



## **The Citizenship for Essential Workers Act**

*Introduced by Reps. Joaquin Castro (TX) and Ted Lieu (CA)*

*The Citizenship for Essential Workers Act provides non-citizen essential workers with a fast, accessible, and secure path to citizenship, beginning with immediate adjustment of status to legal permanent resident. This legislation is a critical part of a just and inclusive COVID-19 recovery.*

### **Who Are Non-Citizen Essential Workers?**

- There are approximately 5.2 million non-citizens working in jobs that were designated essential during the COVID-19 pandemic. This accounts for almost 3 out of 4 non-citizen workers in the United States.
- From janitors cleaning hospital floors to farm workers picking America's crops to EMTs and nurses saving lives, non-citizen essential workers have done jobs that could not have been achieved remotely – putting their lives on the line, in many cases so that American citizens would not need to.
- As a result of their high rates of exposure, essential workers and their families were more likely to die from COVID-19.
- About 1 million non-citizen essential workers were defined as “Dreamers” under the American Dream and Promise Act, with many holding DACA status.

### **What Does the Citizenship for Essential Workers Act Do?**

Adjustment of Status to Legal Permanent Resident under the Citizenship for Essential Workers Act is open to any non-citizen worker in the sectors of:

- Health care
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Emergency response
- Sanitation
- Food
- Restaurants
- Hotels and hospitality
- Meat, fish, and poultry processing
- Domestic work
- Security or state or local government
- Childcare
- Disaster recovery
- Home health and residential care
- Manufacturing
- Warehousing
- Transportation and logistics
- Janitorial
- Laundry services
- Other fields deemed essential by the Department of Homeland

- The Citizenship for Essential Workers Act will also include non-citizen workers who worked in essential industries but lost employment due to COVID-19, including leaving the job due to unsafe working conditions. Relatives of an essential worker who died from COVID-19 are also included.
- Applicants for adjustment of status will be required to pay an application fee and receive a background check. All information provided or disclosed in an application for this act may not be used for enforcement purposes.
- The Citizenship for Essential Workers Act also aims to preserve family unity by repealing three and ten-year bars for re-entry into the United States.

The Citizenship for Essential Workers Act is endorsed by: Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, United Farm Workers, FWD.US, Church World Service, National Partnership for New Americans, Justice for Migrant Women, Nigerian Center, Movement for Justice in El Barrio, Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Inc., Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Immigration Hub, Central American Resource Center of Northern California (CARECEN SF), Hartford Deportation Defense, National Immigration Project, Cleveland Jobs with Justice, America's Voice, Oxfam America, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, Bridges Faith Initiative, Freedom Network USA, National Young Farmers Coalition, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and UnidosUS.