

June 12, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to you today to urge your administration to take swift action to protect hard-working immigrant care workers, family caregivers, and American families. Our organizations together represent and advocate for millions of child care workers, direct care workers, early childhood educators, people with disabilities, older Americans, family caregivers, disabled unpaid and paid caregivers, parents, and sandwich generations. Together, we work to build robust 21st century care systems in our country for all of us to thrive with quality care and services and have respect and dignity.

Our deep interest in protecting immigrant care workers, family caregivers, and their families starts with the fact that thousands of workers essential to the care economy – direct care workers, including workers with disabilities, childcare workers, and early childhood educators, to name a few – are immigrants. Uncertainty about their immigration status means that they are overrepresented in jobs with low-wages and poor job quality. Like many of their citizen and legal permanent resident peers, these workers often double as primary caregivers to family members; indeed, according to the American Journal of Public Health, [20.5% of immigrants](#) in the U.S. are caregivers to an adult, such as a spouse or parent, and an additional number care for minor children, providing support in tasks such as daily activities and healthcare.

Thousands of immigrants must reckon with the impacts of a toxic and broken immigration system that consistently threatens to upend their lives. Your administration can help stabilize these families – and by extension their communities and local workforces – by taking steps to propose and finalize [rulemaking](#) to modernize existing rules around a form of relief known as “cancellation of removal.” This form of relief allows undocumented individuals to apply for legal status if they have lived in the U.S. over 10 years, passed criminal and other background checks, and can show that their deportation would cause significant hardships to their qualifying American family member (typically a spouse or child).

Unfortunately, this potentially powerful form of relief for thousands of caregiving family members is severely limited by unduly burdensome and fear-inducing barriers. That’s because it has been long-standing practice that those seeking this relief must already be in deportation proceedings, which understandably is a cause of severe anxiety and aversion for those being counted on by their families to provide critical care to loved ones. Ironically, the very strong equities that would make many individuals good candidates for this form of relief – long-standing ties to America, family and community ties, and clean records – also make them such low enforcement priorities that they are rarely placed in such court proceedings. As a result, many remain undocumented for longer periods of time than is right.

It doesn't have to be this way. That is why we urge you, Mr. President, to honor the work of caregivers, and women who shoulder the large majority of family caregiving work, by modernizing the existing rules around this form of relief by allowing them to seek this form of relief from outside a daunting court proceeding setting and instead proactively via U.S. Citizens and Immigration Services (USCIS). To be clear, the stringent requirements for this form of relief don't make it a fit for just anyone, but providing this onramp could significantly reduce fear and other barriers to accessing this powerful form of relief by, among other things, allowing prospective candidates with strong claims, like family caregivers, a chance to put their best foot forward without the backdrop of a pressurized court setting.

Your administration should also afford immigrants married to Americans the opportunity to apply for work permits. Many of these individuals have paths to legal status available to them but face [stifling backlogs](#) while also lacking the ability to work while they wait. This demands action: an [estimated](#) 1.3 million spouses, including many caregivers, could further support their families, communities, and local economies if the administration took action to allow them to apply for work authorization.

Mr. President, you recently said that "if we want the best economy in the world, we have to have the best caregiving economy in the world." Immigrant caregivers and immigrant care workers are part of making our economy the *best* caregiving economy. We urge you to consider these proposals as important progress in making our economy the best caregiving economy.

Sincerely,

National Domestic Workers Alliance
Care in Action
A Better Balance
A.Y.U.D.A. INC.
ALA Garifuna Womens
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Medical Women's Association
Arise Chicago
Autistic People of Color Fund
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Border Workers United
Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy
Caring Across Generations
Casa Latina
Center for Law and Social Policy
Church World Service
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Catalyst
Community Change Action
Comunidades sin Fronteras
Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Dominican Development Center
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, Washington DC
Dreamers Mothers In Action (DMIA)
El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos
eQuality HomeCare Co-op
Fair Work Center
Feminist Majority
First Focus on Children
Hand in Hand
Haus of a Stranger
Justice + Joy National Collaborative
Justice and Advocacy Ministries at Disciples Home Mission
Justice for Migrant Women
La Plaza de Encuentro Gathering Place
Legal Momentum
LIFT Inc
Little Lobbyists
Matahari
MomsRising
Mujeres Unidas y Activas
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Community Action Partnership
National Council of Jewish Women
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Law Center
National Women's Political Caucus
NAUGATUCK Valley Project- NVP
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Labor
New Mexico Caregivers Coalition
Oxfam America
Paid Leave for All
Parent Voices CA
Pilipino Worker Center
POWER-PAC IL
Puente
Senior and Disability Action
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sojourners
The Arc of the United States
Unidad Latina en Acción Connecticut

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ
Voices for Progress