



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Walz
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

February 18, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
US. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

I am writing regarding the Trump Administration's negotiations with the Lao People's Democratic Republic that could result in the deportation of Hmong and Lao legal permanent residents.

The State of Minnesota stands with our Hmong and Lao neighbors, many of whom have called this state home longer than I have. The first Hmong family arrived in Minnesota in 1975 and now Hmong is the 3rd most spoken language in our state. The population has risen to an estimated 84,000, which is the largest concentration of Hmong residents in the U.S. With 13,000 Lao residents, Minnesota is home to the 4th largest population in the country.

Our Hmong and Lao neighbors are small business owners, combat veterans who fought alongside American soldiers, and passionate people who have shaped Minnesota's culture into what it is today. Most of the Southeast Asian Americans with a deportation order have never lived in those countries or no longer have ties there. Uprooting this community is unjust, immoral, and a betrayal of our country's patriotic duty to these refugees.

The thought of Minnesota's Hmong and Lao families being torn apart due to deportation has spread fear and panic throughout Minnesota. Reports indicate that hundreds could be affected. As the Governor of Minnesota, I voice my strong opposition to any agreement that results in the deportation of Hmong and Lao people living in Minnesota and urge you to immediately take steps to ensure our Hmong and Lao families and neighbors can continue to reside in our state and country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Walz".

Tim Walz
Governor