

MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: FWD.us
DATE: April 27, 2021
RE: President Biden should seize the opportunity to lead on citizenship legislation

Tomorrow, President Biden will address the Senate, the House and the nation in a Joint Address as he rounds out his first 100 days in office. He has an important opportunity to lean in one of the most popular issues with voters across the country: Providing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS holders, farmworkers and other essential workers, and the broader undocumented community. Not only is this the right thing to do, but numerous respected pollsters have also continued to find that this is smart politics.

New polling from [Garin-Hart-Yang/Global Strategy Group/LD Insights](#), as well as [Anzalone List/Center Forward](#), [Public Opinion Strategies \(GOP\) poll](#) and [Data For Progress](#) all show that **a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants remains incredibly popular** with a range of 75% to 66% in support. The popularity of these proposals show that these are not only good policy, but good politics.

The polling highlights that citizenship for the undocumented population is a consensus issue, not a divisive one:

- Polling from Global Strategy Group, Garin-Hart-Yang, and LD Insights found an electorate eager for action on immigration and very high levels of support for the major citizenship proposals facing Congress. The survey found the DREAM Act to have 72% support, citizenship for undocumented farmworkers to have 71% support, and citizenship for undocumented essential workers to have 66% support. [Nearly two-thirds \(63%\) of voters say they would be upset if immigration reform does not pass](#) and a plurality of voters would blame both parties equally for the failure. This is further evidence that Democrats cannot count on voters blaming Republican obstruction for legislative failures on immigration.
- Polling from Anzalone List/the centrist think tank Center Forward found that 74 percent of likely voters support citizenship legislation for Dreamers, individuals with Temporary Protected Status, farmworkers, and other essential workers. John Anzalone, one of Joe Biden's main pollsters in 2020, concluded that [Democrats shouldn't tip-toe around talking about immigration and, in fact, may want to talk about it more](#). The reason? Protecting Dreamers from deportation is extremely popular across Democratic, Republican and Independent voters, and that approval extends to other undocumented people in the country.

- Public Opinion Strategies polling from March 2021 shows [two-thirds of Americans \(66%\) are in support of a pathway to citizenship](#) for undocumented immigrants, compared to only 28% who support deportation. Support remains strong for Dreamers, farmworkers, essential workers, and a majority of Americans say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate for U.S. Senate if that candidate supported legislation to protect Dreamers from deportation.
- A bipartisan poll from Data for Progress in partnership with We Are Home Action found that a pathway to citizenship generates huge enthusiasm among voters across party lines. Notably, [voters across the ideological spectrum support an eight-year pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who pass a background check by a +44 point margin](#). The data also found that Democratic voters want and expect lawmakers to move forward on these reforms, and that humane, citizenship-granting immigration policy is a key reason they voted Democrat in the first place.

Congress Must Act With Urgency to Protect Undocumented Immigrants

The alarming reality is that DACA remains under threat, and a federal ruling ordering the program to be shut down could come at any moment, leaving hundreds of thousands of young people without protection from deportation or work authorization. At the same time, [more than 5.2 million undocumented essential workers](#) whose contributions are critical for our nation's economic recovery continue to live under the daily threat of deportation. They have been on the frontlines in hospitals and grocery stores and behind the scenes in food service, logistics, and other jobs that we all depend on. **Without congressional action, millions of undocumented essential workers, Dreamers, people with Temporary Protected Status and farmworkers could be deported – threatening the health, safety and security of all Americans.**

While it has been difficult to rebuild the entire immigration system from the ground up, President Biden and Vice President Harris have said they are committed to a fair, humane, and just immigration system. The path forward means President Biden and Vice President Harris must lean in on immigration, embrace shared values of humanity and fairness, and deliver meaningful solutions on immigration policy that Americans across party lines want and expect.

Immigration policy is essential to our country, communities and economy and urgently needed. The upcoming Joint Address on Wednesday, April 28, will be an opportunity for President Biden to reaffirm his commitment to a fair, humane and functional immigration and lay out his future plans for action. He should seize it.