

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 31, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell:

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to deepen the public health and economic crises in our country, we urge you to ensure that tax-paying immigrants who have Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITIN) are able to access the vital economic relief assistance provided in the CARES Act and any future coronavirus relief legislation. Immigrants are disproportionately working in essential jobs to keep Americans healthy, safe, fed, and poised for economic recovery – often at great risk to their own lives and health. Excluding immigrant families, many of which include U.S. citizen children and spouses, from the federal government’s economic disaster relief response will impair our Nation’s ability to not only restore our economy but also to maintain critical essential services during the pandemic.

We have seen millions of immigrants risking their health during the pandemic to protect the health and safety of other Americans, including as health care workers, farmworkers, grocery store clerks, and other essential, frontline workers. According to the Center for Migration Studies, there are 19.8 million immigrants who are “essential” workers, and immigrants, particularly undocumented workers, make up a disproportionate share of these workers who are on the front lines of the pandemic.¹ More than 130,000 Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders and 202,500 DACA recipients are providing essential services during the pandemic that include ensuring that food is still being grown, packaged, and delivered to grocery stores and serving as much-needed health care workers in a severely-strained medical system.² In the health care industry, nearly 1.7 million workers are immigrants, who comprise a disproportionate share of nurses, home health aides, and health care facility workers.³

Moreover, many of these indispensable immigrant workers also face additional vulnerabilities such as low incomes and lack of health insurance coverage. Therefore, it is critical that Congress ensures that immigrants who pay taxes, including frontline workers, are able to access the vital coronavirus economic relief measure in the CARES Act that was intended to help ensure that families are able to put food on their tables and keep a roof over their heads.

As immigrant workers in hospitals, meat processing plants, farms, grocery stores, and elsewhere endure the hardships of this pandemic to provide for our most basic needs, we ask that you extend the coronavirus cash assistance Congress provided to include immigrant families who file taxes with an ITIN. One way to address this issue would be to include the relevant provisions in the Coronavirus Immigrant Families Protection Act (S.3609), and the House-passed HEROES Act (H.R.6800). According to the IRS, 4.4 million people paid \$23.6 billion in total taxes using an ITIN, based on data from 2015.⁴

¹ <https://cmsny.org/publications/us-essential-workers/>.

² <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/06/482708/demographic-profile-daca-recipients-frontlines-coronavirus-response/>;

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/14/483167/demographic-profile-tps-holders-providing-essential-services-coronavirus-crisis/>.

³ <https://www.cato.org/blog/immigrants-aid-america-during-covid-19-crisis/>.

⁴ https://taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/Media/Default/Documents/2015ARC/ARC15_Volume1_MSP_18_ITIN.pdf.

At the very least, Congress should provide this crucial coronavirus cash assistance to spouses and children in mixed-status immigrant families. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 3.5 million children, many of whom are U.S. citizens, live in households with at least one ITIN filer.⁵ No one should be denied critical economic relief benefits they would otherwise be entitled to simply because they are part of a mixed-status family.

As Congress works to meet the urgent needs of our country in the face of a devastating public health emergency and an economic crisis, we strongly urge you to ensure that immigrant workers and taxpayers have access to vital cash assistance relief in the upcoming coronavirus relief legislation. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

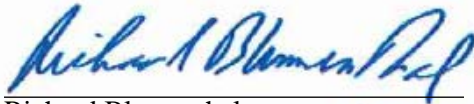
Sincerely,



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

/s/ Patty Murray

Patty Murray
United States Senator



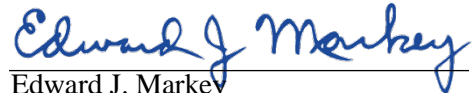
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator




Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



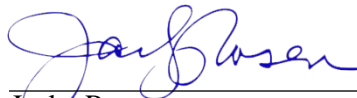
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

⁵ <https://itep.org/analysis-how-the-heroes-act-would-reach-itin-filers/>.



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/ Martin Heinrich

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/s/ Thomas R. Carper

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/ Tom Udall

Tom Udall
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

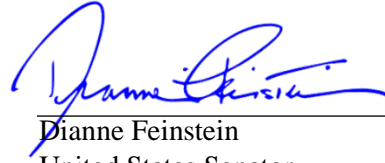
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher S. Murphy

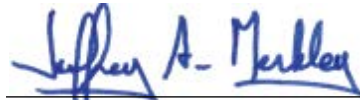
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



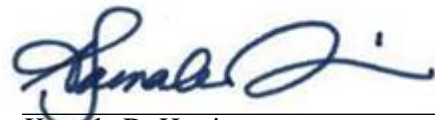
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator




Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Jack Reed
Jack Reed
United States Senator