

Bridges Faith Initiative

October 2021 Newsletter

On Tuesday, October 16, a number of border organizations walked out in protest of the Biden Administration's decision to reinstate Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) -- also known as Remain in Mexico.

Bridges Faith Initiative is in solidarity with our immigrant advocates at the border and supports their decision to walk out. We echo their words **“MPP is deadly and racist in intent and impact.”** [You can read the official press release here.](#)

Bridges Faith Initiative signed onto a letter along with [73 legal service providers, law schools clinics, and law firms in response to the reinstatement of MPP](#). The letter urged the Biden Administration to do everything in its power to terminate MPP and end Title 42. The letter was delivered to President Biden, Vice President Harris, Jake Sullivan of the National Security Council and Attorney General Merrick Garland.



On October 19 Rabbi Joshua Lesser spoke at a rally denouncing Herschel Walker and nazism. Exports from the speech can be read below:

We're here today in protest. In protest of defending symbols of bigotry and hatred -- and in protest of using those symbols of hate to compromise the health of Georgians.

The very basic moral principle of almost any religious traditional or moral code is the golden rule. It is the simple gold standard of common decency and the foundation of almost every culture. Many of us know it as “Do Unto Others as You Would Want Them To Do Unto You” -- in other words treat people as you would like to be treated. Somewhere along the way, Herschel Walker missed out on this fundamental universal teaching.

As someone who has built my rabbinate on building bridges, I am troubled by the harm that Herschel Walker has inflicted on the Jewish community by defending and doubling down on hatred and endangering lives doing so.

Our trauma is not your symbol. Our deaths are not for your exploitation. When someone sympathizes and justifies Nazi symbolism, he diminishes the violation of life of all of those lives murdered in the Holocaust to justify a false equivalency, they are not fit for public office.

So we're calling on Herschel Walker: Condemn the swastika AND the anti-vaccine intent behind it. We will not stay silent while the health of Georgians is at stake, where hate symbols are legitimized and the trauma of Jews is used as a tool for political gain.

In the name of our faiths and our common good, we are taught that we must not stand idly by, that we must look out for each other, particularly for those most vulnerable, for our health and safety. We must encourage honest conversations and talk to our neighbors about how this shot could save lives ahead of a potential dark winter COVID surge. And we must reject the political games of Herschel Walker, who thinks it's okay to use symbols of hatred and bigotry to undermine the health of Georgia.

What We Are Working On

- Asylum advocates and legal service providers held a press briefing to decry the Biden administration's decision to restart the Remain in Mexico program. A recording of the call is [available here](#).
- The current Build Back Better Framework includes \$100 Billion dollars for immigration relief. We will continue to advocate for Congress to provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS Holders, farmworkers, and essential workers.
- We are continuing our work creating awareness on the human rights violations in Sri Lanka by sending bi-weekly Sri Lanka updates to Congress.
- We are continuing to work with coalitions to decry The Biden Administration decision to uphold the racist Title 42 policy.

Help us continue educating elected officials on the human rights violations in the United States, at the U.S. Southwestern border and abroad. With your financial support we can ensure that a progressive faith voice is heard in Congress!

Donate

Thank you for reading, giving, and taking action with us.

Rabbi Joshua Lesser
and the BFI Team