold action needed to transform our immigration system into one that keeps families together,”** said Oscar Chacón, executive director for Alianza Americas. **“Congress needs to use this budget as a launching-off point, and pass a spending bill that makes a sharp break with cruel policies of detention and deportation.”**

**“Congress should build off of the proposed cuts in the White House budget proposal and further reduce funding for ICE detention beds,”** said Nancy Treviño, Alianza Americas' associate director for network power. **“We shouldn't be spending money on a single bed in detention centers. No one should have their freedom taken away from them because they haven't yet resolved their immigration status. We need immigration policies that [uphold freedom for all](#). That means investing federal funds to provide universal legal representation for immigrants in any immigration proceedings.”**

**“On paper, the increased funding to USCIS is a positive step forward. But clear guidelines on investments to USCIS infrastructure will be needed, in order to tackle the stunning backlog of applications that is resulting in DACA and TPS holders losing their work permits. If Congress doesn’t move swiftly to give USCIS the additional funding and support that it urgently needs, this will leave hundreds of thousands of TPS and DACA recipients in the lurch,”** said Yanira Arias, national campaign manager at Alianza Americas.

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*[Alianza Americas](#) is the only transnational organization rooted in Latino immigrant communities in the United States focused on improving the quality of life of all people in the U.S.-Mexico-Central America migration corridor. As a network of Latino and Caribbean immigrants, Alianza Americas is working for change in the U.S. while also promoting a more stable, healthy, democratic and safer conditions in the countries of origin of their members.*

*Presente.org is Alianza Americas’ digital organizing powerhouse. As the nation’s largest online Latinx organizing group — and the nation’s premier Latinx digital organizing hub — Presente.org advances social justice with technology, media, and culture.*