



CHIRLA
Coalition for Humane
Immigrant Rights

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January 7th, 2022

The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus
2342 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nanette Diaz Barragán
1st Vice-Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus
2246 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Darren Soto
Whip, Congressional Hispanic Caucus
2353 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adriano Espaillat
2nd Vice-Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus
2332 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Strategize and Mobilize to Ensure VP Harris Disregards Parliamentarian for an Update to the Registry in BBB

Dear Chairman Ruiz, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Leadership, Senator Feinstein, and Senator Padilla:

As Latino leaders from across the state of California serving in elected office and community based roles, we respectfully urge you, members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and Senators representing the state of California, to ensure that permanent residency- a path to citizenship- is reinserted into the Build Back Better Act (BBB) through a registry update. We are at a crossroads now that the House has sent BBB to the Senate with the Senate to resume consideration after the holiday season. We are cognizant of the ongoing discussions between the White House and the Senate aimed at securing 50 Senate votes for any final package. **Irrespective of the latest news cycle, our position is clear and steadfast: the inclusion of permanent protections for immigrants across the nation is a moral, economic and political imperative. This has never**

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STATE OFFICE

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NATIONAL OFFICE

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been more important as we face the challenges of true recovery from the ravages of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Through our work and advocacy we have fought tirelessly to introduce and enact laws for immigrants at state and local levels. This work is driven by our deep connections to our constituencies and neighbors and for some of us, through our own lived experiences. However, we are limited to enact change within our jurisdictions to secure the rights and protect the livelihoods of impacted communities.

Immigrants throughout the country have made immeasurable sacrifices through and before this Pandemic, and many of them have died in this country undocumented awaiting the opportunity to legalize. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, 74% of undocumented workers (compared to 65% of native born workers) have been employed in essential critical infrastructure categories from farming and food, to construction and healthcare.¹ During a time of crisis, undocumented workers have put their lives on the line to support their families and our nation unequivocally facing higher risk of COVID infection and death, all the while facing limited access to healthcare and benefits.² It is time for Congress to honor their sacrifices, contributions and dreams and deliver green cards. **We demand that the registry update is reinserted into the bill for one simple reason: permanent protections are what the undocumented community wants.** We stand in solidarity with immigrants who want to be recognized as permanent - not temporary - Americans.

You have a responsibility to deliver on your promises to our constituents and community members. In 2020, thousands of our community members— *documented AND undocumented*, worked to turn out voters in key battleground states and we now demand that our country and government deliver on the promises made to voters to embrace immigrants and their humanity through a pathway to citizenship. Provisions that included a registry update were removed from the House bill language on November 3rd, which would have granted up to 8 million undocumented immigrants a pathway to citizenship. Although the most recent draft of BBB includes temporary protections, these leave many in our communities vulnerable. It is not the much-needed permanent solution millions of immigrants have already waited over 35 years for. In a recent poll of 1,314 immigrants who are members of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), an overwhelming 87% stated that they prefer a

¹ Center for Migration Studies. <https://cmsny.org/publications/us-essential-workers/>

² Kaiser Family Foundation.

<https://www.kff.org/report-section/kff-the-undefeated-survey-on-race-and-health-main-findings/#HealthCareSystem>

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Immigrant Rights



path to citizenship to temporary parole in place.³ Congress must deliver green cards this year, our communities cannot wait any longer.

As written into [the draft of the BBB bill, H.R. 5376](#), before being amended, and as explained by the House Judiciary Committee, updating the registry is the simplest manner to achieve a path to citizenship using existing law. An update of the Immigration and Nationality Act's Registry date—moving it from 1972 to 2010, would benefit approximately 62% of the 11 million undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States for ten years or longer including 1.6 million DREAMers, 360,000 TPS recipients, 3.6 million essential workers, and 1 million farm workers— as well as over 70% of California's undocumented immigrants.⁴ **Simply put, this would allow anyone present before January 1, 2010 to apply for a green card under what is effectively the “statute of limitations” in immigration law.**⁵ For the Latino community, this would be an astounding victory given that nearly 78% of those living in the United States undocumented, come from Latin America.⁶

We are aware of the Senate Parliamentarian's multiple negative advisory opinions on proposed immigration provisions. The Parliamentarian's advice against including green cards - or seemingly any relief at all - in reconciliation is just that-- advice. As 92 law professors recently explained in a public letter, “for the Senate to reach its own conclusion [...] should not be seen as an 'overruling' of anyone. Rather, it would recognize that elected members of Congress are ultimately responsible for deciding whether to enact legislation.”⁷

³ CHIRLA.

<https://www.chirla.org/news-category/most-impacted-by-immigration-legislation-say-path-to-citizenship-is-what-they-need-and-deserve/>

⁴ Migration Policy Institute; <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/undocumented-immigrant-population/state/US>

⁵ Please see CHIRLA's explainer,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12w6nKOUGMnfTMbjRq8R2fyZvzNEnvd8y/view?usp=sharing>. As well as the one from the House Judiciary Committee. https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles/immigration_bbb.pdf.

⁶ Migration Policy Institute;

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/undocumented-immigrant-population/state/US>

⁷

<https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/586381-democrats-mull-hardball-tactics-to-leapfrog-parliamentarian-on-immigration>; <https://www.disregardtheparl.org/>.





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It is because of this repeated, unfortunate and misguided advice that we ask you, the Latino leaders in the Senate and House of Representatives, to mobilize and ensure Vice President Harris— who is in her constitutional right to include green cards in reconciliation under Senate rules, disregards the Parliamentarian’s advise and that immigration provisions remain in Build Back Better through an update to the registry. This is a crucial moment, where millions of immigrants living in the United States are relying on your leadership to engage Senate leadership, the Vice President, and less supportive colleagues to take a major step towards reforming our broken immigration system.

We—as the undersigned California based, Latino leaders representing impacted constituents — have worked tirelessly at state and local levels to support and drive equity for Black, Brown and AAPI immigrant communities who bear the brunt of economic, social, and health inequities. With Democratic control of the White House, Senate, and House of Representatives, we now have the unique opportunity to deliver on a policy that over 70% of Americans strongly support⁸— an opportunity that Democrats cannot allow an unelected Parliamentarian to derail.

You, elected as members of our Congress, have the power and responsibility to strategize, mobilize, and advocate to clear the path for registry to be successfully reinserted in Build Back Better. A pathway to citizenship will transform the lives of millions of undocumented immigrants, their families, their communities, and the entire country.

Sincerely,

Elected Leaders

1. Senator Maria Elena Durazo (State Senate District 24, CA)
2. Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gómez Reyes (Assembly District 47, CA)
3. Assemblymember Mia Bonta (Assembly District 18, CA)

⁸ America's Voice.

https://americasvoice.org/press_releases/new-poll-by-70-24-americans-support-a-path-to-citizenship-for-dreamers-tps-holders-form-workers-and-essential-workers/

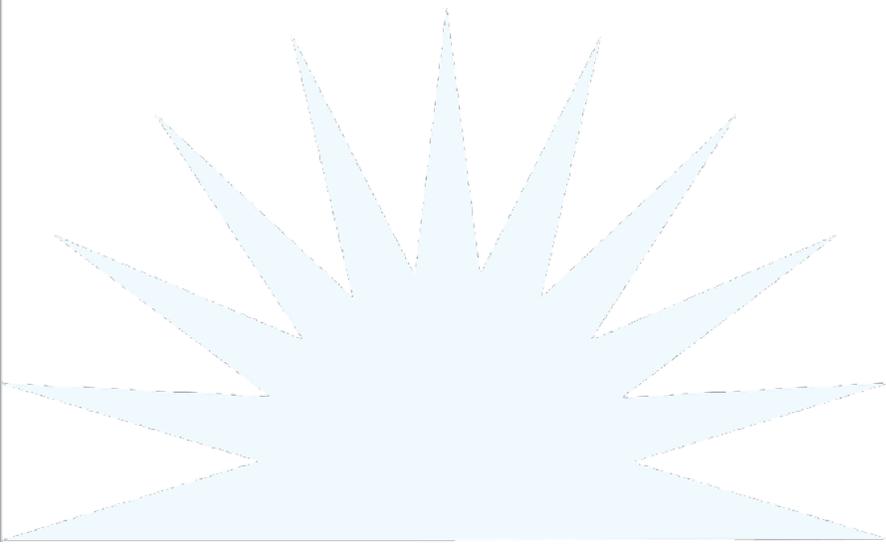




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4. Assemblymember Dr. Joaquin Arambula (Assembly District 31, CA)
5. Assemblymember Robert Rivas (Assembly District 30, CA)
6. Assemblywoman Luz Rivas (Assembly District 39, CA)
7. Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian (Assembly District 46, CA)
8. Assemblywoman Wendy Carrillo (Assembly District 51, CA)
9. Assemblymember Miguel Santiago (Assembly District 53, CA)
10. Assemblywoman Lisa Calderon (Assembly District 57, CA)
11. Assemblymember Cristina Garcia (Assembly District 58, CA)
12. Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (Assembly District 63, CA)
13. Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva (Assembly District 65, CA)
14. Vice-Chair Nora Vargas, San Diego County Board of Supervisors (1st District)
15. Supervisor Luis A. Alejo, Monterey County Board of Supervisors (1st District)
16. Supervisor Joe Baca, Jr., San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors (5th District)
17. Supervisor Angel Barajas, Yolo County Board of Supervisors (5th District)
18. Supervisor Raymond Castillo, Imperial County Board of Supervisors (5th District)
19. Supervisor Leticia Gonzalez, Madera County Board of Supervisors (4th District)
20. Supervisor Debra Lucero, Butte County Board of Supervisors (2nd District)
21. Supervisor Carmen Ramirez, Ventura County Board of Supervisors (5th District)
22. Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg, San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors (3rd District)





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23. Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, Riverside County Board of Supervisors (4th District)
24. Supervisor Ed Valenzuela, Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors (2nd District)
25. Supervisor Eddie Valero, Tulare County Board of Supervisors (4th District)
26. Mayor Elizabeth Alcantar, City of Cudahy (Cudahy, CA)
27. Mayor Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach (Long Beach, CA)
28. Councilmember Gil Cedillo, City of Los Angeles (Council District 1)
29. Councilmember Kevin de León,, City of Los Angeles (Council District 14)
30. Councilmember Daniel Damian, City of Baldwin Park (Baldwin Park, CA)
31. Councilmember Salvador Melendez, City of Montebello (Montebello, CA)
32. Board President Kelly Gonez, Los Angeles Unified School District (Board District 6)
33. Board Member Mónica García, Los Angeles Unified School District (Board District 2)
34. Board Member Tanya Ortiz Franklin, Los Angeles Unified School District (Board District 7)
35. Board President Jeffrey De La Torre, Hacienda La Puente Unified School District (Trustee Area 5)

Community Leaders

36. Angelica Salas, Executive Director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles-CHIRLA (Los Angeles, CA)
37. Bamby Salcedo, M.A. President/CEO of The TransLatin@ Coalition (Los Angeles, CA)
38. Hilda Cruz, Regional Director of Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (Inland Empire, CA)
39. Rudy Espinoza, Executive Director, Inclusive Action for the City (Los Angeles, CA)



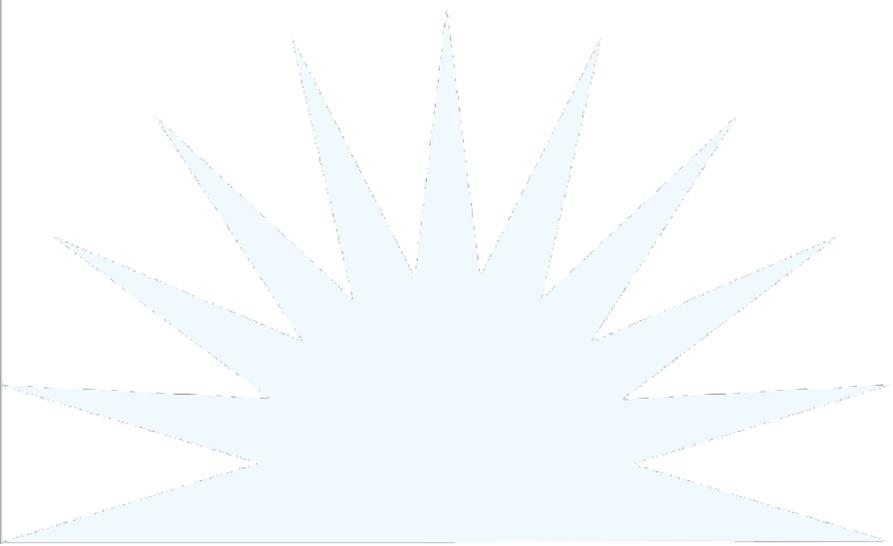


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40. Elena Asturias, President of the Board of CARECEN SF (San Francisco, CA)
41. Elena Chavez Quezada, Chief Impact Officer at End Poverty in California- EPIC (California)
42. Board of Directors, Centro Legal de la Raza (Oakland, CA)
43. Manuel Pastor, Director, USC Equity Research Institute (Los Angeles, CA)
44. Ana Valdez, Executive President of Latino Donor Collaborative (Los Angeles, CA / National)
45. Diego Cartagena, President & CEO at Bet Tzedek Legal Services (Los Angeles, CA)
46. Jane Garcia, CEO at La Clinica de La Raza (Bay Area, CA)
47. Helen I. Torres, Executive Director & CEO of Hispanas Organized for Political Equality- HOPE (Los Angeles, CA / National)
48. Michele Siqueiros, President of Campaign for College Opportunity
49. Dr. Jeffrey Reynoso, Executive Director of Latino Coalition for a Healthy California (Sacramento, CA)
50. Sonja Diaz, Founding Director of the UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative (Los Angeles, CA)
51. Antonia Hernández, President and CEO, California Community Foundation (Los Angeles, CA)
52. Vanessa Aramayo, Executive Director at Alliance for a Better Community (Los Angeles, CA)
53. Chris Iglesias, CEO at The Unity Council (Oakland, CA)
54. Thomas A. Saenz, President and General Counsel at MALDEF (Los Angeles, CA)
55. Arnulfo Manriquez, President and CEO of Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty- MAAC (San Diego, CA)
56. Nancy Robles, ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition Representative, San Francisco, CA and National





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Immigrant Rights



57. Gloria La Riva, Activist with Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), San Francisco, CA and National
58. Berenice Nunez Constant, Vice President of Government Affairs and Civic Engagement at AltaMed Health Services (Los Angeles, CA)
59. Gary Acosta, CEO of National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals- NAHREP (San Diego, CA/National)

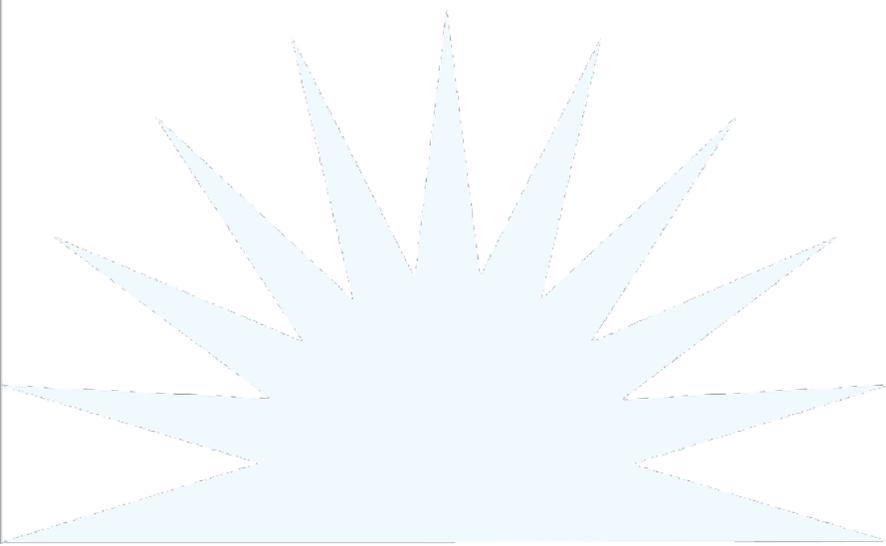
CC:

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Pete Aguilar
Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus
109 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510





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The Honorable Alex Padilla
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Menendez
528 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
498 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

