

Open Letter from Arizona Business and Civic Leaders

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Kyrsten Lea Sinema
317 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Edward Kelly
516 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly:

As business leaders in Arizona, we write to urge you to champion pathways to citizenship for Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, farmworkers, and essential workers, whether within any reconciliation bill that moves forward or by other means that achieve the same goal. This action is urgently needed to address the acute labor shortage across the state, and it is morally right, and politically smart.

Passing a path to citizenship for these and other immigrants already making vital contributions to our economy will grow our Gross Domestic Product, accelerate job growth, and raise the wage floor for all Arizonans and Americans. Common sense immigration solutions will increase economic activity by \$121 billion annually, including adding \$31 billion per year to federal, state, and local tax revenues, according to a recent [analysis](#).

In Arizona, we value immigrants as workers, neighbors, and fellow human beings worthy of dignity and respect. They work hard, pay taxes, and contribute to our state's economy. The household income of [Arizona's](#) undocumented immigrants is \$5.1 billion per year, they pay \$556.5 million in taxes each year, and their total spending power is \$4.5 billion annually. They are Arizonans and Americans in every way, except paperwork.

It has been 35 years since Congress updated our immigration laws. The time for action is now. The U.S. economy [has](#) 10.9 million job openings. Arizona [has](#) an estimated 181,000 jobs open. Legalization and pathways to citizenship will help ease our labor shortage.

Americans overall and Arizonans in particular overwhelmingly and urgently support a path to citizenship - [according to a recent ABIC poll](#), four out of five Arizona voters support a pathway to earned citizenship for these immigrants within the reconciliation bill. That includes a majority of Trump supporters, with 61%, 58% and 50% of 2020 Trump voters backing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, farmworkers and essential workers, respectively.

The Senate parliamentarian's recent decision against Senate Democrats' second attempt at including pathways to citizenship in reconciliation must not be the last word - our labor shortage and the instability facing immigrants, their families, and our communities are too severe. In the face of this crisis, even bypassing the Senate parliamentarian to ensure common sense immigration solutions are included in reconciliation should not be off the table. It would certainly be a much less serious deviation from normal order in the Senate than challenging the filibuster.

Democrats must be courageous and Republicans must stop being paralyzed by a minority of their party. It has never been more urgent to achieve immigration reform to boost our economy, address our labor shortage, level the playing field for all workers and to support families. The time for immigration reform is now and our Arizona Senators are key to its success. The urgency is clear, the benefits are undeniable, the legislative vehicle is on the table and there is bipartisan popular support for action. We can not let this opportunity slip away. Our nation can't afford and neither can Arizona.

We stand ready to answer any questions and work with you to pass these long overdue immigration solutions. Thank you for considering the views of Arizona's business and civic community.

Sincerely,

Bob Worsley, Former State Senator (R-AZ); Founder, SkyMall; Co-Chair, American Business Immigration Coalition

John W. Graham, Chairman, & CEO of Sunbelt Holdings

Steven R Chanen, President & CEO, Chanen Construction Company, Inc.

Rich Dozer, Retired President, Arizona Diamondbacks

Michael Kasser, Founder & Chairman, Holualoa Companies

Philip L. Francis, Former Chairman & CEO, PetSmart

Carole Segal, Co-Founder, Crate and Barrel

Mike Fernandez, Chairman & CEO, MBF Healthcare Partners

Paul Rockower, Executive Director JCRC, Greater Phoenix

Adam Goodman, CEO, Goodmans Interior Structures

Tom Kelly, Former CEO, Aetna Medicaid

John M. Fanning, SCV35 Community Outreach Coordinator & Retired Principal

Donald Schon, MD, FACP

Stephanie Parra, Executive Director, ALL In Education

Steven G. Zylstra, President & CEO of the Arizona Technology Council

Tamora Muir

Liza Montiel, City of Nogales Councilwoman

Susan Udall

David Adame, President & Chief Executive Officer, Chicanos Por La Causa, (CPLC)

Joseph Garcia, Director of Public Policy, Chicanos Por La Causa, (CPLC)

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