



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Letter to Senator Schumer on Immigration Reform in Reconciliation

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL October 6, 2021

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The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
U.S Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear, Majority Leader Schumer -

We, the undersigned, write to you as New York State legislators to strongly urge you to ensure that the U.S Congress includes a path to citizenship for millions of undocumented residents in our nation in the federal budget reconciliation package. For years, our nation has demanded undocumented residents toil without legal status, as they pay taxes, contribute to our communities and economy, and endure the most burdensome socioeconomic and health outcomes. We cannot wait any longer.

We were encouraged by your leadership in pushing for the passage of a budget resolution in August that included immigration reform, but the job is not done. A broad path to citizenship for DACA and TPS recipients, essential workers, and farm workers must be in the final bill. Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, we have benefited from the dedicated public service of undocumented residents who have worked as essential workers in various sectors. Currently, it is estimated that nearly 3 in 4 undocumented individuals in the workforce—an estimated 5 million—are essential workers. These neighbors delivered our food, stocked our supermarkets, and cleaned our transit systems. Additionally, per a New American Economy analysis, households headed by undocumented immigrants in the United States paid an estimated \$18.9 billion in federal taxes and \$11.7 billion in combined state and local taxes in 2019. It was not without struggle. As a high number of undocumented residents continue to work as essential workers they remain susceptible to contracting and dying from the coronavirus even as they lack adequate healthcare coverage.

These residents are our neighbors. In 2017 it was found that unauthorized immigrant adults had lived in the U.S. for a median of 15.1 years. Many of our undocumented neighbors consider this nation to be their home and they deserve to continue to do so. That is why inaction is not an option. Immigration reform is also already popular across the nation. A new poll found that 70% of likely voters overall support creating an earned path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, people who are contributing and working here legally due to war or natural disaster in their home countries, and farmworkers and other essential workers. The public is on our side. Now we just need the political will to ensure that this occurs.

Despite the opinion by the Senate Parliamentarian, an unelected official, recommending that a path to citizenship be removed from the reconciliation package, we know there is a strong precedent for its inclusion. You can and must bypass her recommendation. Congress must move forward with passing this critical measure in the reconciliation package, and we need your leadership to help get us there.

Creating a pathway to citizenship for millions of undocumented residents of this nation will be a historic achievement. But we need your unrelenting leadership. We are counting on you. Almost one million undocumented immigrants in New York State are depending on you so they can finally and truly say that they are here to stay.