

Fairness for Immigrant Families Act
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Immigration plays a defining role in America's identity. Families throughout the United States have roots in the immigration stories of earlier generations who came to the United States seeking better opportunities, safety from persecution, and ultimately, a chance at the American dream. While the ancestors of some families arrived centuries ago, other families are continuing that tradition today. As of 2019, one in four children in the United States live with one or more immigrant parents.¹ Furthermore, 16.7 million people live in a household with at least one undocumented family member, including almost 6 million U.S. citizen children.²

Immigrants also play a critical role in the U.S. economy. Undocumented immigrants contribute over \$11 billion in state and local taxes each year,³ and 1.2 million mortgages are held by households with at least one undocumented family member.⁴

Providing ways for long-term residents with family ties in the U.S. and no criminal record to adjust their status and achieve lawful permanent residency is a necessary part of maintaining both the diverse culture and the economic strength of the United States. Yet our immigration system as it exists now is broken, harming millions of families every single day. Far too many families live under the threat of immigration enforcement, which negatively impacts their health, as well as the development and well-being of their children. Undocumented and mixed status families with strong ties to the U.S. deserve an immigration system that makes sense.

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's Fairness for Immigrant Families Act will...

Protect immigrant families:

- Remove arbitrary barriers for long-term immigrants to become lawful permanent residents by eliminating bars to reentry and reestablishing the 245(i) program for those with family ties to adjust their status
- Make cancellation of removal more accessible by recognizing a wider range of family hardships, increasing the number of cancellations that can happen each year, and establishing an affirmative application process for cancellation of removal through USCIS
- Require high-level approval before any parent of a U.S. citizen child is deported, and increase accountability for deportations of those with U.S. citizen children
- Establish a State Department office dedicated to U.S. citizen children who have left the country in order to stay with a deported parent, and require reporting on this population

Combat notario fraud:

- Allow victims of immigration fraud more time to file motions to reopen their cases
- Criminalize schemes to provide fraudulent immigration services

¹ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states-2020>

² <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/03/16/428335/keeping-families-together/>

³ <https://itep.org/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2016/>

⁴ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/233150241700500101>

- Make grants available for states and local jurisdictions to combat fraud, create immigration consumer fraud hotlines assistance websites, and promote outreach campaigns against immigration consumer fraud
- Create requirements for notarios to notify clients that they are not immigration attorneys and cannot provide legal advice or services
- Allow the Federal Trade Commission, state Attorneys General, and individuals to take action against notarios who violate FTC requirements

Promote citizenship:

- Require DHS to report to Congress prior to increasing immigration service fees, and on any adjudication delays and backlogs
- Establish a National Office of New Americans through Senator Markey's proposal to promote and support immigrant and refugee integration to society

Build community trust:

- Protect immigrants who are victims of or witnesses to crimes or are defending civil and labor rights from enforcement actions

Above all, the Fairness for Immigrant Families Act redefines the way in which we approach immigration enforcement in our country by promoting legal permanent residency and keeping families together instead of pursuing inhumane policies that separate them.

The Fairness for Immigrant Families Act is endorsed by: UnidosUS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, SEIU, Third Way, National Partnership for New Americans, Immigrants' List Civic Action, Immigration Hub, UNITE HERE Culinary Workers Union Local 226, SEIU Nevada Local 1107, Make the Road Nevada, Dream Big Nevada, Immigrant Home Foundation, Latin Chamber of Commerce of Las Vegas, Arriba Las Vegas Worker Center, African Community Center in Las Vegas, Bangladeshi Association of Northern Nevada, and University of Nevada, Reno Latino Research Center.