

September 13, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer,

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the harmful consequences of policies that deny people access to health care and other basic services and supports based on immigration status. We write to support legislation to protect the nation's health and prosperity by eliminating long-standing barriers that have denied people who are lawfully present in the U.S. and their families the basics we all need to thrive. We call on Congress to support and quickly enact the Lifting Immigrant Families Through Benefits Access Restoration (LIFT the BAR) Act upon its introduction.

The LIFT the BAR Act restores access to public programs like Medicaid, CHIP, and SNAP, by removing the five-year bar and other barriers that deny critical care and aid to people who are lawfully present and their families. This includes people who hold "green cards," Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, crime victims, child maltreatment victims and orphans who hold Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), and other noncitizens residing lawfully in the United States.

The legislation also ensures that sponsored immigrants have access to services based on the income and resources that are actually available to them. And it ensures that people across all states have similar access to the basic protections extended by federal safety net programs, while restoring state and local flexibility to provide benefits to immigrants with their own funds.

Research has shown that years of policies that target people because of their immigration status have deterred immigrant families, which include millions of U.S. citizen children, from health care and other basics. While the Trump Administration's disastrous public charge policy was the latest example, the five-year eligibility bar imposed by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) has harmed more families since its enactment, a quarter-century ago. By denying health care and aid to otherwise-eligible people who are lawfully present, the five-year bar sets a dangerous precedent that makes the social safety net inaccessible to millions of families of color.

As the nation reckons with a legacy of racial injustice, any reform effort that fails to address the inequities facing immigrants is doomed to fail. Nearly 1 in 10 Black people in America are immigrants, and immigrants account for 24% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, 33% of Latinos, and 66% of Asian Americans. Take into account their spouses and children, and it's easy to see that there is no justice for families of color until there is justice for immigrant families.

The injustice of PRWORA's five-year bar is compounded by the fact that it denies critical aid to people who are lawfully present including those who have served as essential workers during the pandemic. Many of the health care workers, child care workers, and educators who have kept our communities going have struggled to keep their own families afloat because the five-year bar denies them these basics.

President Biden took a major step forward in ending the harmful public charge policy, but we must work proactively towards addressing a much longer standing injustice by ending the five-year bar. By doing so, Congress will be helping millions of immigrants who are lawfully present and their families to get the quality healthcare, nutritious food, safe homes, and economic security every family needs to thrive.

A quarter-century is more than long enough to wait. We stand ready to partner with you to quickly move this legislation forward this year.

Sincerely, the undersigned

National

1,000 Days

Academic Pediatric Association

African Communities Together

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families

Alianza Americas

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

Alliance for Immigrant Survivors

America's Voice

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association of People with Disabilities

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Physicians

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

American Friends Service Committee
American Lung Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
ASISTA
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Border Network for Human Rights
Bread for the World
Catholic Health Association of the U.S.
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Center for Survivor Agency & Justice
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Health Fund
Children's HealthWatch
Church World Service
Coalition on Human Needs
CommunicationFIRST
Community Catalyst
Community Change Action
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)

Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Educare Learning Network
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Epilepsy Foundation
Faith in Action
Faith in Public Life
Families for Freedom
Families USA
Family Equality
Family Voices
Farmworker Justice
FIRM Action
First Focus Campaign for Children
Food Research & Action Center
Freedom Network USA
Friends Committee on National Legislation
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
Guttmacher Institute
Hanan Refugees Relief Group
Hep B United
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hispanic Federation
HIV Medicine Association
ideas42
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible
Jetpac Resource Center
Justice for Migrant Women
Justice in Aging
Justice in Motion
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Little Lobbyists
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
MLPB
MomsRising
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NASTAD
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Center for Children in Poverty
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities (CNLD)
National Consumers League
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Homelessness Law Center
National Housing Law Project
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Organization of API Ending Sexual Violence
National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA)
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
National Rural Social Work Caucus
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
National WIC Association
National Women's Law Center
National Working Positive Coalition
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Northeastern University School of Law Immigrant Justice Clinic
Pacific Island Health Officers' Association
Partnership for America's Children
Pediatric Policy Council
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Poligon Education Fund
Positive Women's Network-USA
Power to Decide
Prevention Institute
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
RespectAbility
RESULTS
Revolutionary Love Project
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team
Slow Food USA
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Sojourners
South Asian Public Health Association (SAPHA)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Start Early
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice
Tahirih Justice Center
The AIDS Institute
The Forum for Youth Investment
The Workers Circle
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)
UndocuBlack Network
UNICEF USA (U.S. Fund for UNICEF)
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education
United Farm Workers
United We Dream Network
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
World Institute on Disability
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

Alabama

¡HICA! Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
Adelante Alabama Worker Center
Alabama Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Alabama Arise
Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Alabama Food Bank Association
Alabama Institute for Social Justice

Hispanic Outreach Leadership and Action
SPLC Action Fund

Alaska

Alaska Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Arizona

Arizona Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander for Equity (AZ AANHPI for Equity)
Arizona Center for Economic Progress
Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Asian Pacific Community in Action
Children's Action Alliance
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
Island Liaison, Inc.
William E. Morris Institute for Justice

Arkansas

Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese
Marshallese Educational Initiative

California

Altura Centers for Health
American Academy of Pediatrics - Orange County Chapter
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Resources, Inc
California Association of Food Banks
California Center for Rural Policy
California Chapter 1, American Academy of Pediatrics
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
California Primary Care Association
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
California WIC Association
Californians Together
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
County Welfare Directors Association of California
CRLA Foundation
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
Equality California
Feeding San Diego
FIND Food Bank

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Food Share of Ventura County
Foodbank of Santa Barbara County
Futures Without Violence
GLIDE
Health Access California
IKAR
Immigrant Defense Advocates
Indivisible Ventura
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
L.A. Care Health Plan
LA HERMANDAD HANK LACAYO FAMILY CENTER
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
Nourish California
Oasis Legal Services
Open Heart Kitchen of Livermore
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services
San Diego Hunger Coalition
San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank
Second Harvest Food Bank Orange County
Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County
Second Harvest of Silicon Valley
Second Harvest of the Greater Valley
The Children's Partnership
Vital Immigrant Defense Advocacy and Services (VIDAS)

Colorado

American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter
American Friends Service Committee, Colorado
Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Children's Campaign
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Colorado Fiscal Institute
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
ProgressNow Colorado
Hunger Free Colorado
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network

Rosa Belongs Here Committee
The Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger
Violence Free Colorado

Connecticut

Connecticut Students for a Dream
End Hunger Connecticut!
Greater Hartford Legal Aid
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut

Delaware

COMMUNITY LEGAL AID SOCIETY, INC. Delaware

Washington, DC

Casa Ruby
La Clínica del Pueblo

Florida

Broward for Progress
Faith in Florida
Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Florida Health Justice Project
Hispanic Services Council, Inc.
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.
Jewish Community Relations Council of Broward County, Florida

Georgia

Georgia Chapter - AAP
Georgians for a Healthy Future
Latino Community Fund INC
SisterLove Inc.

Hawaii

American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter
Comunidad Latina de Hawaii
Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!
Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center
Hep Free Hawaii
Maui County Immigrant Services Division
Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
Pacific Gateway Center

The Legal Clinic, Hawai'i affiliate of JFON
We Are Oceania

Idaho

United Vision for Idaho

Illinois

ACA Consumer Advocacy
AIDS Foundation Chicago
American Muslim Health Professionals
Asian Health Coalition | Center for Asian Health Equity
Enlace Chicago
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group
Housing Action Illinois
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Interfaith Community for Detained Immigrants
Latino Policy Forum
Legal Council for Health Justice
Logan Square Neighborhood Association
New American Welcome Center at the Z
Shriver Center on Poverty Law

Indiana

Immigrant Welcome Center
Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council
Marion County WIC

Iowa

Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity

Kansas

Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Kentucky

Kentucky Chapter of the AAP
Kentucky Equal Justice Center
Kentucky Voices for Health

Louisiana

Louisiana Budget Project
Tulane Immigrant Rights Clinic

Maine

Cambodian Community Association of Maine
Cross Cultural Community Services
Hope Acts
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
In Her Presence
Ladder to the Moon Network
Maine Business Immigration Coalition
Maine Equal Justice
Maine Immigrants Rights Coalition
Maine Parent Federation
Maine People's Alliance
Mainers for Accountable Leadership
New Mainers Resource Center, Portland Adult Education
Preble Street
Rwandese Community Association of Maine

Maryland

Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, Inc.
Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Inc.
RESULTS DC/MD
The Parents' Place of MD

Massachusetts

Action for Boston Community Development Inc. (ABCD)
Boston Medical Center
Central West Justice Center
HarborCOV
Immigrants' Assistance Center, Inc. (IAC)
The Greater Boston Food Bank
Western Mass Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice
Children's Law Center of Massachusetts
Health Care For All
Health Law Advocates
Immigration Legal Assistance Program, Ascentria Care Alliance
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
MCAAP
Project Bread
The Right to Immigration Institute

Michigan

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC)
Michigan League for Public Policy
Voces

Minnesota

Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Minnesota Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics
SEIU Healthcare Minnesota
The Advocates for Human Rights
West Central Initiative

Mississippi

Mississippi Center for Justice

Missouri

Bilingual International Assistant Services
Missouri Health Care for All

Montana

Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Nebraska

Comunidad Maya Pixan Ixim
Nebraska Appleseed

Nevada

Children's Advocacy Alliance
Nevada Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Silver State Equality

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Legal Assistance

New Jersey

Association for Special Children & Families

Family Based Services Association of NJ
Family Voices NJ
Our Revolution Trenton Mercer
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

New Mexico

New Mexico Asian Family Center
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty

New York

African Services Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, New York Chapter 2
American Academy of Pediatrics, New York Chapter 3
Apicha Community Health Center
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC, Inc.
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Center for Popular Democracy
Chinese Progressive Association
Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Community Health Care Association of NYS
Garra (Cidadão Global)
Her Justice, Inc.
Hunger Solutions New York
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, inc.
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
New York Immigration Coalition
Saratoga Immigration Coalition
Strycker's Bay Neighborhood Council
Treatment Action Group

North Carolina

Carolina Jews for Justice
Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy
Disability Rights North Carolina
NC Child
NC Pediatric Society
North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence
North Carolina Council of Churches
North Carolina Justice Center
Pisgah Legal Services
Student Action with Farmworkers

North Dakota

Global Friends Coalition

Global Neighbors

Ohio

Columbus Mennonite Church

Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Ohio Domestic Violence Network

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Micronesian Coalition

Oklahoma Policy Institute

Oregon

Central City Concern

Oregon Food Bank

Oregon Pediatric Society

Our Children Oregon

Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon

SNAP Training and Employment Program

Pennsylvania

Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh (BCAP)

Casa San Jose

Coalition of African Communities

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Pennsylvania

Homeless Advocacy Project

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Pennsylvania Health Law Project

Pennsylvania WIC Association

Rhode Island

The Economic Progress Institute

The Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

United Way of Rhode Island

South Carolina

Alianza Latina

Lowcountry Immigration Coalition

South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
South Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

South Dakota

South Dakota Voices for Justice

Tennessee

Action by Christians Against Torture
Tennessee Justice Center

Texas

Children At Risk
Every Texan
Feeding Texas
Jane's Due Process
La Unión del Pueblo Entero
Migrant Center for Human Rights
Proyecto Azteca
RITA-Reform Immigration for Texas Alliance
Texas Pediatric Society
The Good Life Outcomes Program, at Change Happens! (Houston, TX)
VELA

Utah

Voices for Utah Children

Vermont

Public Assets Institute

Virginia

Central Americans for Empowerment at UVA (CAFÉ at UVA)
Legal Aid Justice Center
The National Korean American Service and Education Consortium - Virginia (NAKASEC VA)
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Washington

Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) Seattle Chapter, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Spokane
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition-Yakima

Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC)
Columbia Legal Services
Community Health Network of Washington
Community Health Plan of Washington
Economic Opportunity Institute
Entre Hermanos
Feeding Washington
Food Lifeline
Health Care Is a Human Right WA
International Community Health Services
Khmer Community of Seattle-King County
Northwest Harvest
Northwest Health Law Advocates
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
OneAmerica
PAVE
PSARA (Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action)
Puget Sound Educational Service District
Seattle Educare
Spokane Immigrant Rights Coalition
United Way of King County
Washington Association for Community Health
Washington Community Action Network
Washington Healthcare Access Alliance
Washington State Budget & Policy Center
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Washington State Community Action Partnership

West Virginia

National Association of Social Workers - West Virginia Chapter
Rise Up WV
West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy
West Virginians for Affordable Health Care
WV Citizen Action Group

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
WIPPS-H2N
Kids Forward
Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin

Wyoming

American Civil Liberties Union of Wyoming