Experts Available: House Immigration Bills on Dreamers and Farmworkers

MARCH 15, 2021

This week, the House of Representatives will vote on two immigration bills: the American Dream and Promise Act (regarding Dreamers) and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act (regarding immigrant farmworkers). For reporters covering this bill, the following researchers are available to provide expert analysis and commentary.

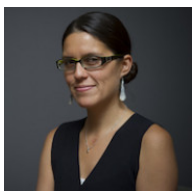## ERNESTO CASTANEDA

American University

Castañeda's research compares Latino immigrants in the U.S. and Muslim immigrants in Europe.

1. "A path to provide citizenship to the Dreamers, TPS holders, and similar groups is long overdue. Passing laws to do so is widely popular across the country and on a bipartisan basis."

2. "As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, we are highly dependent on farm workers and other frontline workers who produce and transport the produce, meat, and milk products we consume. These workers often do these physically-demanding fast-pace jobs in tough conditions and often without legal rights. It is time to improve this situation."

SHANNON GLEESON

Cornell University

Gleeson's research includes the role of the Mexican Consulate in protecting the rights of immigrant workers, the local implementation of DACA, and the impacts of temporary legal status on immigrant workers.

1. "The American Dream and Promise Act would provide a critical pathway to citizenship for individuals currently caught in the limbo of temporary status. It has significant implications for educational success, access to healthcare, and workplace protections. It is an important first step towards greater equity in our immigration system."

2. "The Farm Workforce Modernization Act would provide a critical pathway to citizenship for some of the most vulnerable workers. As we commit further to our decades long legacy of agricultural guestwork, we should also work to rectify the deep inequities that stem from temporary work authorization tied to a single employer."

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ALVARO HUERTA
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Huerta's research focuses on the intersecting domains of community & economic development, Chicana/o & Latina/o studies, immigration & Mexican diaspora, social movements, social networks, and the informal economy.

"In contrast to the Trump/Pence Administration and its record of xenophobic/racist policies, memos and executive orders, any new immigration bill (or packet) under the Biden/Harris Administration should be based on humanistic values. In other words, as a society, we must value all the contributions from DREAMers to farm workers (like my late father) to domestic workers (like my late mother) and beyond. Our diversity must be our strength, not weakness!"

SAYIL CAMACHO
Vanderbilt University

Camacho studies workplace climate and immigrant populations, exploring the relationship between academic labor and migrant identity. Her interests include the work experiences of undocumented young adults and the effects of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals federal program.

"Amid multiple pandemics, farmworkers are our nation's unsung heroes—keeping America fed despite extreme weather conditions and increasing anti-immigrant rhetoric, policies and processes. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act is a means towards establishing immigration reform and creating a more sustainable food economy. Farmworkers deserve just work conditions not just because they are essential to our economy, but because the exploitation of vulnerable, immigrant populations is dehumanizing and needs to end for our collective advancement."

CAITLIN PATLER
University of California, Davis

Patler's research explores citizenship and legal status as axes of stratification that significantly shape opportunities for mobility, including the DACA program. She is available to comment on the American Dream and Promise Act.

"The research is clear: a permanent pathway to citizenship is critical to providing young, undocumented immigrants the opportunities necessary to achieving their highest potential. While this bill leaves out many immigrants from legalization, it is a good step in the right direction that will permanently change the lives of up to 4.5 million young people, including so-called "DREAMers" and TPS holders."

TOM K. WONG
University of California, San Diego

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Wong's research focuses on the politics of immigration, citizenship, and migrant "illegality." As these issues have far-reaching implications, his work also explores the links between immigration, race and ethnicity, and the politics of identity. He served as an advisor to the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders under the Obama administration.