



Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau

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Hon. Marc Miller

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
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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,

SWAN Vancouver is a member of the Migrant Rights Network that promotes the rights, health and safety of im/migrant women engaged in indoor sex work through frontline service and systemic advocacy. For more than 20 years, we've supported and advocated for women who've been criminalized because of their work and status in Canada. Many of the women we support are migrants who hold temporary status in the country and are banned from doing sex work under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR), [which forces them to work in more risky and precarious situations](#).

In December 2021, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau asked Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Marc Miller, to create a "regularization program" for undocumented migrants. Since then, women we support have been detained, deported, separated from family and have lost the lives they've built in Canada. Women have been the target of violent crimes carried out by perpetrators who threaten to notify the Canada Border Services Agency that they are working illegally as a migrant sex worker. Perpetrators often use temporary status and the IRPR as a weapon against migrant sex workers, and every day it impedes these workers' access to justice, healthcare and basic services.

SWAN Vancouver is demanding the government ensure equal rights for all by:

- Creating a comprehensive regularization program that allows undocumented people to apply for permanent resident status immediately. This program should

include no caps, no restrictions by industry or work or geography and no two-step immigration which only give temporary work permits.

- Create an interim program for migrant caregivers in Canada to apply for permanent resident status without educational accreditation and language test score requirements;
- End migrant exploitation by ending tied work permits and hours of work limits for international students;
- And ensure permanent resident status for all working class people in Canada, including migrant sex workers.
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We urge the federal government to develop programs based off of the Migrant Rights Network's proposals on [regularization](#) and for [migrant careworkers](#). With a comprehensive program in place, migrant sex workers will not have to live in constant fear of being deported. With status, these workers can access basic services such as healthcare, settlement programs and justice. They will be less likely to be attacked or robbed while working because perpetrators can no longer target them for their status and threaten to call the CBSA on migrant sex workers who want to report crimes to the police. Furthermore, undocumented people and migrants are mostly racialized, low-waged people and often women. Ensuring rights and access for them is crucial for implementing anti-racist and gender equitable policies.

Regularization can build on best practices from around the world. Between 1996 and 2008, 24 of the 27 EU Member States implemented regularization programs, with some rolling out several programs, resulting in up to six million people being regularized. The largest programs were the Italian 2002 program which regularized 634,000 people and the Spanish 2005 program which regularized 578,375 people. Last year, Ireland regularized most undocumented people in the country who met a basic residency requirement.

This is an opportunity for the Trudeau government to leave a legacy through a regularization program that results in basic rights for migrants, ensures public health, grows the economy and improves labour conditions. We look forward to the Liberal government acting on its promises to ensure status for all.

Sincerely,

SWAN Vancouver



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