



March 18, 2021

**Washington, D.C.
Regional Office**
1016 16th Street, NW
Suite 100
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202.293.2828

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Sent via email

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

**National
Headquarters**
**Los Angeles
Regional Office**
634 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014
Tel: 213.629.2512

Dear Representative:

On behalf of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund), I write to urge you to support the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021, H.R. 6, and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, H.R. 1603. Founded in 1968, MALDEF is the nation's leading Latino legal civil rights organization and is known as the "law firm of the Latino community." With a mission to protect and defend the rights of all Latinos living in the United States and the constitutional rights of all Americans, MALDEF urges you to vote "Yes" on these bills.

**Chicago
Regional Office**
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Chicago, IL 60603
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The previous administration's attempt to terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) initiative and end the designation of TPS for almost every country was part of a broad and xenophobic attack on immigrant communities. Trump's racist agenda has been rejected by the majority of Americans, and it is time for Congress to now represent the majority of Americans by passing necessary legislation to provide permanent relief to a significant number of immigrants and pave the way for further immigration reform.

**San Antonio
Regional Office**
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San Antonio, TX 78205
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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 who have been in the U.S. for decades and have established their lives and families here, with stability and relief.

**Sacramento
Policy Office**
1512 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916.444.3031

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.

These bills do not go far enough to address the penalization and racial profiling of immigrants in our country, which result in criminal barriers that prevent pathways to relief for many in our communities. We will continue to urge Congress to pass inclusive immigration legislation that does not further criminalize our communities and immigrant youth, and that removes harmful criminal barriers to immigration relief. These bills also do not recognize and acknowledge many of the essential workers who, at personal and family risk, have served our nation so selflessly in the last twelve months. Nonetheless, these bills are a significant step toward progress, and their passage would be a benefit to all U.S. families. According to one study, the GDP gains from passing the H.R. 6 could be as high as a cumulative \$400 billion, and with the education requirements in the bill, the gains could be as high as a cumulative \$1 trillion. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role that immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, play in our lives and our reliance on their talents and labor. Many undocumented immigrants have been working on the frontlines, including in our hospitals, schools, grocery stores, food service, social service sector, and fields.

The passage of these bills is important to the Latino community – over 90 percent of DACA holders are Latino, and nearly 80 percent from Mexico. It is Congress's responsibility to pass legislation and mend the troubling situation that Donald Trump created through rhetorical and policy targeting of the Latino community, our nation's largest minority group. In addition, 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.

Legislative action is urgently needed; the COVID-19 pandemic continues to destabilize the lives of our communities and our economy. After too many decades of inaction, Congress must address the undocumented population in the U.S. and improve our immigration system so that it is humane, fair, and just. The American public wants to see action. MALDEF calls on Congress to pass H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603.

Please contact me at asenteno@maldef.org with any questions regarding this issue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Andrea Senteno
Regional Counsel