



GHIAA IS SHARING THIS CALL TO ACTION REGARDING A **RELIEF FUND FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS AND FAMILIES** WITH ITS MEMBERS AND ASKING YOU TO PLEASE WRITE TO [OR CALL] YOUR LEGISLATORS USING THE TEMPLATE BELOW.

The Issue:

The spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) has sent the country into health and economic crises that have just begun. We know that during crises, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities and those who have been systematically and historically marginalized through denied access to resources (health, housing, education, economic resources, and others) are the most impacted by the disparate outcomes of infection and a struggling economy^{1,2,3}.

Undocumented immigrants in Connecticut are one of the groups that has been hit hard during these troubling times. Our state and national mandates to control the spread of the virus through '[social distancing restrictions](#)' and '[stay-at-home orders](#)' are simply not [possible](#) for many undocumented immigrants⁴. Many are working in the frontlines of essential businesses, doing their part to help other residents remain safe at home. There are over [100,000 tax-paying undocumented immigrants in our workforce](#) and thousands have lost jobs or seen a substantial reduction income, yet they have been [missing from most federal and state relief efforts](#). The current administration's orders to make testing and healthcare available regardless of status and to extend renters' protections to everyone are great starts, but ***we know that will not be enough***.

Immigrants, documented and undocumented, are a big part of our collective fight and response to the spread of the virus. They are members of our communities, our neighbors, our friends, members of our congregations, and essential workers risking their lives to keep us safe. During these times a popular saying has emerged⁵, "We're all in this together", we must show solidarity by putting resources in the very same hands that are caring for us and helping maintain our cities and communities running day-to-day, regardless of their status.

The Action:

Contact your state legislator and add your voice to request that the Lamont administration take action to support our immigrant communities by establishing a monetary ***Relief Fund for Undocumented Immigrants and Families***.

- Support the requests of [local community groups, advocates, nonprofits](#) and State leaders ([Senate](#) and [House](#)) to start by appropriating **\$20 million in state funds** and coordinate outreach to **raise an additional \$10 million** in private funds towards economic assistance for state residents suffering economic harm but who are excluded from state and federal relief.

Potential Talking Points:

- **On the issues of health and infection:**

We have an obligation to every resident of the state, regardless of status, to do everything we can to curve the rate of infection. If we do not provide financial relief to undocumented immigrants during this time, they may resort to unsafe work prospects that put them, their families, and our communities at higher risk of infection.

- **On the issue of financial burden to the state:**

In Connecticut, undocumented immigrant communities contribute over \$400 million dollars in state and local taxes each year and are systematically excluded from many social service benefits (unemployment; healthcare, and others) and the current federal and state monetary relief efforts.

- States like California and New York have shown us that it is possible and crucial to support our communities and we can follow their lead and continue to set a national trend during these challenging times.

We know from studies and research at the national level that it is always more expensive to solve a problem retroactively than proactively, whether it is homelessness, illness, or any other social ill, this is true about COVID-19, we must be proactive and protect our communities during these times.

Sample Script:

*"Hello, my name is _____, and I live in your district at _____ [address]. I am writing to ask that you support a monetary **Relief Fund for Undocumented Immigrants and Families**. The health and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic is felt across our state regardless of legal status. I add my voice to the request of local community groups, advocates, nonprofits, and other State Senators and Representatives to **immediately appropriate \$20 million to a state fund** for state residents suffering economic harm. I urge you to ensure this fund serves people who are excluded from state and federal relief. We ask that the State **coordinate outreach to raise \$10 million in private funds** towards additional economic assistance. The creation of this fund is a symbol of solidarity to our immigrant communities, it is a way of letting them know that we're all in this together. **Thank you** for your support."*

Who to Contact:

Calls and emails are needed to your local legislators. Find Your Legislators: [Quick Look-up Here](#).

*If your legislator has NOT already signed the letter in support of this effort ([find out if they signed the letter here](#)), it's even more **important that you reach out to them before May 15** to urge them to support our immigrant communities.*

SOURCES AND FURTHER READINGS:

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