



## Advocacy Newsletter May 2025



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**HELLO!** My name is Allie Raines and I am the designer for Advocacy News from the Iowa United Nations Association. I am currently a sophomore at Drake University as a double major in graphic design and environmental science, with a minor in magazine and brand media. I am most passionate about designing environmental topics, however I love all forms of art, especially painting! My hometown is in Missouri, but I am so excited to become more involved in Iowa through this newsletter. View my past projects and portfolio at [arainesdesign.myportfolio.com/](https://arainesdesign.myportfolio.com/)

# WHERE IS



## Kilmar Abrego Garcia and the Rule of Law

Harper Dunne | Iowa UNA College Ambassador  
from the University of Iowa

# JUSTICE?

All Americans must speak up for the immediate return of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who was [deported from the United States to El Salvador](#) in March of this year. In 2019, Mr. Abrego Garcia was granted a “withholding of removal” order on the grounds that he had a well-founded fear of persecution in his home country. His removal from the country in disregard of this order represents the ability of the US executive branch to override the US judicial system and US Constitution, effectively destroying a key pillar of US democracy. The removal of Kilmar Abrego Garcia from the United States without due process is a peace, justice, and rule of law Issue, not an immigration issue.

While it is important to recognize the humanity of Abrego Garcia, the core issue is not whether this one man should be deported. The fundamental issue is the Trump administration’s violation of the right to due process, which is afforded to all who reside within American borders as given in the US Constitution’s [Fifth](#) and [Fourteenth](#) Amendments. The Trump administration deported Abrego Garcia without due process. He was grabbed in a traffic stop in Baltimore and immediately shipped to CECOT, El Salvador’s [most](#)

[notorious prison](#) containing Salvadorian gang members and suspected terrorists, within just three days. If he was afforded his constitutional right to due process, he would most certainly still be in the United States - he has committed no crime and, as previously mentioned, has a withholding of removal order protecting him from being deported to El Salvador.


The [timeline of events](#) related to this case shows the government’s failure to uphold due process norms. On March 31, Justice Department attorneys wrote in a filing that Abrego Garcia’s imprisonment in El Salvador was “an administrative error.” On April 4, a US District Court gave an order which required the Trump administration to return Abrego Garcia to the US by April 7th. By April 10th, the case had made it up to the Supreme Court, which ruled with no dissenting votes that the Trump administration must “facilitate” Abrego Garcia’s release to the US. Meanwhile, the US District Court which originally heard Abrego Garcia’s partner’s case has been requiring daily updates on Abrego Garcia’s status and the US government’s steps taken to return him, but updates have not been coming. On April 23, the federal judge who issued the order for daily updates

temporarily paused this order.

The US government’s blatant disregard of the constitutional rights afforded to those who reside within US borders represents a violation of rule of law norms and democratic institutions, which is a core concern of the United Nations. [Sustainable Development Goal 16](#) (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) urges “accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” When both El Salvadorian President Bukele and US President Trump can sit in the office on April 14 and say to each other, on broadcast, that neither has the power to return Abrego Garcia, one has to wonder, where is the accountability? Where are our strong institutions? Where is the justice?

The one power everyone still has right now is their voice. Speak up. Contact your representatives in Congress and your governors. Demand that our government view the issue of Kilmar Abrego Garcia not as an immigration issue, but as a due process issue. As a Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions issue.

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Consider the major fires in 2025. In January, a series of wildfires in metropolitan Los Angeles and its surrounding areas had devastating consequences. Almost 200,000 were evacuated; at least 29 people were killed. In March, wildfires in the Carolinas devastated thousands of acres, required mass evacuations, and led to the declaration of a state of emergency. These fires worsened the damage created by Hurricane Helene, a catastrophic cyclone that occurred in September 2024 which resulted in massive flooding in Western North Carolina. Hurricane Helene's debris coupled with a drought during the winter and early spring resulted in the survival of many insects, which, in turn, damaged additional trees. All of these factors, and stronger than usual winds, resulted in the massive wildfires in the region.

An increase in wildfires has been happening not only in the United States. There have been massive wildfires in Siberia. Their causes are similar to those in the United States: increasing droughts and changing precipitation patterns. The resulting drier soils make vegetation more susceptible to fire.

Also, fire interacting with clouds results in even less precipitation and more drought conditions, which creates a self-amplifying feedback.

One of the key causes of all of this is climate change in the Arctic, which has been warming faster than the global average. Research data indicate that boreal forests, otherwise known as taiga, which cover northern parts of North America, Eurasia and Asia, are burning at speeds that the earth has not experienced in the last 10,000 years.

Climate change produces more extreme weather, including hurricanes and wildfires. Wildfires like the ones that overwhelmed Los Angeles are becoming more frequent. The links between Hurricane Helene and the wildfires in the Carolinas show that extreme weather events like hurricanes can contribute to additional climate catastrophes. Recent Siberian wildfires are spreading faster and lasting longer because of the conditions created by global warming. Unfortunately, what has happened in Los Angeles, the Carolinas, and Siberia should be seen as a new normal.



## Child Labor Laws Weakened Again in Iowa | E.J. Gallagher

In 2023, the Iowa legislature passed legislation, later signed into law by Governor Reynolds, that [rolled back child labor law protections](#). Critics argued that the provisions of the new state law conflicted with [child labor provisions](#) of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act involving hazardous conditions or excessive hours that interfere with teens' schooling or health and well-being.

The Iowa legislation was opposed by organized labor, and some more objectionable provisions were removed. The final legislation passed with only Republican votes. There was similar legislation introduced in fourteen states in 2023. The Iowa law allowed longer hours of work on both school and non-school days. Iowa is not the only state whose child labor laws are less restrictive than federal law. The enacted laws were pushed by the [Foundation for Government Accountability](#), a conservative think tank, through its lobbying arm, the [Opportunity Solutions Project](#). After the legislation passed, Governor Reynolds asked the U.S. Department of Labor to reconsider or renegotiate fines against some Iowa businesses for federal child labor violation. Notable violations and fines reported in the press included incidents involving child labor being used in work deemed hazardous while employed by contracted firms cleaning an Iowa packing plant. Earlier this year, [changes to state administrative rules](#) further eroded child labor protections by lowering the maximum civil penalties for violations

of time and hour restrictions from \$10,000 to \$2,500 for each instance and by allowing for penalties to be reduced based on the size of the business. Organized labor in Iowa opposed these changes.

The United Nations speaks to the issue of child labor through the [International Labour Organization](#), which was started by the League of Nations in 1919. The worst forms of child labor are defined by Article 3 of the [ILO Convention No. 182](#) and include child slavery, prostitution and child pornography, procurement of a child for illicit purposes including drug trafficking, and work that by the nature of its circumstances is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child. Hazardous child labor or hazardous work is defined in Article 3 of [ILO Recommendation No. 190](#) and includes work exposing children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in

confined spaces;  
work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer. These definitions parallel provisions of federal and state labor laws but, as in many matters, the definitions of where the limits should be set are subject to change as can be shown in recent policy changes in Iowa and other states. In some states, a decrease in the adult labor pool is proposed to be solved by revising laws to make child labor more available. It will be interesting to see if regulations will be loosened at the federal level under the current Trump administration.



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# Your Voice and Action Needed Now

## Practical Tips on Helping the Immigrant Population

Jane Shuttleworth and Caryl Lyons



Many immigrants and refugees from around the world who are here legally and have become our neighbors and friends are facing an uncertain future due to drastic changes in U.S. immigration policy. Some are being deported right off the streets of the United States: a man [accused of being part of a Venezuelan gang](#) was sent to a third country prison with no due process; international [students here on legal student visas at universities](#) are being detained and accused of being terrorists for exercising free speech to protest the violence in Gaza. These are just a few examples, and universities around the country, including in Iowa, are now

being affected.

Other refugees are losing their legal status because the sources of that legality are being taken away or dismantled by the current administration. For example, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Humanitarian Parole are both forms of temporary relief that allow non-citizens from particular countries to be here legally during times of great unrest and upheaval in their home countries or for urgent humanitarian reasons and/or significant public benefit. [Some nationalities that currently have TPS or Humanitarian Parole](#) and are threatened with the loss of their status include Afghans, Cameroonians,

Haitians, Cubans, Ukrainians, Ethiopians, Venezuelans, El Salvadorans, Somalians, South Sudanese and several others. Many refugees cannot return to their native countries due to war, fear of reprisals, or even death. Many sold everything they had to get the money to come here. If they are repatriated, they will arrive “home” with nothing.

In February 2025, [Iowa business experts warned changes in immigration policy could impact Iowa's economy](#). The Iowa Business Council [flagged Iowa's slow population growth](#) as an impediment to economic progress. The census report showed that 98% of Iowa's population growth from 2020 to 2024 was the result of international migration. [Common Sense Institute Iowa](#) is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of Iowa's economy. [A key finding](#) in their 2025 report states that if foreign immigration in Iowa were to be halted for the next four years, Iowa would

lose 11,000 labor force participants and \$300 million in GDP based on Common Sense Initiative's macroeconomic forecasting.

Even government funding to agencies and non-profits that assist immigrant and refugee settlement is being cut. The Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids [recently lost most of their funding and much of their staff](#). Other immigrants face [losing access to SNAP benefits \(food assistance\)](#). Such funding is a critical resource for those struggling to make ends meet as they adjust to a new country and find jobs. Studies show that early support helps them become self-sufficient faster, which benefits local economies, and that within fifteen years [they contribute more than they receive to local economies](#). Instead of investing tax payer money to welcome and assist immigrants, the [Trump administration aims to expand funding](#) to private contractors to build facilities to detain and deport immigrants.

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## WHAT CAN WE, AS CARING HUMAN BEINGS, DO TO HELP IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES?

### EDUCATE

Realize there are many categories of immigrants: documented, undocumented, visa holders, Humanitarian Parole, Temporary Protected Status, etc., and that many families have mixed status members. Become educated on the difference between good and bad immigration reform bills: the [Migration Policy Institute](#) is one example of a non-partisan institute with in-depth reports and analysis on US immigration policies.



## ADVOCATE

Immigrants need our support. As citizens, it is our moral obligation to help protect their rights. Call and email local, state, and federal politicians. Request compassionate and smart immigration reform. The [Iowa Movement for Migrant Justice](#) has volunteer opportunities and an immigration Narrative Change Ambassador program that meets monthly via Zoom. The Friends Committee on National Legislation [has an immigration justice advocacy team](#).

## INTERNATIONALLY

Not only are our local new friends and neighbors in trouble, but so are people around the world who are now starving and missing other key services because the U.S. has shut down the U.S. Agency for International Development ([USAID](#)), an organization that was supporting food security, health care, and disease prevention in many countries around the world, efforts that help to stem migration and displacement from home countries. By spending 1% of our budget helping the world, we had been saving lives, enriching lives, and building good will toward the United States since the organization was founded during the Carter administration. Some of the organizations that are trying to replace some of the money they have lost recently are:

[International Rescue Committee](#) (IRC)  
[UNHCR](#) (United Nations Refugee Committee)  
[UNICEF](#) (United Nations Children's Fund)  
[Save the Children](#)

## DONATE AND VOLUNTEER

Do research about organizations that assist immigrant populations both on a legal and humanitarian basis. In Iowa, for example, there are free legal clinics that help immigrants, including the [Iowa Movement for Migrant Justice](#) and the University of Iowa Legal Clinic. Organizations like the [Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids](#), the [Immigrant Welcome Center of Johnson County](#), [Open Heartland](#), and the Catholic Worker House help immigrants with legal assistance, finding jobs, and learning English. These organizations need donations of everything from food to clothing and furniture. They also need volunteers to give rides to medical or legal appointments, sort donations, distribute food, or become tutors or conversations partners for someone learning English. Check with your own place of worship, if you have one, to see if they are sponsoring refugees and offer to help. A number of food banks in the area ([see Hawkeye Area Community Action Program \(HACAP\) food reservoirs](#)) are essential to both immigrant and low-income populations and a good way to get started volunteering. [Iowa Nice](#) brings Iowans and Ukrainians together to help make Iowa their home. [The Prairie Lands Freedom Fund](#) educates about immigration enforcement and advocates to ensure that those detained and charged with being deportable receive a fair hearing.

## PROTECTIVE ACCOMPANIMENT

Volunteers gathered in April to provide Protective Accompaniment and support to asylum seekers during their check-in at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office or ICE in Cedar Rapids. Some asylum seekers request accompaniment to provide safety, visibility, and support in the face of potential unjust detention or deportation risks as ICE often operates in the shadows and out of the light of public accountability for their actions.

To learn more about Protective Accompaniment or to volunteer, contact [Iowa City Catholic Worker](#): Email: [Iowacitycatholicworker@gmail.com](mailto:Iowacitycatholicworker@gmail.com)  
 Phone: 515-729-6482

## IOWA FOOD SECURITY FORUM

The Iowa Food Security Forum aims to find effective, long-term solutions to food insecurity in Iowa. The forum is a large, one-day event that intends to guide food- and nutrition-related policy in Iowa through understanding the diverse perspectives of food insecure Iowans. Drake University and several local non-profits have partnered with Stanford University's Deliberative Democracy Lab to organize the event using a unique model known as a Deliberative Poll. The Deliberative Poll will recruit a sample of 250-300 food insecure Iowans, each of whom will be given access to briefing materials, plenary sessions with experts, and small-group discussions. The event will conclude by administering a questionnaire to each participant, and the results will be used by local policymakers and non-profits to inform their responses to Iowa's food insecurity problem.

In partnership with the Iowa United Nations Association, the Iowa Food Security Forum is currently accepting donations in support of the event, which is tentatively scheduled for October. Donations can be made via check (mail to Iowa United Nations Association, 20 E. Market Street, Iowa City, IA 52245), on the Iowa UNA website ([www.iowauna.org/support](http://www.iowauna.org/support)), or through Venmo (@Iowa-UNA). Please indicate that your donation is targeted to the Iowa Food Security Forum. Any questions on the event can be directed to Heath Henderson ([heath.henderson@drake.edu](mailto:heath.henderson@drake.edu)).

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# THE LEGAL STATUS

## OF GREENLAND UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

DEBRA DELAET | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IOWA UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

In August 2019, President Trump confirmed discussions within his administration about buying Greenland, an autonomous territory within Denmark. He emphasized Greenland's potential strategic value to the United States. This plan was denounced by both Greenland's government and Mette Frederiksen, the Danish Prime Minister, who stated bluntly that "Greenland is not for sale."

President Trump has escalated his rhetoric about Greenland since the beginning of his second administration. In January 2025, he reiterated his interest in buying Greenland on the grounds that U.S. "ownership" of Greenland would serve both U.S. economic and national security interests. Greenland is an island with rich with national resources, including oil and gas, and rare minerals used to produce electric cars, wind turbines, and military equipment. The melting of ice in the Arctic region also signals the potential of future opportunities for additional minerals and natural resources. Bordering the Northwest Passage shipping lane, the region also is a critical corridor in global trade. Russia's increased military

presence in the Arctic also drives the Trump Administration's preoccupation with Greenland. President Trump has declined to rule out the use of military force to annex Greenland.

Greenland's colonial history sheds light on its complex legal status under international law. The Kingdom of Denmark colonized Greenland in 1721. The 1814 Treaty of Kiel, ending hostilities between Denmark and Sweden during the Napoleonic Wars, affirmed Denmark's control over Greenland. Greenland remained a Danish colony until 1953 when Denmark fully incorporated Greenland into its territory through a constitutional amendment. The predominantly Inuit indigenous population of Greenland continued to resist Danish rule and called for decolonization and self-determination. In response, the Danish government eventually granted Greenland a form of autonomy through the Home Rule Act of 1979. Under this legislation, Greenland legally remained part of Denmark but was granted the right to establish its own parliament and limited authority to govern itself in domestic matters, including

education, health, and housing. The 2009 Act on Greenland Self-Government further advanced self-determination for the people of Greenland by allowing for a referendum on the question of independence and calling for negotiations between the governments of Greenland and Denmark should a majority of Greenlanders vote for independence in such a referendum.

Two key legal principles—state sovereignty and self-determination—provide a framework for understanding Greenland's status under international law. State sovereignty is a foundational principle of international law. Article 2 of the UN Charter specifies that the organization is based on the sovereign equality of all of its members and that member states are obligated to refrain from the threat or use of force in their relations with each other. Greenland currently remains a part of Denmark. Any threat to the territorial integrity or political independence of Greenland remains a threat to the state sovereignty of Denmark.

The principle of self-determination, enshrined in Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, affirms that all peoples have the right to "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development." Under international law, the right to self-determination can be fulfilled by autonomous self-governance within a sovereign state. Thus, the current governance framework, allowing Greenland a degree of autonomy within Denmark, fulfills the basic requirements of self-

determination. Furthermore, the fact that Denmark, under the 2009 Greenland Self-Government Act, has authorized Greenland to hold a referendum to determine if a majority of Greenlanders want to pursue independence also advances the right to self-determination.

The international legal principles of state sovereignty and self-determination have clear implications for the Trump administration's recent pronouncements on Greenland. As long as Greenland formally remains a part of Denmark, the United States cannot buy Greenland unless Denmark agrees to sell it. Denmark has emphatically and consistently stated that Greenland is not for sale. The Trump administration's indication that it would not rule out the use of force to annex Greenland represents a clear assault on the concept of state sovereignty and prohibitions against intervention against sovereign states under the UN Charter. Should Greenland become independent in the future, the political terrain would shift, but the legal principles would remain the same. Upon any future independence, Greenland would become a sovereign state with which the United States would have to negotiate the terms of their relationship. The United States could not buy Greenland unless Greenland was willing to sell itself. And the United States could not use military force against Greenland without violating international law.

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# & WHERE TO FIND US HOW TO REACH US

C/O Iowa UNA | 20 E Market St. Iowa City, IA 52245

VIEW OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.IOWAUNA.ORG](http://WWW.IOWAUNA.ORG)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**LinkedIn:** Iowa United Nations Association

**Facebook:** Iowa United Nations Association

**Instagram:** @una-iowa-division

## HELP US BY DONATING!

Your generous donations help support our work in support of climate action, gender equity, human rights, and refugees. To donate online, go to [www.iowauna.org](http://www.iowauna.org) and select the Donate button. You also may donate to Iowa UNA through Venmo @Iowa-UNA.

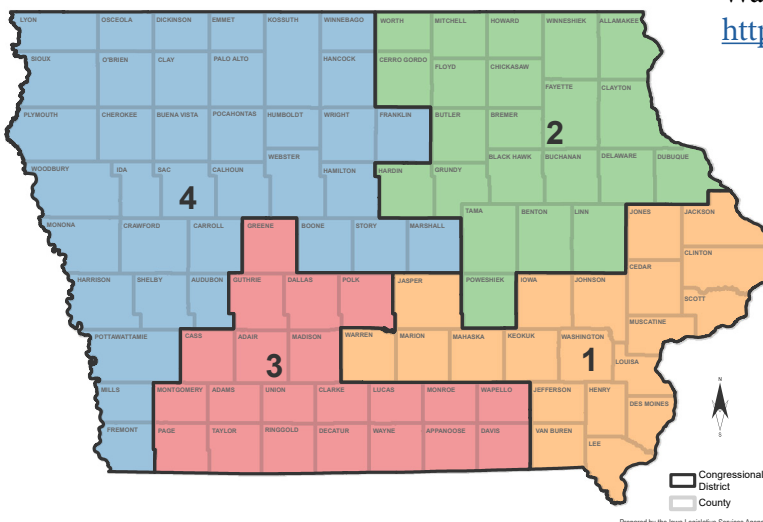
# HOW TO CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

President Donald Trump (R)  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
[www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact)

Senator Charles Grassley (R)  
135 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20510  
(202) 224-3744  
[www.grassley.senate.gov/contact](http://www.grassley.senate.gov/contact)

Senator Joni Ernst (R)  
111 Russell Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20510  
(202) 224-3524  
[www.ernst.senate.gov/contact](http://www.ernst.senate.gov/contact)

IOWA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS  
Effective Beginning with the Elections in 2022 for the 118th U.S. Congress



District 1: Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)  
1716 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-6576  
<https://millermeeks.house.gov/>

District 2: Representative Ashley Hinson (R)  
1429 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2911  
[www.hinson.house.gov/](http://www.hinson.house.gov/)

District 3: Representative Zach Nunn (R)  
1034 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-5476  
[nunn.house.gov/](http://nunn.house.gov/)

District 4: Representative Randy Feenstra (R)  
1440 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-4426  
[feenstra.house.gov](http://feenstra.house.gov)