Rep. Bennie G. Thompson

Chair, House Homeland Security Committee

2466 Rayburn HOB

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson,

I write to you with grave concern about the Trump administration’s recently announced rule which would effectively end the ability of nearly all asylum-seekers to lawfully seek asylum in the United States.

The new rule states that asylum-seekers who pass through another country before reaching the United States and who do not attempt and fail to seek asylum in that country will not be eligible for asylum protections in the United States. This new rule is an immoral assault on the rights of individuals and families, many under extreme duress and in grave danger. It effectively undermines their legal and human right to seek safety in our country.

The Trump administration’s treatment of asylum-seekers is egregious. The Department of Homeland Security has sabotaged the right to asylum by turning back asylum-seekers, by separating parents and children to deter families, and by detaining record numbers of asylum-seekers, including children, who face abuse and ill-treatment. In 2018, Amnesty International found that “the administration’s deliberate and punitive practice of forced family separations in some cases constituted torture under both U.S. and international law.”

I urge you to use your position of authority as Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee to block this new rule using all the legal means at your disposal. Your committee’s oversight function is essential in restoring a moral and just immigration policy and in ensuring that those asylum-seekers who truly need our help can find safety in our country.

Yours sincerely,