



## Work Permits for Spouses of U.S. Citizens

### U.S. Citizens Should Not Have to Choose Between Their Country and Their Families

- Every day, U.S. citizens face the possibility that their loved one will be deported and their families will be torn apart.
- Hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens have already had their families separated because their spouse was removed from the U.S. or denied a U.S. visa.
- 2.5 million U.S. citizens [live](#) in a family where a U.S. citizen is married to an undocumented immigrant, and 1.1 million undocumented people in the U.S. have a U.S. citizen spouse.

### Republicans have recognized that the 1.1 million mixed status marriages and families in the U.S. are in an extraordinarily difficult position

- In 2020, Sen. [Marco Rubio](#) and 11 Republicans incl. Sens. **Tillis, Cornyn, and Cassidy** led the fight to give Covid checks to U.S. citizens married to the undocumented immigrants that **President Donald Trump** signed into law.
- Senator Rubio famously remarked: “What is their alternative? Divorce? That is not conservative”
- **Republican Governors**, including [Cox in Utah](#), [Lombardo in Nevada](#), and [Holcomb](#) in Indiana have each called for federal executive action on this issue.

### U.S. Citizens Shouldn't Face a “Marriage Penalty”

- The current system amounts to a “marriage penalty” for U.S. citizens, as U.S. citizens married to undocumented spouses live in fear of separation, work and pay taxes and cannot claim social security benefits.

### Immigrants in Mixed-Status Families are Already Paying Taxes

- Undocumented workers already pay taxes by filing returns with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs). In 2019, ITIN filers [contributed \\$5.8 billion in net taxes](#).
- Undocumented people also pay property taxes, sales taxes and state and local taxes, and contribute to programs like Social Security and Medicare. However, taxpayers using ITINs cannot benefit from federal programs that their taxes fund.

*American Business Immigration Coalition represents 1400+ Employers and CEOs across the country fighting for sensible immigration solutions to strengthen the workforce ; American Families United represents 1.1 million US citizens fighting for their undocumented spouses. 16 years is the average number of years for these marriages.*



## **Work Permits for Spouses Could Grow the Economy by \$16 billion**

- Work permits for spouses could [grow](#) the economy by \$16 billion.
- Granting the undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens access to legal work permits would [generate](#) an additional \$5 billion in tax revenue.

## **Expanding Work Permits Could Fill an Urgent U.S. Labor Need**

- The U.S. is facing a major labor shortage. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, there are [9.5 million job openings](#) in the U.S. Even if every person looking for work today is employed, there would still be 3 million vacancies.
- Undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens could play a crucial role in the economy by filling those jobs, getting better jobs, higher wages, and paying even more taxes if they are granted work permits.

## **Commonsense and Simple Executive Action: Parole-in-Place for Spouses of US Citizens**

- The first dedicated PIP program was a “[military parole in place](#)” process that is still used today due to its success. In November 2013, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a [policy memorandum](#) asserting that granting parole to undocumented children, parents, and spouses of active duty or retired service members “would generally be an appropriate exercise of discretion,” and that an individual’s direct relationship to a service member “weighs heavily in favor of parole in place.”
- By expanding Parole-in-place for spouses of all US citizens including those not serving in the U.S. military is a legal, easy and effective fix to stabilize the workforce, reduce inflation, grow the economy and keep American families together. Legal memo [here](#)

## **Work Permits for Spouses of US Citizens is Popular with Almost Zero Backlash**

- NEW: As first reported by [@politico](#), [@USImmHUB](#) April 2024 poll with [@GSG](#) and [@BSPresearch](#) shows strong voter support 82-74% for citizenship/legal status for spouses of US citizens; strong opposition to family separation policies - full poll [here](#)
- [Celinda Lake poll](#) showed strong support among Republican voters because even Trump voters believe it is a right US Citizens already have.

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## **US Citizens Directly Impacted:**

- **Ashley DeAzevedo, President, American Families United**, Ashley is a U.S. Citizen from Brick, New Jersey. Ashley is married to an undocumented spouse for over ten years and together they have a beautiful son. Ashley runs two hair salons in South Jersey and Hollywood California.
- **Allyson Batista, Board Member, American Families United, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**. Allyson is a US Citizen married over 20 years with her undocumented spouse and together they have three beautiful US citizen children. Allyson is a former school teacher and owns a successful landscaping business with her husband. Allyson speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese
- **Gina Cano, M.D.**, U.S. citizen married to undocumented spouse from Cincinnati, Ohio living in exile in Mexico to be together with her husband. Due to a physician shortage in rural Ohio, travels back and forth to provide extra support in nursing homes and primary care offices. Speaks English and Spanish
- **Gerardo Diaz, American Families United, from Chicago, Illinois**: Gerardo was born and raised in Aurora, Illinois. He is a small business owner and has been married to his wife, Elizabeth, for 11 years and the couple has been blessed with two children, seven-year-old Nathalia and two-year-old Gerry. After they married, Gerardo and Elizabeth tried to adjust Elizabeth's immigration status, but that meant she had to leave the country. Due to broken and outdated immigration laws, the government forced this family's separation. Gerardo speaks English and Spanish.
- **Kali, Treasurer for American Families United, from Minneapolis, Minnesota**: Kali is a law enforcement community relations manager with the Minneapolis police. Kali met her husband 20 years ago while dancing merengue and together they have a beautiful son. *"It was halfway through our dance that he broke out his authentic, beautiful smile, full of light and imperfect teeth. I knew right away that I would love him."* They are raising a family in Minneapolis, Minnesota, her native home and his adopted one. Kali writes, *"When I look at the trajectory my life has taken, even from the very foundational elements of my core identity, it seems to me there is no way I could have avoided ending up with my husband. To borrow a line from my favorite band, 311, 'I believe we came from the same cloud, two drops in the ocean' — our paths were destined to converge."* Kali speaks English and Spanish.
- **Liza, American Families United, from Atlanta, Georgia, U.S. citizen married to an undocumented spouse for 11 years with two children, flight attendant for 25 years**: *"I am a U.S. citizen and yet I live with the fear every single day that my family could be torn apart. My husband of 12 years is from Mexico and has no criminal history. We met salsa dancing here in Atlanta."*
- **Jason Rochester, American Families United, from Roswell, Georgia**: Jason Rochester is a U.S. citizen, UPS truck driver and Teamster member living with his son in Georgia while his wife is barred from being with them for 10 years. Shortly after Cecilia got stuck in Mexico, their son Ashton was diagnosed with kidney cancer. He had to go through chemotherapy, kidney removal and radiation without his mom, who was denied humanitarian parole to be at her son's bedside. CNN's Anderson Cooper and Randi Kay produced a special about the Rochester family [here](#)

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**American  
Families United**

**UNITE  
HERE!**

- **Everk Sanchez, [American Families United](#), from Phoenix, Arizona:** Everk is a US citizen, small business owner and community radio DJ calls Rosa, his undocumented wife, “*an amazing mother of five beautiful girls*”. Rosa works as a carpenter. Speaks English and Spanish

## **Endorsements**

- 300+ employers: hospitality, agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare etc
- Labor: Unite Here, UAW, SEIU, and Teamsters
- 110+ Members of Congress: House and Senate letter to President Biden
- 329 Congressional, WH, and Cabinet visits
- 30 bipartisan governors incl. Lombardo (R-NV) Cox (R-UT), Holcomb (R-IN), Polis (D-CO), Gianforte (R-MT), Pritzker (D-IL), Holchul (D-NY)
- 50+ press events, roundtables, and convenings incl. TX, WI, NV, AZ, CO
- 15.5B+ media impressions incl. WSJ, NYT, WaPo, Bloomberg, and local and Spanish media

## **WSJ: Biden Weighs Giving Legal Status to Immigrant Spouses of U.S. Citizens**

<https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/biden-weighs-giving-legal-status-to-immigrant-spouses-of-u-s-citizens-04277843>

## **NYT: New Migrants Get Work Permits. Other Undocumented Immigrants Want Them, Too.**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/15/us/migrants-work-permits-undocumented.html>

## **Nevada Current: U.S. citizens urge Biden to expand work permits to undocumented spouses**

<https://nevadacurrent.com/2024/02/15/u-s-citizens-urge-biden-to-expand-work-permits-to-undocumented-spouses/>

## **CNN: Anderson Cooper 360 and Randi Kay Special Report “Reuniting Rochester Family” Clip [here](#)**

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