

August 30, 2022

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2

Hon. Sean Fraser  
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
Confederation Building, Suite 110  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Fraser:

**Re: Supporting regularization and pathways for permanent residency for precarious status migrants in Canada**

On behalf of Unifor's 315,000 members from across the country, we would first like to commend your government in taking action to ensure that low-wage temporary migrant workers and those living without status in Canada, finally have the opportunity to acquire permanent residency in Canada, so that they can continue to live, work and contribute to our communities.

Implementing a pathway program for permanent residency will greatly work at reducing the inequities that have long existed in Canadian immigration policy, wherein migrants deemed "low-skilled" or those in low-wage jobs have little opportunity of acquiring permanent status compared to those arriving in "high-skilled" or in high-waged positions.

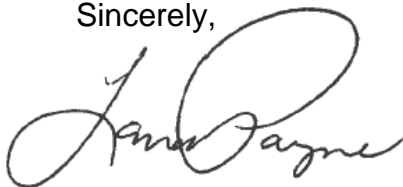
Further, the introduction of a comprehensive regularization program in Canada is another positive step – one that is long overdue. Far too many migrants have fallen through the cracks of our immigration system that has increasingly failed to provide the necessary stability and safety that migrants require and has resulted in thousands to live in the country without status (i.e. undocumented). These workers are subject to extreme forms of labour exploitation and human rights abuses by groups, including employers, recruiters or landlords, who use threats of detention and deportation should people speak out against abuse and mistreatment.

Moreover, migrants without immigration status are less likely to seek out public services such as healthcare and education, or engage with government agencies and organizations (e.g. reporting workplace violations), for fear of having to disclose their status. This erodes overall quality of life of in communities as public health and safety becomes jeopardized, while also contributing to unsafe workplaces. Granting permanent residency is a critical step in ensuring that all migrants have access to the same rights and protections as other Canadians and can freely access public programs and services.

In order for these permanent residency pathway and regularization programs to make a real difference in the lives of the over 1.7 million migrants currently without secure status in Canada, they must be made as open and accessible as possible. We have already seen how previous federal programs that were meant to grant permanent residence status for migrant workers – e.g. those working in health care sector – left too many unable to apply due to arbitrary program restrictions. We now have the opportunity to rectify these gaps so that all workers in Canada have full access to the rights and entitlements they deserve while ensuring equal rights for all people. That is why Unifor is fully endorsing and supporting the proposals set forth by the Migrant Rights Network in guiding the development of a federal regularization program. This includes creating a simple and broad program, with a clear and simple application process, without exclusions or criteria for inadmissibility.

In developing these programs, we encourage your government to ensure they listen to the voices of migrant workers, including community and labour advocates that have long called for equal rights for all. We look forward to continue working with your government to ensure we create a fair and just immigration system -- one that emphasizes social and human rights, equity, equal opportunities, family reunification and safety and security. We thank you for your time and consideration on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lana Payne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

**LANA PAYNE**  
**National President**

LP:NS:nmcope343