

May 17, 2013

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Grassley, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

As the Senate considers the bipartisan Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 (S. 744), we urge you to PROTECT and EXTEND the Act's path to citizenship so that all undocumented immigrants have a chance to achieve this goal.

Allowing the 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country to become citizens after meeting appropriate requirements will make America stronger. It will add at least \$832 billion to our national economy over 10 years (according to the Center for American Progress), stabilize the workforce in key sectors of the economy, and level the playing field in the workplace. It will strengthen community safety and national security by rebuilding trust between immigrant populations and law enforcement. And, it will protect the rule of law by restoring integrity and sanity to our nation's immigration system. But in order to accomplish these goals, the path to citizenship must be fair, inclusive, and affordable, with reasonable and achievable requirements. A complicated, expensive, and restrictive path that leaves deserving people out will fail our families and undermine the success of Congress' immigration reform.

We are pleased that S. 744 includes a path to citizenship for many immigrants (beginning with application for Registered Provisional Immigrant status), as well as accelerated paths for farmworkers, DREAMers, and long-term residents who already have work authorization, such as those with TPS and DED. There are many features of these programs that we support, but others that need to be improved. Numerous amendments in the Senate Judiciary Committee have been filed that would alter the path to citizenship, some in positive and some in negative ways.

Amendments that would restrict access to citizenship or make the path less workable should be opposed. These include, but are not limited to, Sen. Cruz's Amendment 3, which would bar any formerly-undocumented immigrant from ever obtaining U.S. citizenship; Sen. Hatch's Amendment 3, which requires DNA collection of all individuals before receiving RPI status; Sen. Sessions' Amendment 29, requiring any RPI to maintain an income four times over the poverty line (over \$90,000 for a family of four) for the entire ten years of RPI status in order to receive a green card; and Sen. Lee's Amendment 7, moving the physical-presence date for RPI eligibility back to 2009 (and to 2011 for dependents). We also oppose amendments like Cornyn 3, Grassley 8, and Grassley 21 which claim to bar serious criminals from RPI status, but will actually sweep in people with very minor offenses. We vigorously oppose amendments designed to block deserving immigrants from ever obtaining earned citizenship.

Amendments that would improve or expand the program should be supported. These include, but are not limited to, Sen. Feinstein's Amendment 14 and Senator Blumenthal's Amendment 15 that extend the physical-presence cutoff date for RPI eligibility; Sen. Blumenthal's Amendment 1 which allows the youngest DREAMers to apply for LPR status under the same rules as one who has already graduated from college; and Sen. Hirono's Amendment 12 and Sen. Leahy's Amendment 8 which allow individuals

to pay RPI fines on an installment basis rather than all at once. We vigorously support amendments that make citizenship possible for more deserving immigrants.

The American people support a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants because it is a real and lasting solution. By enacting a broad path to citizenship, Congress can act on the people's will and restore integrity to our immigration system once and for all.

Respectfully,

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality

AFL-CIO

Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice, Inc.

Alliance for a Just Society

Alliance of Baptists

Alliance San Diego

America's Voice Education Fund

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Jewish Committee

Americans for Immigrant Justice, formerly Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center

Annunciation House, Inc.

Arkansas Interfaith Alliance

Arkansas United Community Coalition

Asian American Justice Center, a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance/Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement

Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council

Asociación Internacional Civico Cultural

Border Action Network

Border Network for Human Rights

Campaign for Community Change

CASA de Maryland, Inc.

CAUSA

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies

Cesar E. Chavez Legacy and Educational Foundation

Church World Service

Cleveland Jobs with Justice

Communications Workers of America

Conference of Major Superiors of Men

CREDO

CT Students for a DREAM

Democratic Party of White County, GA

Dominican Sisters of Houston

El Pueblo, a Program of Seashore Mission

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities

Entre Hermanos

Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)

Farmworker Justice

Faro de Luz Church
First Focus Campaign for Children
Florida-Bahamas Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Franciscan Action Network
Generational Alliance
Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials
Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin
Greater Hispanic Business Association of Norristown, PA
Grupo de Apoyo E Integracion Hispanoamericano
Guatemala Solidarity Boston
Hispanos Organizados de Lake y Ashtabula
Idaho Community Action Network
Iglesia Bautista Central de Chicago
Iglesia Episcopal San Jose
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Immigration Equality Action Fund
Interfaith Immigration
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Iowa Citizens for Community Empowerment
Irish Apostolate USA
Jewish Labor Committee Western Region
Jobs with Justice/American Rights at Work
Juntos
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Korean American Resource & Cultural Center
Korean Resource Center
Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA)
Latin America Working Group
Latin America/Caribbean Committee of the Loretto Community
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Long Island Wins
Lowcountry Immigration Coalition
LULAC-Syracuse Chapter
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Metodistas Asociados Representando la Causa de los Hispano-Americanos (MARCHA)
Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati
Mi Familia Vota
Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope
Montana Immigrant Justice Alliance
Montanans Support Immigration Reform
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Day Laborer Organizing Network

National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers' Guild
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Organization for Women
NE Iowa Peace & Justice Center, Inc.
Nebraska Appleseed
NDN and the New Policy Institute
New Hope Christian Fellowship
New York Immigration Coalition
New York State Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform
North Georgia Immigrant Justice Group
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Office of Immigration and Refugee Services, ABHMS
Office of the Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Virginia
OneAmerica
Oregon Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition
Philadelphia Japanese Americans Citizens League
Philadelphia Storytelling Project
Pinos y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)
PUIR
Rancho EL Fresno Real Estate
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Western American Province
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Service Employees International Union Local 73
Service Employees International Union Illinois Council
Sisters of Mercy South Central Community
Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
Sojourners
South Asian Network
Southern Border Communities Coalition
St. Charles Borromeo Church
Tacoma Community House
Thai Health and Information Services, Inc.
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Dream Is Now
The Hat Project
Unitarian Universalist PA Legislative Advocacy Network
United We Dream
USAction
Virginia New Majority
Voces de la Frontera
Washington DREAM Act Coalition
We Belong Together: Women for Common Sense Immigration Reform

WI Council on Children and Families
WIN - the Welcoming Immigrants Network
Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice
Women's Refugee Commission
Workers' Rights Center
YWCA USA