



LULAC SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO STOP THE DEPORTATION OF MILITARY VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES.

- ❖ Thousands of U.S. veterans, military families, and gold star families have been deported or are currently in deportation proceedings. LULAC supports legislation to stop the deportation of military veterans and their families.

CONGRESS MUST EDUCATE ITSELF ON THE ISSUE OF THE DEPORTATION OF MILITARY VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES

- ❖ Thousands of U.S. veterans, commonly referred to as “green card” veterans, were recruited to serve in the U.S. military as legal permanent residents with the promise that they would be granted U.S. citizenship.
- ❖ These veterans served their country honorably and upon returning home they encountered challenges to obtaining their citizenship.
- ❖ In fact, many of them report that they never received the adequate resources, guidance, or instructions to file the proper paperwork to gain citizenship. Others report that their superiors neglected to provide them the necessary information to proceed with their status adjustments.
- ❖ The consequences of the lack of support and guidance have been devastating to veterans. Many “green card” veterans report feeling betrayed, exploited, and misinformed by the Department of Defense. Veterans suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, brain, and other physical injuries. Other veterans have experienced depression, anxiety, and have fallen victim to drug or alcohol addiction. Those who do fall to addiction and get into trouble, face the added dilemma of becoming deportable. Undocumented military families, including those who double as U.S. veteran caretakers, are also subject to deportation.
- ❖ Currently, there are no mechanisms in place to assist “green card” veterans, their families, or previously deported “green card” veterans.
- ❖ Many of these veterans seek help and counsel from Veterans Affairs (VA), but are often forced to wait months in between appointments and/or do not receive proper diagnosis or treatment.
- ❖ These symptoms often lead to reckless behavior and drug or alcohol related crimes. As legal permanent residents, these type of charges are grounds for deportation. Currently, there is no form of relief from deportation due to military service or for their family members.
- ❖ Once these veterans are deported, they do not have access to their VA benefits as not all countries have VA hospitals. They often face homelessness, violence and are highly susceptible to cartel recruitment due to their combat experience. In addition, they are often perceived as traitors in their native country due to their military experience in the US. The cruel irony of this injustice is that deported veterans are only eligible to return to the U.S. for their own military burial.

LULAC SEEKS LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM

- ❖ LULAC and other grassroots leaders met with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus on February 2017 to discuss the plight of “green card” veterans and the need for legislation to address their current situation.
- ❖ Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus have agreed to draft legislation modeled after Representative Raul Grijalva’s H.R. 5695. New legislation would seek to address the current situation of “green card” veterans, but also allow for the return of previously deported “green card” veterans, and include language to provide deportation protection for family members of veterans and gold star families.
- ❖ LULAC encourages you to support legislation aimed at addressing the plight of “green card” veterans, deported veterans, and the family members of veterans and gold star families. For more information on possible legislation, please contact Norma Salazar at Representative Raul Grijalva’s office at 202-225-2435.