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Marielena Hincapié

September 22, 2014

President of the United States
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We strongly support your plans to exercise your legal authority to fix our broken immigration system, and we urge you to broadly expand administrative relief and work authorization to aspiring citizens. For an administrative relief program to succeed, it is essential that it be financially accessible for all eligible individuals and families.

Two years of experience with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is telling: fees are the number one barrier to applying. A survey by the Immigration Policy Center found that 43 percent of those who are DACA-eligible cited the \$465 application fee as the single largest obstacle to applying. While more than 500,000 people have applied for and received DACA as of August 2014, the total number of those who were eligible at the time DACA was announced is closer to 1 million. That means 50 percent of eligible recipients are not applying, largely due to a combination of high fees, no waivers and extremely limited fee exemptions.

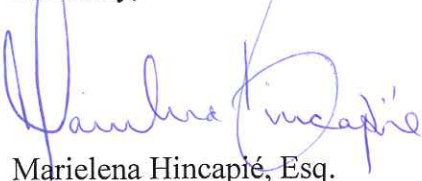
Undocumented immigrants are disproportionately low-income. They work but in low-wage jobs. A third of the adults and more than half of the children live in poverty. Women and children together represent 75 percent of the immigrant population and are especially economically vulnerable. An expansion of the deferred action program must address these realities. Specifically, we urge you to:

- Establish affordable application fees with fee exemptions and waivers sufficient to address the need; and
- Allow households to submit “family applications.” This will streamline the adjudication of applications with largely similar facts and documents, reduce administrative costs, and make the application process more affordable for families. Nearly half of immigrant households are couples with children.

It is well-established that providing work authorization to the 11 million undocumented immigrants will bring about significant economic gains in terms of growth, earnings, tax revenues and jobs. Immigration reform that allows immigrants to achieve their full potential and offer their most meaningful contributions to our communities and economy will only make the United States stronger and more prosperous. Affordable application fees and an accessible process are investments that will provide extraordinary pay-offs.

We are grateful for your consideration,

Sincerely,



Marielena Hincapié, Esq.
National Immigration Law Center
Executive Director

On Behalf of:

9to5

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Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

California Immigrant Policy Center

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Farmworker Justice
Fair Immigration Reform Movement
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Hispanic Federation
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Immigrant Defense Project
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Immigration Equality
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Korean Resource Center
Latin American Coalition
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
League of United Latin American Citizens
Legal Aid Justice Center
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Make the Road New York
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Mountain View Dreamers
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC)
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association (NEA)
National Employment Law Project
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
National Immigrant Justice Center

National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild
National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASAEC)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)
National Minority AIDS Council
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
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New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice
New York Immigration Coalition
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