



IndivisibleEB.org

Congresswoman Barbara Lee
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Washington, DC 20515

To: Congresswoman Barbara Lee
From: Indivisible East Bay
Date: June 4, 2018
Subject: Resisting the Trump Agenda

Immigration: We assume, based on past statements and votes, that Rep. Lee agrees with us that ICE has abused its power and at the very least needs significant reform. In fact, we believe that before passing a bill to authorize the agency is a good time to examine whether it should exist at all. We recognize that abolishing ICE is not realistic right now, but longer term, we want to know whether the congresswoman is open to the idea of fundamentally changing our immigration enforcement system in a way that cuts out the need for this type of agency.

Questions:

- What, in Rep. Lee's view, is the purpose of ICE and how does she think it could be reformed to better carry out that mission?
- Why did she vote NO on the DHS authorization bill last year?
- Does Rep. Lee expect any of the DACA bills the House ends up voting on (if they end up voting on any DACA bills) will be something she can support? What would such a bill need to have/not have for her to support it?
- Will Rep. Lee push for funding cuts for ICE and CBP (specifically for reducing officer headcount and detention beds quotas) in the House DHS Appropriations bill?

Yemen: We are wondering why Rep. Lee voted against the non-binding resolution[1] last November—and whether she had the same concerns about the Sanders-Lee joint resolution that failed to pass the Senate in March.

Questions:

- What does she think Congress should do about our involvement in Yemen?

Spending Bill: What are Rep. Lee's priorities for the next continuing resolution we expect to see in September?

AUMF Repeal: We know she agrees that the Corker-Kaine AUMF bill is dangerous.

Questions:

- Does she see any chance their draft could be amended into something that would at least be better than the status quo, or would it be better to pressure them to scrap the whole thing and start over?
- What's her opinion of Merkley's alternative framework[2] for AUMF?

Criminal Justice Reform: It seems like there's bipartisan support for Senator Grassley's Sentencing Reform bill[3] (both Sen. Booker and Harris are co-sponsors). Though we agree with its aims, we have some concerns about the details of the bill, in particular, the specifications for the risk assessment system. Reliance on proprietary software to determine the risk of recidivism, and hence sentencing, without any path for appeal of the software's [4] outputs is deeply concerning to us. We're also concerned about the lack of requirements for testing of the software's output as well as review of the software systems' source code and input data and how that might

encode bias[5], especially against already vulnerable populations. We'd like to see more concrete safeguards against algorithmic bias.

Questions:

-Does the Congresswoman support the bill?

-Are the Congresswoman and CBC looking into this aspect of criminal justice reform? How can we help?

Poverty Reduction: We thank her for co-sponsoring Supplemental Security Income Restoration Act: H.R. 3307 Closing the Meal Gap Act: H.R. 1276 to strengthen and expand SNAP. How can she work to pass them? How can we help?

Climate Change: We believe that putting a price on carbon is one of the most effective tools available to combat climate change. We're glad to see that the Congresswoman was one of the original co-sponsors of the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act[6].

Questions:

-What does the Congresswoman see as the path forward for durable carbon pricing policy? Does she see any hope for a bipartisan solution to climate change?

-What is the Congresswoman's position on interim/short-term legislative or funding bills that might preserve research into climate change and its impact? Would she be in favor of pushing for preservation of NOAA's climate modeling and supercomputing (see Exhibit 4a-2 of FY 2019 Budget Request[7] for NOAA) funding?

-Would the Congresswoman consider co-sponsoring H.R.4251 - Rebuilding Resilient Energy Systems Act to reform the Stafford Act[8] to ensure that federal funding for post-disaster infrastructure reconstruction is both greener/more efficient and more resilient?

Sexual Harassment in Congress: We thank Rep. Lee for her work on this issue. And, to be clear, we are not aware of any particular problems with her staff, but as constituents, we see it is our responsibility to address and prevent sexual harassment in the offices of those we elect. As a group inspired by an organization founded by former Congressional staffers, and which works closely with current Congressional staffers, we feel particularly invested in this aspect of our role in holding our representatives accountable.

Questions:

-What can you tell us about sexual harassment (and other employee wellbeing) policies in Rep. Lee's office?

-Is there a written policy we could see a copy of?

Sources:

1. Khanna R. Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to United States policy towards Yemen, and for other purposes [Internet]. H.Res.599 Nov 13, 2017. Available from: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-resolution/599/text>

2. Merkley Introduces Alternative AUMF to Stop Endless War and Preserve Constitutional Vision of War Authorization | U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley of Oregon [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2018 Jun 2]. Available from: <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/news/press-releases/merkley-introduces-alternative-aumf-to-stop-endless-war-and-preserve-constitutional-vision-of-war-authorization>

3. Grassley C. Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017 [Internet]. 1917 Feb 15, 2018. Available from: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1917/text>

4. Dressel J, Farid H. The accuracy, fairness, and limits of predicting recidivism. Sci Adv [Internet]. 2018;4:eaa05580. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aao5580>

5. Lohr S. Facial Recognition Is Accurate, if You're a White Guy. The New York Times [Internet]. 2018 Feb 9 [cited 2018 Jun 3]; Available from:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/09/technology/facial-recognition-race-artificial-intelligence.html>
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7. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION. NOAA BUDGET ESTIMATES FISCAL YEAR 2019 [Internet]. NOAA; Available from:
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8. Serrano J. Rebuilding Resilient Energy Systems Act of 2017 [Internet]. 4251 Nov 6, 2017. Available from:
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