

July 18, 2022

The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A2

Dear Minister Fraser,

I write to you on behalf of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights<sup>1</sup> because right now, Canada has an opportunity to make meaningful progress for migrant rights and abortion access, moving us towards just and equitable healthcare for everyone in Canada.

We welcome the government's initiative to task you with developing a plan to allow permanent residency for workers of all skill levels by September 8, 2022 and to move forward with the regularization of status for undocumented workers. Action Canada applauds this development and calls on your office to leverage this opportunity to guarantee the health and rights of everyone in Canada. We echo the demands of the Migrant Rights Network and support the regularization of all undocumented migrants and the establishment of permanent resident status for all 1.7 million people without it. This should be supported by a moratorium on detentions, deportations, and other immigration enforcement.

As you know, migrants face many rights violations and challenges. These include the lack of access to abortion care. Following the U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, people in Canada are seeking ways to protect abortion rights and enhance access to this medical procedure. Equitable access to abortion for all people cannot exist without taking steps to ensure access for those in the most precarious situations, including undocumented migrants.

Through our toll-free Access Line, we hear about the many barriers people in Canada experience when trying to access abortion. Alongside general access issues, many callers face barriers related to their immigration status. Many are unable to access the public health system. This is because they are located in remote areas, or lack transportation, adequate labour protections, privacy, access to information, or documentation to enable their access to health services. When accessing an abortion requires travel to the United States, the risk of detention or deportation means that many migrants are unable to access the care they need.

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<sup>1</sup> Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights (formerly the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada) is a national human rights organization committed to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights in Canada and globally. This letter is an adaptation of a public statement, which is viewable on our website. <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/news/2022-07-12-status-all-abortion-access-all>

We have found that the vast majority of people who are ultimately unable to access abortion in Canada have precarious immigration status or are undocumented. We also support people facing financial barriers to abortion, and some months, migrants and undocumented folks make up as much as one third of all people we assist through our Norma Scarborough Emergency Fund.

We welcome the steps that the department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship is taking towards Status for All and affirm that abortion access is a human right. The Government of Canada has taken many meaningful steps to enhance access to abortion in Canada. We urge you to take this opportunity to continue this important human rights work and ensure that sexual and reproductive health services, including abortion, are available and accessible for all people. Guaranteeing full and permanent immigration status for all moves us closer to a world where everyone's rights are realized and upheld.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Bowden", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

**Kelly Bowden**

Director of Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations  
Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

CC: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau P.C., M.P