



National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- Alianza Americas
- American G.I. Forum
- ASPIRA Association
- AVANCE Inc.
- Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
- Farmworker Justice
- Green Latinos
- Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
- Hispanic Federation
- Hispanic National Bar Association
- Hispanics in Philanthropy
- Inter-University Program for Latino Research
- Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
- LatinoJustice PRLDEF
- League of United Latin American Citizens
- MANA, A National Latina Organization
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
- Mi Familia Vota
- NALEO Education Fund
- National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
- National Association of Latino Arts and Culture
- National Association of Latino Independent Producers
- National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
- National Day Laborer Organizing Network
- National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
- National Hispanic Council on Aging
- National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
- National Hispanic Media Coalition
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
- National Latinx Psychological Association
- Presente.org
- SER Jobs for Progress National
- Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
- U.S.- Mexico Foundation
- UnidosUS
- United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
- United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
- Voto Latino

October 18, 2021

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Vice President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20501

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Mr. President, Madam Vice President, Madam Speaker and Majority Leader Schumer:

We know that all of you have personally committed and worked for permanent protections and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers and their families, particularly for immigrant youth, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, farm workers and essential workers. And we thank you for it. But, as the specifics keep getting watered-down in round after round in the Senate, we, 41 of the Nation’s most prominent Latino organizations, representing millions of Latinos across the country, underscore that we are done with waiting for the next time. Congress must include strong protections for immigrants and a pathway to citizenship in the Build Back Better reconciliation package. Our communities demand it of us and so we demand it of you.

For years, we have sought a pathway to citizenship for immigrants deeply rooted in our country, including Dreamers and TPS holders and their families. As the Covid-19 pandemic grew last year, we underscored the need for the same pathway for undocumented farmworkers and other essential workers and their families: the heroes that helped keep our Nation alive.

Now, a supply chain crisis is paralyzing the economy and, yet again, we point to the same permanent protections and pathway to citizenship as an essential part of the solution. Over a hundred thousand undocumented immigrants usually work in warehousing, distribution, and fulfillment: 7% of its workforce. Immigrants are almost [half](#) the usual truck drivers in California, over a third in Florida and New Jersey and a quarter in New York. These states house our main ports. That’s where the crisis is. And yet, the only mentions of immigration in the entire 250-page White House 100 Day Supply Chain [Report](#) relate to highly-skilled semiconductor workers. Undocumented immigrants have fed America, saved our lives, and are now desperately needed back at work in our supply chain if we are to have happy holidays.

We care less about parliamentary opinions than we do about results and leadership, and so do the American People. Congress must include strong protections for immigrants and a pathway to citizenship, and we need your leadership to help get us there. That was the deal for the infrastructure vote and that was the deal you struck with Latinos at the ballot box. And, if Congress fails, then all consequences will be on the table.

Latinos are a significant part of the estimated [five million](#) undocumented immigrants, including [202,500](#) DACA recipients and [131,300](#) TPS holders, who continue to serve our country everyday as essential workers. Nearly [20](#) percent of all undocumented essential workers work in the retail sector, including in restaurants and grocery stores. Over [400,000](#) are healthcare workers, serving us and our loved ones as doctors, nurses, and home health aides, or working in key jobs that keep health care settings up and running. About [660,000](#), nearly 12 percent, are in the essential services industry, which includes child care service. Undocumented essential workers have stepped up to serve our country in a time of crisis and should be able to apply for U.S. citizenship.

Latino workers and their families have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic given their overrepresentation in essential industries. Latinos are [1.7](#) times more likely to contract COVID-19 than non-Hispanic white counterparts, as well as [4.1](#) times more likely to be hospitalized from COVID-19 and [2.8](#) times more likely to die from COVID-19. Though Latinos only account for about [16%](#) of the labor force, they account for [43%](#) of ground/maintenance and construction workers and up to [75%](#) of agricultural field occupations that expose workers to health hazards, bad air quality and economic impacts of extreme weather. A pathway to citizenship would recognize these Latino essential workers as the true Americans they are and would lay the foundation for an equitable recovery.

Ultimately, a pathway to citizenship for essential workers and their families, Dreamers, and TPS holders would boost GDP by a cumulative total of [\\$1.5 trillion over 10 years, create over 400,000 new jobs, and increase wages for all American workers by \\$600](#). Undocumented immigrants would also contribute an added \$149 billion of spending power each year if they were U.S. citizens. This added income could result in an additional [\\$39 billion](#) in combined federal, payroll, state, and local taxes each year. A reconciliation bill with a path to citizenship included would have large-scale economic benefits for all Americans, including the very Latino communities that have borne the brunt of the pandemic.

The importance of the passage of a pathway to citizenship for Latino communities and electorate cannot be overstated. A recent [poll](#) found that 80 percent of Latino voters in critical areas support policies that establish a pathway to citizenship. The study shows that Latino voters in key districts expect improvements to our immigration system, especially for Dreamers, farmworkers, and TPS holders who have fled violence or disasters in certain countries and for essential workers.

As organizations representing tens of millions of Latinos across this Nation, we will leave no stone unturned in the quest for fairness and protections for as many immigrants as possible. We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that this is the year we enact strong protections that will allow undocumented immigrant workers and their families to come out of the shadows legally, once and for all. A pathway to citizenship and other legal protections for immigrant youth, DACA recipients, TPS holders, farm workers, and other essential workers continues to be our goal to ensure a robust recovery that is inclusive and equitable for all Americans, including Latinos,

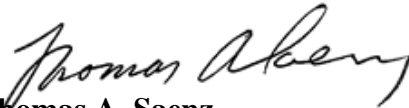
regardless of their immigration status. Immigrant workers and their families are vital to the fabric of our nation - it is time we step up for them.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact Laura M. Esquivel, Vice President, Federal Policy, Hispanic Federation lesquivel@hispanicfederation.org; Nikolos Youngsmith, Legislative Staff Attorney, MALDEF nyoungsmith@maldef.org; and Guillermo L. Mena, Director of Legislation, Policy and Advocacy, NHCSL gmena@nhcsl.org.

Sincerely,



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Co-Chair, NHLA Immigration Committee



Thomas A. Saenz
President & General Counsel
Mexican American Legal Defense Fund
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Kenneth Romero-Cruz
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