



City of Seattle

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

August 30, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

I am writing today to strongly reaffirm my continued support for a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, essential workers, farmworkers, and their families through the budget reconciliation process.

According to the most recent Census 2020 report, Seattle was the fastest-growing big city in 2020, continuing a decade-long trend. And foreign-born residents, including undocumented essential workers and Dreamers, accounted for a significant portion of this growth. Additionally, more than 15,000 Dreamers lived in Washington State as of March 2021.¹ A 2020 American Progress report found that roughly 6,400 of them worked on the front lines of the pandemic, with an estimated 1,000 in healthcare professions.²

These essential workers, many of whom are disproportionately Black and people of color, continue to risk their health and the health of their families as they contribute their talents and skills to such crucial fields as agriculture, healthcare, retail, hospitality, construction, and more. We owe so much to all these heroes who have worked throughout this COVID-19 pandemic. A pathway to citizenship would be an appropriate start.

Our city's resilient economy and vibrant culture is due in large part to past and present waves of immigrants and refugees. And the same can be said for the overall economy and culture of the United States. According to the non-partisan think tank New American Economy, immigrant household incomes

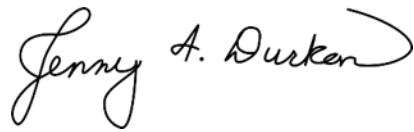
¹ https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles?gclid=CjwKCAjwx8ilBhBwEiwA2quaq7pRV4bROBQ02spd2mYdfqk5c91AXHXSrVExKQ4lj3mjMvR9F79UBoC5IAQAvD_BwE

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

accounted for \$31 billion in household income and \$12.7 billion in taxes paid to support the Seattle Metropolitan Area. Throughout Washington State in 2018, undocumented immigrants paid an estimated \$678.7 million in federal taxes and \$367.9 million in state and local taxes, while Dreamers paid an estimated \$49.8 million in taxes.³

For these reasons and more, the City of Seattle is proud to be a Welcoming City. We believe supporting immigrants creates a stronger future for our nation. And as mayor, I will continue to call for urgent reform to this nation's outdated immigration system. I encourage you to truly "Build Back Better" by incorporating a long overdue pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS holders, essential workers, farmworkers, and their families into the next budget reconciliation package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny A. Durkan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan
City of Seattle

CC: Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, Representative Smith, and Representative Jayapal

³ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-washington>