



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on July 17, 2019

“Immigrants Rights” Attorneys Continue to Help Illegal Migrants Sue Government

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A phenomenon that started as far back as 2016 — “asylum-seekers” who are in this country illegally enlisting help from “immigrant rights” attorneys to file lawsuits against the federal government — has continued.



The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and other immigrant advocacy groups filed a lawsuit on July 16 in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, opposing a new Trump administration rule that would prevent migrants who entered our country illegally from seeking asylum inside the United States. The lawsuit asserts that the new regulations violate U.S. and international law.

The suit was a response to a statement issued the previous day by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security saying that the new rule requires asylum-seekers to have first applied for asylum and been rejected in one of the countries they traveled through before becoming eligible to apply in the United States.

Iran-based Press TV reported that the lawsuit names U.S. Attorney General William Barr and a number of U.S. immigration officials as defendants.

“This is the Trump administration’s most extreme run at an asylum ban yet. It clearly violates domestic and international law, and cannot stand,” ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt said in a statement.

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The ACLU, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Center for Constitutional Rights filed the lawsuit on behalf of immigrant support groups East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, Al Otro Lado, Innovation Law Lab, and Central American Resource Center, Press TV reported.

Another such recent lawsuit filed on June 26 in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles asked for an emergency injunction allowing immediate inspections by a public health expert of all Customs and Border Protection facilities in Texas’ El Paso and Rio Grande Valley sectors. The suit also sought access for medical professionals to these facilities.

In its response to the suit filed the following day, the Trump administration asked the court to deny the temporary restraining order, arguing the obligations the plaintiffs had requested were too severe to be addressed immediately, and that the government should be given more time to review and respond to them on a schedule set by the court.

The *Washington Times* reported in February that six migrant families had filed multi-million dollar claims on February 11 against the Trump administration over last year’s family separations, saying they needed the money to pay for counseling and other medical care to heal from the “torture” they said



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they suffered. Each claimant seeks \$3 million from the government for its alleged “intentional” infliction of emotional distress.

The families and their lawyers said the administration’s policy intended to inflict “emotional distress” on the parents and children, hoping it would make illegally entering the United States so uncomfortable that fewer people would attempt it.

The report quoted Mark Fleming, associate director of litigation at the National Immigration Justice Center, as saying, “It succeeded with devastating consequences.”

The families filing claims are being represented by law firms Arnold & Porter; Kairys, Rudovsky, Messing, Feinberg & Lin; the American Immigration Council; and the National Immigrant Justice Center.

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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