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Give us your poor... but make sure they bring boot straps

Urge your senators to support health care access for immigrants

The Senate has started debating comprehensive immigration reform, which could offer a path to citizenship for many of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants now living in the U.S. Currently undocumented immigrants would be able to apply for Registered Provisional Immigrant (RPI) status, allowing them to remain in the country legally and ultimately obtain citizenship. Part of the debate will focus on immigrants' access to safety net programs, to include health care services. Some in Congress want to enhance access, while others want to make it more difficult for this population to obtain assistance. **Call your senators today and urge them to support access to safety net programs for immigrants regardless of immigration status!**

TAKE ACTION

The bill currently states that those in RPI status will have no access to Exchange subsidies or Medicaid. Those who have immigrated legally can access Exchange subsidies but face a five year waiting period to access Medicaid and other benefits (no change to current law).

The Senate will be voting on amendments for the next two weeks with hopes of passing a bill prior to the July Fourth Congressional Recess. Some amendments that seek to expand access to safety net programs include the following:

- Eliminating the five year waiting period for Medicaid for legal immigrants
- Allowing those in RPI status who have paid all back taxes and fees to access benefits
- Providing funding to states and localities for targeted health care programs for those in RPI status

Many more amendments seek to restrict access, such as the following:

- Adding a five year waiting period for legal immigrants to access ACA subsidies
- Disallowing Social Security and Medicare taxes paid while undocumented from counting towards future benefits
- Requiring RPI status immigrants to maintain health insurance coverage, annual income >125% FPL, and/or avoid using any safety programs or face deportation

The central message *Mobilizer* readers should convey to their senators is that immigrants should have access to safety net programs to protect the health of the entire population and avoid future costs. Call your senators now toll free through the Capitol Switchboard at 1(877) 210-5351 and ask that they support amendments that increase access and oppose those that further restrict it.

If you would like information beyond this, **our partners at the National Immigration Law Center have been tracking this very closely and have extensive fact sheets and talking points on various amendments.** View their website [here](#).

Please email [Dan Rabbitt](#) with any questions or to be linked into more specific immigration advocacy.

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