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**Statement of the American Immigration Lawyers Association
Submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee for the December 10, 2024 hearing
“How Mass Deportations Will Separate American Families, Harm Our Armed Forces, and
Devastate Our Economy”**

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The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), the national bar association of over 16,000 immigration attorneys and law professors, submits this statement to express its concern and opposition to reports of how the Trump administration will engage in massive enforcement operations with the goal of deporting every undocumented person from the country. AILA members practice in every state and frequently assist individuals, families, and businesses impacted by immigration enforcement actions.

The Judiciary Committee hearing is timely given statements by the President-elect and other spokespersons that his administration will conduct wide-spread campaigns to deport millions of undocumented people and will mobilize not only federal immigration authorities but also the national guard and local law enforcement. AILA urges the incoming administration to consider other strategies for managing immigration that will be more effective while still ensuring the people subject to enforcement are treated fairly, humanely and in accordance with the principles of due process guaranteed in the Constitution.

Widespread enforcement operations will have devastating consequences for American businesses, schools, and municipalities, and will not serve America’s national interests. Immigrants, including people who are undocumented and their U.S. citizen family members, are essential to our nation. Immigrants live in big cities and small towns in every region. They have children who attend schools and families that worship in temples, churches and mosques. From an economic perspective, immigrants sustain American businesses through their work in every industry and economic sector. In particular, undocumented individuals represent 4.8 percent of the overall U.S. workforce; in the agricultural industry, 13.7 percent of the workforce; in construction, 12.1 percent; and in hospitality, 7.1 percent.¹ The majority pay taxes that, in turn, fund the local education systems and social services in the communities in which they live.

Large-scale enforcement actions will devastate the economy and have the most severe

consequences on the people being targeted and their families, many who have resided in America for years and have contributed to our country's strength and prosperity. The people who will be targeted will suffer enormous hardship, including apprehensions at their homes, workplaces or in public spaces, detention in jail-like facilities, and ultimately deportation and separation from their families and community. The incoming administration's mass deportation plan will not only harm the direct targets of the actions but also cause chaos and sow fear in American cities and communities.

In economic terms, the nationwide impact of large-scale enforcement actions will be severe. By removing people from their homes and communities, the government will potentially reduce the overall median incomes for mixed-status households by 47 percent, literally driving millions of U.S. citizens into poverty.² There are at least 4 million mixed status families living in the country that would be impacted by mass deportations; this figure includes over 5 million children.³ This will lead to foreclosures on mortgages and evictions of U.S. citizens and many people who rely on the income of their immigrant and undocumented family members.

A report by the American Immigration Council concluded that deportation of approximately 13 million people who are likely to be targeted by the incoming administration would result in massive labor shortages and a dramatic reduction in the U.S. gross domestic product by over \$1.1 trillion.⁴ Furthermore, such widespread enforcement actions would dramatically reduce U.S. tax revenue: In 2022, undocumented individuals paid \$46.8 billion in federal taxes and \$29.3 billion in state and local taxes.

Our nation's elected leaders must urgently reform the immigration system, but attempting the costly deportation of millions of people is not the solution. Instead, the incoming administration should focus on enforcement strategies that are effective, fair and humane. The management of migration into and out of the country will be more effectively accomplished by properly resourcing federal immigration agencies to conduct the necessary enforcement functions and to efficiently process visas and other immigration applications. Immigration is a resource that needs to be controlled in an orderly manner to meet the interests of the country and to ensure the success and continuing prosperity of the nation.

¹ National Immigration Forum, "Mass Deportation in the U.S.: Explainer", September 30, 2024. And <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/undocumented-immigrants/>.

² National Immigration Forum, "Mass Deportation in the U.S.: Explainer", September 30, 2024. And <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/undocumented-immigrants/>.

³ American Immigration Council, "Mass Deportation: Devastating Costs to America, Its Budget and Economy", October 2024.

⁴ American Immigration Council, "Mass Deportation: Devastating Costs to America, Its Budget and Economy", October 2024.