

May 23 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Cambodian Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

This letter is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, *et seq.*, submitted by the Asian Law Caucus (“ALC”).

ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Cambodian nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Cambodian nationals.

Request for Records

For any and all Cambodian nationals¹ removed from the United States from January 1, 2024 to the date on which your response to this request is produced, documents that reflect the individual’s:

- a. Date of initial entry into the United States
- b. Charge of removability
- c. Immigration status prior to removal order
- d. Date of final removal order

¹ This request defines “Cambodian nationals” to include individuals who were born in refugee camps outside of Cambodia but who ICE has nonetheless sought to remove to Cambodia because of their ties to Cambodia.

- e. Date of most recent detention by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) and the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (“ERO”) Field Office that detained the individual
- f. Date interviewed by Cambodian government for travel document, if applicable
- g. Date travel document issued by Cambodian government, if applicable
- h. Date of removal
- i. Country removed to

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Cambodian nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.²
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Cambodia, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Cambodian nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
- Disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of “a reasonably broad audience” because ALC intends to disseminate the information broadly. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iii). ALC regularly disseminates information regarding Southeast Asian deportation issues and other immigrant rights issues to the public through channels such as community alerts,³ written media,⁴ and social media.⁵

² See, e.g., *Vietnam to support deportations from US after tariff threats, lawyer says*, Feb. 27, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/vietnam-support-deportations-us-after-tariff-threats-lawyer-says-2025-02-28/>; *Milwaukee mother deported to Laos ‘shaken’ as she faces decades without family in U.S.*, Mar. 25, 2025, <https://www.the-independent.com/asia/southeast-asia/trump-ice-milwaukee-laos-ma-yang-deported-b2721619.html>; *Trump departs hundreds to third countries, leaving them in legal limbo*, Feb. 21, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/02/21/panama-costa-rica-migrants-trump/>; ICE Email Directive, https://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/legaldocs/gkpljxxoqpb/ICE_email_Reuters.pdf (instructing “review for re-detention ... in light of the Administration’s significant gains with regard to recalcitrant countries and the potential for third country removals”).

³ See, e.g., *Hmong/Lao Americans with Removal Orders Should Seek Legal Assistance*, Feb. 7, 2020, <https://www.searac.org/immigration/community-alert-national-asian-american-and-southeast-asian-american-organizations-denounce-trump-administrations-move-to-increase-deportations-to-laos>.

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- The contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will be “significant.” 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iv). As of today, very little public information is available regarding the current process for removals of Cambodian nationals. While some data regarding the number of removals of Cambodian nationals is available on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s website,⁶ no information is available regarding the characteristics of the individuals removed. Therefore, the requested records will greatly enhance the public’s understanding of the repatriation process.
- As a nonprofit organization that educates the public at no charge, ALC has no commercial interest in this request. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(i).
- As explained above, ALC has no commercial interest in this request and the public interest in disclosure is significant. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(ii).

If the request is denied in whole or in part, please justify all redactions by reference to specific FOIA exemptions and release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We reserve the right to appeal a decision to withhold any information.

We look forward to receiving your response within twenty business days, as required under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i).

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. Please direct all questions regarding this request to Lee Ann Felder-Heim by phone at 628-236-3518 or by email at leeannf@asianlawcaucus.org.

If any records are available in electronic form, please provide them in electronic form.

Please mail all non-electronic records to:

Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus
55 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94111

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Sincerely,



Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus

<https://www.asianlawcaucus.org/news-resources/guides-reports/resources-southeast-asian-refugees-facing-deportation>

⁵ See, e.g., <https://x.com/asianlawcaucus>. ALC’s X account has over 13,500 followers.

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May 23, 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Cambodian Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

This letter is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, *et seq.*, submitted by the Asian Law Caucus (“ALC”).

ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Cambodian nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Cambodian nationals.

Request for Records

With regards to the removal of Cambodian nationals from the United States, we seek any and all of the following documents dating from January 1, 2024 to the date on which your response to this request is produced:

- a. All currently effective agreements, memoranda of understanding, and/or policy statements between the United States and the Cambodian government, regarding the removal and repatriation of Cambodian nationals in the United States to that country, or any other country;
- b. All briefing materials, meeting schedules, and/or meeting notes relating to any discussions since January 1, 2024 between the United States and the Cambodian government regarding the removal and/or repatriation of Cambodian nationals from the United States to any other country;

- c. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the number of Cambodian nationals in the United States with final orders of removal as of the date your response to this request is produced;
- d. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the total number Cambodian nationals who have been removed from the United States since January 1, 2024.

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Cambodian nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.¹
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Cambodia, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Cambodian nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
- Disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of “a reasonably broad audience” because ALC intends to disseminate the information broadly. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iii). ALC regularly disseminates information regarding Southeast Asian deportation issues and other immigrant rights issues to the public through channels such as community alerts,² written media,³ and social media.⁴

¹ See, e.g., *Vietnam to support deportations from US after tariff threats, lawyer says*, Feb. 27, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/vietnam-support-deportations-us-after-tariff-threats-lawyer-says-2025-02-28/>; *Milwaukee mother deported to Laos ‘shaken’ as she faces decades without family in U.S.*, Mar. 25, 2025, <https://www.the-independent.com/asia/southeast-asia/trump-ice-milwaukee-laos-ma-yang-deported-b2721619.html>; *Trump departs hundreds to third countries, leaving them in legal limbo*, Feb. 21, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/02/21/panama-costa-rica-migrants-trump/>; ICE Email Directive, https://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/legaldocs/gkpljxxoqpb/ICE_email_Reuters.pdf (instructing “review for re-detention ... in light of the Administration’s significant gains with regard to recalcitrant countries and the potential for third country removals”).

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- As a nonprofit organization that educates the public at no charge, ALC has no commercial interest in this request. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(i).
- As explained above, ALC has no commercial interest in this request and the public interest in disclosure is significant. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(ii).

If the request is denied in whole or in part, please justify all redactions by reference to specific FOIA exemptions and release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We reserve the right to appeal a decision to withhold any information.

We look forward to receiving your response within twenty business days, as required under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i).

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. Please direct all questions regarding this request to Lee Ann Felder-Heim by phone at 628-236-3518 or by email at leeannf@asianlawcaucus.org.

If any records are available in electronic form, please provide them in electronic form.

Please mail all non-electronic records to:

Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus
55 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94111

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Sincerely,



Lee Ann Felder-Heim
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⁴ See, e.g., <https://x.com/asianlawcaucus>. ALC’s X account has over 13,500 followers.

⁵ See <https://www.ice.gov/statistics>.

June 27, 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Laotian Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

This letter is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, *et seq.*, submitted by the Asian Law Caucus (“ALC”).

ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Laotian nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Laotian nationals.

Request for Records

For any and all Laotian nationals¹ removed from the United States from January 1, 2020 to the date on which your response to this request is produced, documents that reflect the individual’s:

- a. Date of initial entry into the United States
- b. Ethnicity (e.g. Lao, Hmong, Mien)
- c. Charge of removability
- d. Immigration status prior to removal order
- e. Date of final removal order

¹ This request defines “Laotian nationals” to include both (1) individuals who were born in refugee camps outside of Laos and (2) individuals who are ethnically Hmong or Mien, but who ICE has nonetheless sought to remove to Laos because of their ties to Laos.

- f. Date of most recent detention by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) and the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (“ERO”) Field Office that detained the individual
- g. Date travel document issued by Laotian government, if applicable
- h. Date of removal
- i. Country removed to

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Laotian nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.²
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Laos, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Laotian nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
- Disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of “a reasonably broad audience” because ALC intends to disseminate the information broadly. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iii). ALC regularly disseminates information regarding Southeast Asian deportation issues and other immigrant rights issues to the public through channels such as community alerts,³ written media,⁴ and social media.⁵

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June 27, 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Laotian Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

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ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Laotian nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Laotian nationals.

Request for Records

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- a. All currently effective agreements, memoranda of understanding, and/or policy statements between the United States and the Laotian government, regarding the removal and repatriation of Laotian nationals in the United States to that country, or any other country;
- b. All briefing materials, meeting schedules, and/or meeting notes relating to any discussions since January 1, 2024 between the United States and the Laotian government regarding the removal and/or repatriation of Laotian nationals from the United States to any other country;

- c. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the number of Laotian nationals in the United States with final orders of removal as of the date on which your response to this request is produced;
- d. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the total number Laotian nationals who have been removed from the United States since January 1, 2024.

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Laotian nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.¹
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Laos, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Laotian nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
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San Francisco, CA 94111

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Sincerely,



Lee Ann Felder-Heim
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May 23, 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Vietnamese Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

This letter is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, *et seq.*, submitted by the Asian Law Caucus (“ALC”).

ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Vietnamese nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Vietnamese nationals.

Request for Records

For any and all Vietnamese nationals¹ removed from the United States from January 1, 2024 to the date on which your response to this request is produced, documents that reflect the individual’s:

1. Date of initial entry into the United States
2. Whether the individual initially came to the United States as part of the Orderly Departure Program (ODP)
3. Charge of removability
4. Immigration status prior to removal order
5. Date of final removal order

¹ This request defines “Vietnamese nationals” to include individuals who were born in refugee camps outside of Vietnam but who ICE has nonetheless sought to remove to Vietnam because of their ties to Vietnam.

6. Date of most recent detention by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) and the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (“ERO”) Field Office that detained the individual
7. Date travel document issued by Vietnamese government, if applicable
8. Date of removal
9. Country removed to

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Vietnamese nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.²
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Vietnam, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Vietnamese nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
- Disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of “a reasonably broad audience” because ALC intends to disseminate the information broadly. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iii). ALC regularly disseminates information regarding Southeast Asian deportation issues and other immigrant rights issues to the public through channels such as community alerts,³ written media,⁴ and social media.⁵

² See, e.g., *Vietnam to support deportations from US after tariff threats, lawyer says*, Feb. 27, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/vietnam-support-deportations-us-after-tariff-threats-lawyer-says-2025-02-28/>; *Milwaukee mother deported to Laos ‘shaken’ as she faces decades without family in U.S.*, Mar. 25, 2025, <https://www.the-independent.com/asia/southeast-asia/trump-ice-milwaukee-laos-ma-yang-deported-b2721619.html>; *Trump departs hundreds to third countries, leaving them in legal limbo*, Feb. 21, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/02/21/panama-costa-rica-migrants-trump/>; ICE Email Directive, https://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/legaldocs/gkpljxxoqpb/ICE_email_Reuters.pdf (instructing “review for re-detention ... in light of the Administration’s significant gains with regard to recalcitrant countries and the potential for third country removals”).

³ See, e.g., *Hmong/Lao Americans with Removal Orders Should Seek Legal Assistance*, Feb. 7, 2020, <https://www.searac.org/immigration/community-alert-national-asian-american-and-southeast-asian-american-organizations-denounce-trump-administrations-move-to-increase-deportations-to-laos>.

⁴ See, e.g., Melanie Kim, *It’s been two weeks since the largest deportation of Khmer refugees in U.S. history*, MEDIUM, Apr. 17, 2018, <https://medium.com/alc-voices/its-been-two-weeks-since-the-largest-deportation-of-khmer-refugees-in-u-s-history-9dada90426ba>; *Resources for Southeast Asian Refugees Facing Deportation*, Feb. 26, 2025,

- The contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will be “significant.” 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iv). As of today, very little public information is available regarding the current process for removals of Vietnamese nationals. While some data regarding the number of removals of Vietnamese nationals is available on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s website,⁶ no information is available regarding the characteristics of the individuals removed. Therefore, the requested records will greatly enhance the public’s understanding of the repatriation process.
- As a nonprofit organization that educates the public at no charge, ALC has no commercial interest in this request. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(i).
- As explained above, ALC has no commercial interest in this request and the public interest in disclosure is significant. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(ii).

If the request is denied in whole or in part, please justify all redactions by reference to specific FOIA exemptions and release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We reserve the right to appeal a decision to withhold any information.

We look forward to receiving your response within twenty business days, as required under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i).

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. Please direct all questions regarding this request to Lee Ann Felder-Heim by phone at 628-236-3518 or by email at leeannf@asianlawcaucus.org.

If any records are available in electronic form, please provide them in electronic form.

Please mail all non-electronic records to:

Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus
55 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94111

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Sincerely,



Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus

<https://www.asianlawcaucus.org/news-resources/guides-reports/resources-southeast-asian-refugees-facing-deportation>

⁵ See, e.g., <https://x.com/asianlawcaucus>. ALC’s X account has over 13,500 followers.

⁶ See <https://www.ice.gov/statistics>.

May 23, 2025

Via the SecureRelease Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding Removals of Vietnamese Nationals

Dear FOIA Officer:

This letter is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, *et seq.*, submitted by the Asian Law Caucus (“ALC”).

ALC seeks information regarding the removals of Vietnamese nationals who have been ordered removed from the United States. This information is of particular interest to ALC and its constituencies to inform our understanding of the risk that nationals of that country will be removed from the United States.

ALC is a nonprofit, public interest organization that defends the legal, civil, and human rights of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander (“API”) and other immigrant communities. ALC works to achieve its mission through (1) provision of direct legal services, (2) strategic impact litigation, and (3) community education and organizing. Accordingly, a major component of ALC’s work is to disseminate information of public interest both to API communities and to the broader public. We currently represent and provide legal consultations to a number of Vietnamese nationals.

Request for Records

With regards to the removal of Vietnamese nationals from the United States, we seek any and all of the following documents dating from January 1, 2024 to the date on which your response to this request is produced:

- a. All currently effective agreements, memoranda of understanding, and/or policy statements between the United States and the Vietnamese government, regarding the removal and repatriation of Vietnamese nationals in the United States to that country, or any other country;
- b. All briefing materials, meeting schedules, and/or meeting notes relating to any discussions since January 1, 2024 between the United States and the Vietnamese government regarding the removal and/or repatriation of Vietnamese nationals from the

United States to any other country as of the date on which your response to this request is produced;

- c. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the number of Vietnamese nationals in the United States with final orders of removal;
- d. All reports and/or summaries reflecting the total number of Vietnamese nationals who have been removed from the United States since January 1, 2024.

Request for Fee Waiver

ALC seeks a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees on the grounds that disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest and is “likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” 5 U.S.C. § 522(a)(4)(A)(iii). This request meets the criteria for a fee waiver established by regulation:

- The request concerns “the operations or activities of the government”—specifically, ICE’s ability to repatriate Vietnamese nationals with final orders of removal. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(i). The request is particularly timely and relevant in light of the United States’ current efforts to increase removals of Southeast Asian nationals, including to third countries.¹
- Disclosure is “likely to contribute” to an understanding of government operations and activities because the records will reveal what current agreements exist regarding repatriation between the governments of the United States and Vietnam, and how regularly ICE in practice has been able to obtain travel documents for the repatriation of Vietnamese nationals. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(ii).
- Disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of “a reasonably broad audience” because ALC intends to disseminate the information broadly. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iii). ALC regularly disseminates information regarding Southeast Asian deportation issues and other immigrant rights issues to the public through channels such as community alerts,² written media,³ and social media.⁴

¹ See, e.g., *Vietnam to support deportations from US after tariff threats, lawyer says*, Feb. 27, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/vietnam-support-deportations-us-after-tariff-threats-lawyer-says-2025-02-28/>; *Milwaukee mother deported to Laos ‘shaken’ as she faces decades without family in U.S.*, Mar. 25, 2025, <https://www.the-independent.com/asia/southeast-asia/trump-ice-milwaukee-laos-ma-yang-deported-b2721619.html>; *Trump departs hundreds to third countries, leaving them in legal limbo*, Feb. 21, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/02/21/panama-costa-rica-migrants-trump/>; ICE Email Directive, https://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/legaldocs/gkpljxxoqpb/ICE_email_Reuters.pdf (instructing “review for re-detention ... in light of the Administration’s significant gains with regard to recalcitrant countries and the potential for third country removals”).

² See, e.g., *Hmong/Lao Americans with Removal Orders Should Seek Legal Assistance*, Feb. 7, 2020, <https://www.searac.org/immigration/community-alert-national-asian-american-and-southeast-asian-american-organizations-denounce-trump-administrations-move-to-increase-deportations-to-laos>.

³ See, e.g., Melanie Kim, *It’s been two weeks since the largest deportation of Khmer refugees in U.S. history*, MEDIUM, Apr. 17, 2018, <https://medium.com/alc-voices/its-been-two-weeks-since-the-largest-deportation-of-khmer-refugees-in-u-s-history-9dada90426ba>; *Resources for Southeast Asian Refugees Facing Deportation*, Feb. 26, 2025,

- The contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will be “significant.” 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(2)(iv). As of today, very little public information is available regarding the current process for removals of Vietnamese nationals. While some information regarding the number of removals of Vietnamese nationals and regarding past repatriation agreements is available online,⁵ no information is available regarding current repatriation agreements and practices. Therefore, the requested records will greatly enhance the public’s understanding of the repatriation process.
- As a nonprofit organization that educates the public at no charge, ALC has no commercial interest in this request. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(i).
- As explained above, ALC has no commercial interest in this request and the public interest in disclosure is significant. 6 C.F.R. § 5.11(k)(3)(ii).

If the request is denied in whole or in part, please justify all redactions by reference to specific FOIA exemptions and release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We reserve the right to appeal a decision to withhold any information.

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Sincerely,



Lee Ann Felder-Heim
Asian Law Caucus

<https://www.asianlawcaucus.org/news-resources/guides-reports/resources-southeast-asian-refugees-facing-deportation>

⁴ See, e.g., <https://x.com/asianlawcaucus>. ALC’s X account has over 13,500 followers.

⁵ See <https://www.ice.gov/statistics>; <https://www.asianlawcaucus.org/news-resources/guides-reports/trinh-reports>