



3 April 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 - letters@migrantrights.ca

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

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Miller,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of OPSEU/SEFPO. OPSEU/SEFPO represents over 180,000 workers in Ontario. On their behalf, I want to emphasize the critical need for migrant justice in Ontario, and in Canada more broadly, and to urge you to take decisive action. As trade unionists, we see the treatment that migrant workers receive and we know that much of it derives from their lack of permanent status. As trade unionists, we are deeply invested in values of equity, anti-racism, and workers' rights, and we believe it is imperative our country address the critical issues facing undocumented migrants and migrant care workers in Canada.

In December of 2021, your government made a commendable commitment through a mandate letter to the Immigration Minister to establish a regularization program for undocumented migrants. However, despite repeated and recent assurances, this promise remains unfulfilled, leaving thousands of community members in precarious situations and vulnerable to exploitation. As the expiry date of the migrant care worker program fast approaches, the urgency of this situation cannot be overstated. Without swift action, many migrant workers will find themselves undocumented, unable to secure permanent residency due to unreasonable language testing and education accreditation requirements.

Further, we are deeply concerned about the growing trend of scapegoating immigrants amidst ongoing economic challenges. While it's true that a number of sectors – including housing, healthcare, and education – are facing significant challenges, immigrants are being unjustly targeted as the cause of these issues. This divisive rhetoric not only perpetuates racism, but also distracts from addressing the root causes of these systemic issues. Your own government has used this rhetoric instead of focusing on solving the problems that lead to such crises in our communities.

The choice facing your government is clear: will you continue to perpetuate anti-immigrant sentiments, succumbing to a tide of rampant xenophobia, or will you uphold values of equity and take a decisive stance in combating racism?

We join countless others in reiterating the following path toward justice:

1. Immediately create a comprehensive and inclusive regularization program that allows all undocumented individuals to apply for permanent resident status without restrictions by industry or geography.
2. Establish an interim program for migrant caregivers to apply for permanent resident status without burdensome educational accreditation and language testing requirements.
3. End migrant exploitation by abolishing tied work permits and hours of work limits for international students, while ensuring permanent resident status for all working-class people in Canada.

The issue at hand is not only about justice for migrants; there are significant implications for many aspects of our shared society, including systemic racism, gender equity, improved labour conditions, public health, and economic growth. By taking this step and ensuring equal rights for migrants, we can address these issues more effectively and build toward a freer and more just society for all Canadians.

Additionally, taking responsibility for climate migrants is both a moral obligation and a necessity in light of Canada's significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change. Recognizing the interconnectedness of climate justice and migrant justice, we must ensure that our immigration policies reflect our commitment to leaving no one behind.

The time for action is now, and I hope your government will seize this opportunity to champion migrant justice in Canada. Your leadership on this issue will not only shape the future of our country, but also reaffirm our shared commitment to the values of equity, solidarity, and human rights.

I look forward to your response.

Thank you,

JP Hornick

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP Hornick', written in a cursive style.

President, OPSEU/SEFPO