

CUPE MANITOBA

Canadian Union of Public Employees
Manitoba Division

September 18, 2022

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2
justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Hon. Sean Fraser
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Confederation Building, Suite 110
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
sean.fraser@parl.gc.ca

RE: WE SUPPORT PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR ALL

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Fraser,

As the largest public service union in MB, the Canadian Union of Public Employees represents over 37,000 members in Manitoba. The membership includes workers from health care, education, post-secondary, social services, childcare, municipalities and others throughout the province. Diversity and inclusion bring us strength in the labour movement and because social justice is one of the mandates our union, we are politically active, work on community coalitions and organize events as necessary to raise awareness about social injustices.

We have supported the work of Migrante and the Migrant Rights Network and were very pleased when they shared with us the news of the mandate letter to the Immigration Minister calling for a “regularization program” for undocumented migrants and the unanimous parliamentary motion asking for the creation of a plan to give permanent residency to workers of all skill levels.

As a union that strongly defends and promotes human rights, CUPE MB is urging the writers of this program to ensure equal rights for all by extending permanent residence to the approximately 1.7 million migrants Canada depends on, including the 500,000 undocumented migrants. With fair and equitable regularization of all undocumented people and permanent residency for all migrants, including those in low waged jobs we are certain many issues that workers now face will begin to subside.

We believe when folks are able to go to work (or study), be treated fairly and compensated justly without the worry of raising concerns and risking deportation, or waiting for approvals

from backlogged Federal departments, they will thrive and be great assets to their communities and the economy. We also believe employers and unscrupulous, ineffective immigration lawyers will be unable to victimize and ignore human the human rights and employment laws should this occur.

In Manitoba, we have had to take public service employers to task when permanent positions were denied to workers because of their status. This move denied workers the opportunity to participate in benefit programs and denied them the rights of employment stability. A program that offers regularization to all levels of workers would remove this harmful practice and support the human rights of every worker, including their right to organize and earn a dignified living.

The Migrant Rights Network has created a set of proposals to guide the development of a regularization program that CUPE MB fully endorses and urges you to refer to when developing this key piece of legislation. It is attached for your records.

Canada's history is not one that is free from despair and missteps. From colonization, to slavery, to residential schools, head taxes and internment camps, Canada has made its fair share of mistakes in our short history. This government, now, with this program has the opportunity to be sure we don't continue to set ourselves up for creating greater issues, harming folks and most importantly not learning from the past we are trying to reconcile with now. At this moment, this government, who prides themselves as being committed to liberal values and upholding equality, fighting racism, and welcoming immigrants and refugees has this great opportunity to introduce a regularization program that will extend permanent residence to 1.7 million migrants, including 500,000 undocumented migrants and including those in low-waged occupations.

Recently we celebrated the roll out of a National Child Care plan. It is our hope that in the near future we will be celebrating the rollout of regularization program that will reflect we have learned from past mistakes and are willing to fully support human rights with a full comprehensive regularization plan.

Thank you – Merci – Miigwetch,



GINA MCKAY
President, CUPE Manitoba

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Cc: Migrant Rights Network - info@migrantrights.ca