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Statement of the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota on the Senate Emergency Supplemental Bill Immigration Provisions

February 5, 2024— Every day, the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM) has the privilege of supporting newcomers, many of whom first entered the United States at the southern border. Each of their stories is unique, and their reasons for seeking to enter the United States are diverse. Over the past several years, however, ever-tightening border policies and procedures have restricted people’s ability to share their experiences before immigration officials make a life-or-death decision whether they can enter the United States.

The Senate Emergency Supplemental Bill goes even further. The bill mandates a border shutdown when border encounters reach 5,000 per day; raises the bar for seeking asylum beyond those established by international law; and further limits access to court processes and review. The likely result? Not better control and safety along the border, but rather greater exploitation by cartels and smugglers of desperate people seeking safety.

The Senate negotiators seek to make this proposal palatable by including several policies long called for by immigration advocates, such as:

- a pathway to lawful permanent residence and citizenship for certain Afghans;
- an infusion of 250,000 family- and employment-based green cards over the next five years;
- protections for children of high-skilled temporary workers who “age-out” of status while their parent is awaiting a green card; and
- work authorization for the dependents of certain temporary immigrants.

Notably, however, the proposal does not include a pathway to citizenship for DREAMers or for TPS holders.

We cannot acquiesce to a misguided border strategy in exchange for securing protections for certain classes of immigrants. We need and deserve an immigration system that works for all. The Senate Emergency Supplemental Bill does not bring us any closer to making that system a reality.