



MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

March 18, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: NHLA Support of the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021, H.R. 6 and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021, H.R. 1603

Dear Representative:

We write on behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of over 40 leading national Latino civil rights and social justice organizations, in support of the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021, H.R. 6, and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, H.R. 1603. These two pieces of legislation provide a pathway to citizenship for a significant portion of the undocumented immigrant population in the U.S., and they are a significant step toward broader and more inclusive immigration legislation.

NHLA urges each member to support passage of these bills. NHLA will closely monitor this matter for inclusion in future NHLA scorecards evaluating Member support for the Latino community.

The majority of Americans voted to reject the previous administration’s racist agenda, making Congress’s need to pass overdue immigration legislation even clearer. For the millions of immigrants without protection, work authorization, and a path toward citizenship, each day that passes is simply too long for congressional inaction. Many of those who would benefit under these bills have built their lives in this country, and face the very real threat of deportation.

H.R. 6 provides a path to citizenship for approximately 3 million immigrants, including DACA holders, undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children, and immigrants with Temporary Protected Status (TPS). It will allow eligible immigrants to receive conditional permanent resident status, and potentially move toward naturalization, assuming certain criteria are met and the applicant meets educational, work, or military service requirements. Among other important provisions, the legislation would also allow those with TPS to adjust to lawful permanent resident status, providing these immigrants, many of whom have been in the U.S. for decades and have established their lives and families here, with stability and relief.

H.R. 1603 creates a pathway to citizenship for undocumented agricultural workers and their immediate family members. This bill also includes important reforms to the H-2A system, and provides H-2A visa holders with additional protections, including: protections against deceptive practices, additional housing protections, and a requirement that all employers have a heat illness prevention plan.

- 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

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how critical immigrants are to our country and our daily lives. Many undocumented immigrants have been working on the frontlines, including in our hospitals, schools, grocery stores, food service, social service sector, and fields, at great sacrifice and without federal support. While we urge Congress to quickly consider additional legislation that recognizes and acknowledges the many essential workers who, at personal and family risk, have served our nation so selflessly in the last twelve months, swift passage of H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603 would be a bold and monumental down payment toward that charge.

These bills also do not go far enough to remove harmful criminal barriers to relief, given the persistent criminalization of immigrant communities of color and immigrant youth. NHLA will continue to push for legislation that addresses the criminalization of the immigrant population, but these bills are an important step toward progress.

Quick passage of these bills is a top priority for the Latino community. More than 90 percent of DACA holders are Latino, and nearly 80 percent from Mexico. Historically, most H-2A visa holders have come from Mexico or other countries in Central or South America, and eighty percent of all farmworkers are Latino. The Latino community deserves and demands that our legislators take this opportunity to denounce the dog-whistle tactics that have become far too commonplace in rhetoric and policy. American families across the country are depending on congressional action.

Please contact NHLA through Andrea Senteno, of MALDEF, at asenteno@maldef.org, or Laura Esquivel, of Hispanic Federation, at lesquivel@hispanicfederation.org, with any questions regarding this issue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Saenz
NHLA Chair & Immigration Committee Co-chair
MALDEF, President and General Counsel



Laura Esquivel
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-chair
Hispanic Federation, VP of Federal Policy and
Advocacy