



Case Nos. 19-16299, 19-16336, 19-16102, 19-16300
IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

**SIERRA CLUB; SOUTHERN BORDER COMMUNITIES COALITION, v. Plaintiffs-Appellees,
DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States, in his official capacity, et al.,
Defendants-Appellants.**

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA, et al., Plaintiffs-Appellees-Cross-Appellants, v. DONALD J. TRUMP,
President of the United States, in his official capacity, et al.,
Defendants-Appellants-Cross-Appellees.**

**BRIEF OF *AMICI CURIAE* RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT
OF PLAINTIFFS-PLAINTIFFS' PRINCIPAL AND RESPONSE BRIEFS**

Statement of Identity and Interest

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ) is a nonprofit religious and educational advocacy organization whose members comprise individuals and congregations. Founded in 2000, the mission and work of UUSJ is grounded in the principles of the Unitarian Universalist faith which recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person, the responsibility of the larger community to seek justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

UUSJ seeks to mobilize and amplify the voices of Unitarian Universalists (UUs) throughout the nation on matters of federal public policy. One of UUSJ's priorities is comprehensive immigration reform, including the fair and compassionate treatment of immigrants regardless of legal status. Our UU faith has a history of moral commitment to the rights and dignity of vulnerable persons seeking refuge from violence, discrimination and persecution. UUs have been murdered because of such actions. We have an active decades-long history of aiding refugees and asylum-seekers, from risking their lives during WWII to help people escape Europe to facing court trials for leaving water in the desert at the U.S. border.

On moral, economic, and social grounds UUSJ supports an immigration system that centers human dignity and objects to the apparent diversion of funds, against the will of Congress, and outside the appropriations process articulated in the constitution for the proposed border wall. The construction of a wall, especially where the security functionality of said wall could be accomplished with less invasive means and technology, seems superfluous and perhaps antithetical to the aim of securing the U.S.-Mexico border. This seems especially

so in the context of the higher moral aim of achieving security in a manner that is fair, compassionate and preserves human dignity--and in a fully legal manner.

Moral grounds: We believe the Administration should not be empowered with resources or legal grounds to build a wall as an obstacle to persons seeking asylum. Furthermore, current plans strike us as a willful diversion of taxpayer funds and thereby unhealthy for our democracy and its foundational moral covenants.

Economic grounds: Analysis and debate continues regarding the efficacy and efficiency of a physical barrier such as a wall as compared to a technological barrier. Further, property rights seem at risk with the imposition of a wall, whereas alternative security methods would likely mitigate or minimize undue infringement upon attendant property rights.

Social grounds: Local and community sovereignty claims and the attendant civic privileges of self governance seem jeopardized with this federal action to build a wall. This would seem an especially worrisome precedent for those localities where such infrastructure has not been requested and where duly elected representatives to Congress, and other levels of government, have voiced objection or concern.

For the above moral, economic and social reasons, UUSJ urges the court to act with all due deliberate care, finding against the defendant, and rejecting the apparent diversion of funds proposed by the Administration, against the will of Congress, outside the appropriations process articulated in the constitution.

Contact: (Pablo) Pavel DeJesús, Executive Director, UUSJ