



League of United Latin American Citizens

April 17th, 2020

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The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

We first want to express our appreciation and gratitude for the efforts you have made to respond to this pandemic crisis and the swift way in which you have responded.

Yet, as the largest membership-based national Latino organization we are deeply concerned about the crisis we see unfolding in front of our eyes. The Latino community—which faces generational challenges when it comes to its socio-economic, health and general well being—is not only feeling the brunt of the pandemic, but their livelihoods are at risk and their economic outlook threatened not just in the near term but for years to come.

Therefore, your office along with leaders from both sides of the aisle, need to continue using every tool at your disposal to ensure that we are leveraging every asset in the federal government to provide for the health and safety of millions of Latinos who are part of our nation.

It is no exaggeration to say that Latinos are the first respondents and essential to this moment. From the [1.9 million farmworkers](#) and [35 percent of meat and poultry packers](#), who toil our lands and who are making sure our grocery stores are stocked up with food; to the [23 percent](#) of grocery workers who are working in small and big chains and exposing themselves to COVID-19. Moreover, more than [200,000 DACA recipients](#) are classified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as "essential critical infrastructure workers" and in the front lines of response.

Latinos are also disproportionately feeling the impacts: [34 percent](#) of those who have passed away in NYC—ground zero of the pandemic—are Latinos even though they make up only 29 percent of the population. [83.8 percent](#) of Latino workers are unable to work from home. Front-facing customer services industries, "essential" industries, such as food production,



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construction, custodial service, and leisure sectors are [heavily dominated](#) by Latinos. Moreover, this economic upheaval will further hurt Latinas since they are [overrepresented](#) in low wage work.

In the last few days and weeks, you have likely received hundreds of letters from various civil rights groups with specific policy interventions to help vulnerable communities, and we have added our voice in support. The present letter seeks to underscore how important your actions are to this moment and that LULAC will ensure that every member of our network understands where you stand.

We would not be doing our jobs if we left something unwritten, which is the importance of including our undocumented brothers and sisters in the next relief efforts. Helping the undocumented is not just the moral thing to do, it is also an economic imperative. The undocumented deserve to be treated with the same dignity as every other person. They are an integral part of our workforce, from farming the land to stocking up shelves, to taking care of our elders. Undocumented workers have for many years contributed to our nation's coffers by paying taxes and contributing to social security: in 2017 undocumented immigrants paid [\\$27.2 billion in taxes](#); and in 2016 according to the New American Economy, they contributed [\\$13 billion](#) into the Social Security funds and [\\$3 billion](#) to Medicare. Almost [60 percent](#) have lived in the US for 10 years or longer and nationwide, more than [8 million U.S. citizens](#) have at least one unauthorized family member living with them.

Thus, there is no valid reason why we should leave the undocumented community out. We ask that you vigorously fight for their inclusion and not cave under pressure that is not grounded in policy nor facts.

As you deliberate the next steps of a package, we ask that you keep the following principles in mind:

1. Ensuring access to quality health care for everyone and including targeted relief for the most vulnerable;
2. Protecting the jobs of working people and ensuring their safety;
3. Strong oversight and conditions on industry bailout funds that emphasize and prioritize workers;
4. Keeping people in their homes and safeguarding their financial health;
5. Providing educational funding and support including for English learners;
6. Stimulating the economy and investing in our collective future;
7. Protecting our democracy and ensuring our communities are not disenfranchised and prevented from participating in their civic duty.

Attached to this letter you will find LULAC's priorities by issue area. We look to your leadership and guidance to help us maneuver this moment. LULAC stands ready to fight by



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your side to ensure we do everything we can to support the engines of our economy and our most valuable asset: our workers and their families.

In Solidarity,

Domingo Garcia
LULAC National President

Sindy M. Benavides
LULAC Chief Executive Officer

cc: Members of Congress