



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

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin, Democratic Whip
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Senator Durbin:

As business and civic leaders in North Carolina, we write to urge you to do everything in your power to include pathways to citizenship for Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, farmworkers, and essential workers in President Biden's Build Back Better plan. As long time champions of common sense immigration reform, you know this action is urgently needed to boost the economy and address America's labor shortage, and it is morally right and politically smart.

Legalization and citizenship will grow our Gross Domestic Product, accelerate job growth, and raise the wage floor for all North Carolinians and Americans. Pathways to citizenship will increase economic activity by \$121 billion annually, including an additional \$31 billion per year in federal, state, and local tax revenues, according to one study. A dozen states would see multi-billion dollar increases to their economies, including a boost of \$3 billion per year for North Carolina's economy.

Our state is home to 865,000 immigrants, including 309,000 undocumented immigrants.

They are already here, work hard, pay taxes, and contribute to North Carolina's economy. The household income of undocumented immigrants in our state is \$6.6 billion, they have a total spending power of \$5.9 billion, and pay \$721.9 million in taxes each year. They are North Carolinians and Americans in every way, except for paperwork.

North Carolina has been welcoming immigrants from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and other parts of the world for generations. More than one million North Carolinians are Latino, now the fastest growing ethnic group. Nationwide, Latinos accounted for nearly 80 percent of all net new businesses created in the last decade and if U.S. Latinos were a stand-alone country, they would account for the 8th largest GDP in the world. Latinos are an unprecedented economic force, which will be further unleashed through legalization and citizenship, to the benefit of all North Carolinians and Americans.

Now is the perfect time to provide pathways to citizenship. The U.S. economy has 10.4 million jobs open and employers, like many of us, are looking high and low for qualified workers. Including pathways to citizenship in the Build Back Better agenda will help ease our labor shortage.

Immigration solutions are widely popular. A recent bipartisan poll of voters in battleground states, including North Carolina, found 3-to-1 support for providing pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants in the budget reconciliation bill. This poll, commissioned by the American Business Immigration Coalition, found widespread support for legalization and citizenship across the political spectrum, including among majorities of Trump voters and self-described conservatives.

Given how much legalization and citizenship would help our economy, address our labor

shortage, add to tax revenues, and so many other positive impacts, the Senate Parliamentarian should not have the last word. It is immoral to keep good, decent families in fear and anxiety of being separated when you, as our elected leaders, have the power to fix it.

It has been 35 years since Congress last modernized our immigration laws. Immigrant workers and families, and the people who care about them, have waited too long. The time for immigration reform is now, the benefits are clear, the legislative vehicle is before you, and there is widespread bipartisan public support for action. Please do not allow this opportunity to slip away.

We stand ready to answer your questions and work with you to pass these long overdue immigration solutions. Thank you for considering the views of North Carolina's business and civic leaders.

Sincerely,

Gris Bailey, President & CEO Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte

Martin Eakes, President & CEO Self-Help Services Corp

Bob Page, Founder & CEO Replacements Ltd

Leah Ashburn, President & CEO Highland Brewing Company

Rodney Moore, President & CEO Moore Consulting Group LLC

Virgilio Briones, CFO Color Superfoods

Emiliano Gonzalez Portino, Co-founder The Brand Building Shop

Isabela Lujan, Co-founder Latin American Business Council - Wilmington Chamber of Commerce

Lidia Meneses Martinez, Owner Nuestro Porvenir, LLC

Johanna Suarez, Owner Reliable Restorations

Stella Adams, Owner S J Adams Consulting

Obed Guzman, Owner Alma HVAC Inc

Saul Flores Lazo, Owner Sausam LLC

Cavin Fertil, Owner Speech-Language Pathologist

Aida Bertsch, Self Employed Gerontologist

Brajan Funes, Financial Advisor Dixon & Company Wealth Management

Jenn Harrison, Administrator NoDa Brewing Company

Karen Johnson, Analyst Verge Innovation

Alex Salgado, Consultant Ernst & Young