



February 28, 2024

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau

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

Hon. Marc Miller

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Marc.Miller@parl.gc.ca, Minister@cic.gc.ca

Cc: Migrant Rights Network - info@migrantrights.ca

RE: Regularize All Undocumented People and Ensure Permanent Resident Status for All Migrants

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Miller,

My name is Rowan Burdge, and I am the Provincial Director of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition. The [BC Poverty Reduction Coalition](#) comprises over 85 organizations and community mobilizations that advocate for public policy solutions to end poverty, homelessness and inequality in B.C. We aim to improve the health and well-being of all living in British Columbia. The Coalition advocates for a targeted and comprehensive poverty reduction strategy that prioritizes equity-seeking groups, and a whole government, cross-ministry approach to ending poverty. Our work is grounded in the foundation of universal human rights.

In December 2021, PM Trudeau made a [mandate letter](#) commitment asking the Immigration Minister to create a “regularization program” for undocumented migrants. That promise has been repeated many times, and most recently, the Minister promised to bring a proposal to Cabinet in the [Spring](#) of 2024. The migrant care worker program is expiring on June 17, and unless it is replaced, thousands of migrant women will become undocumented. Already, [many cannot apply for permanent residency because of impossible-to-achieve language testing and educational accreditation requirements](#).

Further, landlords are raising rents beyond reach, grocery monopolies are making it harder to put food on our tables, and lobbyist-driven governments are privatizing healthcare and education. But it's im/migrants that are being scapegoated in media and public discourse for the affordability crisis as racism is used to divide and distract us. The federal government has capped study permits, students can't be with their families, and permanent residency has been capped, which means more people than ever will remain on temporary and exploitative permits. We know the housing crisis has not been caused by immigration – complex factors, including the lack of investment into affordable homes and the financialization of housing in this country, have caused it.

Now is the time to lead with justice, fairness, and generosity. We urge you to use your power and influence to ensure we are welcoming immigrants and refugees, creating gender justice, fighting poverty, and ensuring a fair society with permanent resident status for all. You can enshrine human rights for people and avoid the polarizing anti-immigrant fears, racism, and xenophobia becoming so normalized in our culture.

We are asking for an inclusive [regularization program](#) that allows all undocumented people to apply for permanent resident status immediately, without any caps or restrictions by industry of work or geography, and no two-step processes that only allow for temporary work permits. There is also a clear need for an [interim program for migrant caregivers](#) in Canada to apply for permanent resident status without educational accreditation and language test score requirements; measures to end migrant exploitation by ending tied work permits and hours of work limits for international students and ensuring permanent resident status for all working-class people in Canada today. Working-class migrants and refugees are essential labour sources in key industries, but more importantly, they consist of people who have inherent human rights that you have the opportunity to uphold.

We fully support Migrant Rights Network's proposals on [regularization](#) and for [migrant careworkers](#). We endorse these principles and support MRN's recommendations. These principles of rights, self-determination, and access to dignified experiences only enhance and support the human rights of all those who call Canada home. The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition supports human rights, equity, and centering lived experience. Further, ending gender-based violence, racism, and discrimination against poor people across Canada means taking steps to address the systemic nature of these forces currently baked into our political systems and institutions, including, and especially, immigration processes. Reducing and eliminating poverty goes hand in hand with health, labour rights, access to fair and just social policy, enforcing and enshrining human rights, and creating safe, fair working conditions and wages, regardless of immigration status. Supporting the human rights of migrants benefits us all. Now is the time to regularize all undocumented people and ensure permanent resident status for all migrants.

Thank you very much,

Rowan Burdge

Rowan Burdge

Provincial Director

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition