

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 14, 2015

Ms. Esther Herran

Dear Esther:

Thank you for writing. Throughout our Nation's history, people have come to America from every corner of the globe. Generations have understood there is something unique about this country where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts—where different cultures, ideas, and passions come together to create something new. Today, however, our immigration system is broken.

In 2013, I laid out principles for reform. Soon after, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents in the Senate joined together to pass a commonsense compromise bill. It would have further secured our border while giving undocumented immigrants a pathway to earned citizenship if they paid a fine, started paying taxes, passed national security and criminal background checks, and went to the back of the line. Independent experts recognized this plan would grow our economy and shrink our deficits. Unfortunately, Republican leaders in the House refused a vote on that bill, and that's why I needed to take action.

As President, I have the legal authority to take actions that will help make our immigration system more fair and more just—the same kinds of actions taken by Republican and Democratic Presidents before me. The actions I announced build on our progress at the border by providing additional resources for law enforcement personnel to stop illegal crossings and send home those who cross without authorization. They will make it easier and faster for high-skilled immigrants, graduates, and entrepreneurs to stay and contribute to our economy. And they deal responsibly with the millions of undocumented immigrants already living here. To learn more about these actions, visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/Immigration-Action.

Many Americans support these types of reforms, but I hear the concerns of those who do not, and I want to work with both parties to pass a more permanent legislative solution. Once Congress passes a bill and I sign it into law, my actions will no longer be necessary.

America is and always will be a nation of immigrants. We were all strangers here once, but our forebears were welcomed and taught that being American is about more than what we look like or where we come from. We are Americans because of our shared commitment to the belief that all of us are created equal, and all of us should have the chance to make of our lives what we will. That is the country we inherited, and it's the one we must leave for future generations.

Sincerely,

