



May 1, 2020

The Honorable Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye
The Honorable Associate Justices Supreme Court of
California 350 McAllister Street San Francisco, CA
94102-4797

Re: Letter of Amici Curiae in Support of Petition for Writ of Mandate in California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, et. al v. Gavin Newsom, Governor, et al., Supreme Ct. No. S261829

Dear Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye and Hon. Justices of the California Supreme Court:

Pursuant to the Rule 8.500(g) of the California Rules of Court, our organization, the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, a statewide organization of faith leaders and congregations from throughout the State of California, strongly urge this Court to grant Petitioners' petition for writ of mandate, and halt state and local cooperation with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") notification and transfer requests.

The Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity is a California Statewide organization of people of faith and congregations dedicated to faith and social justice. The Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity represents people of faith in Los Angeles County, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Inland Valleys (San Bernardino and Riverside counties). We advance racial equity and human rights in two program areas: immigrant justice and ending mass criminalization. In the last two years, we have trained 1,800 people of faith to take leadership roles, engaged 200 faith communities, enlisted over 50 sanctuary churches, and reached more than 45,000 people.

During this global pandemic of Covid-19, we are deeply concerned about the life threatening danger faced by our fellow human beings who are suffering in immigration detention centers, prisons, and jails. Unlike others of us, they are unable to practice social distancing. Many of them have serious chronic health conditions and advanced age that further adds to their vulnerability. An outbreak of COVID-19 in prisons and detention centers could be catastrophic to detained people, workers and all of us in surrounding communities. We are also cognizant that those legally and institutionally responsible for their

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well being are either not capable or not willing to provide them with the care and public health practices required for their safety. Many of these facilities are run by for-profit corporations and marred by a record of poor medical conditions and deaths inside their facilities.

Guided by our shared interfaith values and commitments to the principles of the inherent worth and dignity of each person, equity and justice, compassion and mercy, we have worked in collaboration to support immigrants such as Charles Robert Joseph. After serving 13-years in California State prison, subject to excessive sentencing for a crime committed when he was a young adult, Mr. Joseph was found eligible for parole. As his family waited for him in the parking lot of the prison, unbeknownst to them, ICE entered the prison and detained and arrested Charles before he was ever able to see his family. He spent nearly 12 months in immigration detention as ICE attempted to deport him back to Fiji, a country he left in his youth. Only less than a month ago, was Charles released by court order because of the potential threat ICE detention during COVID-19 waged against his compromised health. ICE is still proceeding with their process to deport him, but now Mr. Joseph is afforded due process and can await immigration judicial proceedings in his case, out of the deadly danger of detention. Upon his release, he comments that this past year in detention was valuable time he could have spent beginning his re-entry program and reuniting with his family. It also put his very life in danger as the Mesa Verde Detention Facility was unable to comply with the most basic of CDC recommendations for the pandemic.

Unfortunately, Charles' story is not alone. ICE and CA prisons have a history of targeting, detaining, and deporting hundreds of community members *after* they have served time and have been paroled. Now during this pandemic, it is absolutely alarming that those who have earned parole are being transferred and brought into ICE detention on a daily basis, increasing the risk of spreading disease from prison to detention. It is for this reason that we have been working in earnest with legal service organizations, the SF public defenders office and other community groups to reduce the numbers of persons in criminal and immigration custody, and to stop transfers between them in order to promote public health and safety.

It is our shared belief that immigration detention is unnecessary. Many can safely and responsibly await their immigration proceedings outside detention facilities. Many detained people are long-term residents with families who are US citizens and ties to our local communities and congregations. Effective and compassionate alternatives like case management can help keep immigrants and employees safer and healthy during this pandemic. Our organization is a critical part of community alternatives and post release programs. We provide support to those who find themselves in immigration detention or imprisoned. We provide as needed spiritual support, support letters, support to their family members,



financial support for bonds, post-release rides, food, emergency short term housing, and volunteer support and accompaniment and networks to help people rebuild their lives after detention and incarceration.

At this time, needlessly awaiting in immigration detention can lead to death. It is for these reasons that we strongly support Petitioners' petition for writ of mandamus to halt our local state and local enforcement agencies from cooperating with ICE during this extraordinary period, during which normal criminal procedures and rights have been suspended in the name of public safety. Everyone in our communities should be afforded reasonable safety without forfeiting the due processor life to which they are entitled.

Respectfully submitted on this 1st day of May, 2020

Rev. Deborah Lee
Executive Director
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity

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PROOF OF SERVICE

I am employed in the County of Alameda, California. I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action. My business address is: Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, 310 8th St. #310, Oakland, CA 94607 and my business email is dlee@im4humanintegrity.org

On May 1st, 2020 I served the foregoing document(s), described as:

- AMICUS LETTER IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE
NAT'L ASSN OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS V. CA ATTY GEN. AND
GOVERNOR, SUPREME CT. NO. S261829

on the interested parties in this action by e-mail or electronic service [C.C.P. § 1010.6; CRC 2.250-2.261]. The documents listed above were transmitted via e-mail to the e-mail addresses on the attached service list.



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Not required until
further notice from the
court.

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BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE: I caused the documents to be served electronically through TrueFiling in portable document format ("PDF") Adobe Acrobat [C.C.P. § 1010.6; CRC 2.250-2.261].

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on May 1, 2020, at Albany, California.

Rev. DePaul Lee

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