

Statement on Immigration Reform

The BlueGreen Alliance is a unique national partnership of 14 of the country's largest and most influential labor unions and environmental organizations. We bring together nearly 15 million members and supporters as a powerful voice for a cleaner, fairer and more competitive American economy. We believe that the hallmark of a successful 21st Century society will be our capacity to solve our interrelated environmental and economic challenges in tandem.

As the premier labor and environmental coalition in America today, we support the effort to create a path to citizenship for three important reasons. First, it is a demonstration that American democracy can rise above short term political polarization and pass meaningful reform to address fundamental issues that are core to our society. The same effort is profoundly needed to address the major environmental and economic problem of our time, the climate crisis.

Second, it is a sad fact that those within our country who are disempowered and without rights or recourse also suffer the brunt of environmental degradation, particularly caused by disruptive climate change, both in their workplaces and their communities.

Too often, those who are forced to live their lives in the shadows of society stand voiceless to these injustices. As Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy demonstrated, their neighborhoods are the last to have the lights turned back on. The BlueGreen Alliance feels a special responsibility to give voice to those who are voiceless, but who also bear the heaviest load of severe climate events.

Third, our nation's competitiveness has historically relied on the hard work and rich perspectives of immigrants to advance the American economy. Our factories, our cities, our scientific knowhow, and the infrastructure that binds us together, all benefited from the contributions of our immigrant communities. America simply cannot push such talent out of our economy. And harnessing the very best minds in the world today will be necessary for our country to play the role it must in the innovation necessary to grow the clean energy economy.

For these reasons, the BlueGreen Alliance strongly supports a bipartisan and commonsense approach to create an equitable path to citizenship. We urge Congress and this administration to move forward quickly to achieve this goal.