

## Letters to a President

### Commended entry Y11 - Maryam Jawad

To the President of the United States, Joe Biden,

An adversarial political climate. A global pandemic, and a country with the highest COVID deaths and cases. Mass civil unrest. Long lines for basic supplies. Complex political issues such as climate change. The combination is bound to pose a mammoth challenge.

Despite the relief for the American public to not have a President whose main mode of communication is Twitter, for four years, Trump has pushed a racist agenda that has divided America. But whilst doing so has exposed major rifts in the country. With genuine desire your administration can overcome the underlying problems in America. A new generation is anticipating a new America, which can be respected on the global stage once again and mediate resolutions for a unified country that isn't guided by fear mongering.

I urge you to prioritise mass vaccination and bring in consistent stimulus checks to restart the economy so people can stay home and kill the spread of virus. If you are going to put money into people's hands, make sure it makes a difference.

Not to mention, we should be concerned about the lack of privacy, and concentration of power that comes with big tech companies as you agreed in a New York Times interview. Yet your transition team is packed with tech industry insiders. So how should the American public calculate the odds of a Biden administration taking on the power of the tech giants?

Now, the president has a lot more power than anyone else to be able to set right some of the systems and policies that perpetuate racial injustice in America. The legacies of slavery, the historical exploitation and occupational segregation of people of colour are still relevant. They have helped create a system where today, stark and persistent racial disparities exist in almost every other measure of economic well being

What we are hoping for is longer term systemic change which will carry us beyond executive orders and for you to remain true on your promise to study reparations for the black community. By far the most important thing you can do to have stability in communities is have an administration focused on racial justice.

Furthermore, on your watch immigrants are criminalised for being in America, deported, or imprisoned and tortured. Simply acquiring basic necessities like soap is a challenge in the system combined by packed living spaces where social distancing is out of the question detention centres have been plagued with COVID-19 infections and medical neglect. For now, your administration has chosen to continue giving ICE officers significant discretion to conduct inhumane operations that harm communities and tear

families apart. Issuing a new ICE guidance wholly abandoning your pledge to halt deportations when the public is looking to you to heal from the deep damage from Trump and Obama's deportation policies is frustrating. You have a moral responsibility, and opportunity to lay out a vision for an immigration legal system in which individuals are treated with dignity.

We urge you to take meaningful action, and whilst your embrace of progressive cultural issues is positive your administration's maintenance of the status quo, will be criticised. We can still be glad that Trump has left office and be alarmed at the direction this administration is going. In a democracy everyone should be held accountable. And if we can't then you are the new Trump.