



To: Members of the U.S. Senate

From: Virginia Kase, CEO

Re: Vote "NO" on Immigrant-related Amendments for Budget Resolution

As members of the U.S. Senate, you are currently voting on numerous amendments to the 2021 Budget Resolution and the eventual COVID-19 relief package. However, multiple amendments will hurt mixed-status families and communities and undermine pandemic recovery. The League of Women Voters respectfully urges you to oppose the following amendments:

- **Amendment 54 by Sen. Young:** This amendment would deny COVID relief to citizens in mixed-status families. It would establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to preventing legislation that would allow illegal immigrants to receive Economic Impact Payments or any similar direct, tax-based, temporary financial assistance.
- **Amendment 187 by Sen. Cotton:** This amendment would establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting Federal spending for Medicaid or subsidies for qualified health plans offered on an Exchange established pursuant to title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for aliens that are not lawfully present in the United States.
- **Amendment 550 by Sen. Cotton:** This amendment would establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting federal spending for health care for illegal aliens.
- **Amendment 175 by Sen. Tillis:** This amendment would create a point of order against legislation that would permit illegal immigrants to access nonemergency-related public benefits derived from Federal funds.
- **Amendment 272 by Sen. Tuberville:** This amendment would establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that federally funded COVID-19 vaccinations are allocated to citizens and legal residents.

Regarding the Young Amendment:

The Young Amendment threatens to deny the latest round of tax payments to citizens and other tax filers with Social Security Numbers (SSNs) simply because they live in households that include people who file taxes with Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs.) About 4 in 5 of the affected families include essential workers who are delivering our food, caring for our elderly, and otherwise helping our country to survive the pandemic every day in every way.

Over five million U.S. citizens and lawfully present taxpayers could lose critically needed relief as the COVID pandemic continues to ravage the economy. Senator Rubio and other Republican



Senators have supported measures to ensure that citizens are not denied access to relief and do not face a “marriage penalty” simply because their families include immigrants.

Even worse, this amendment threatens to take away stimulus relief and other tax credits such as the Child Tax Credit (CTC) from U.S. citizens and other lawfully present taxpayers with Social Security Numbers because their households include ITIN filers. Tax credits such as the CTC have strong bipartisan support and a proven track record of lifting families out of poverty and making communities stronger and healthier. The CTC already includes a Social Security Number requirement, but this amendment would punish U.S. citizen children simply for having immigrant family members.

Excluding families that include immigrants from COVID relief harms American families and US citizens, hurts our ability to stop the spread of COVID, and holds back our economic recovery.

None of the stimulus payments enacted so far have included undocumented immigrants and neither has the Biden plan.

Regarding the following 4 immigrant-health related amendments:

Noncitizens who are not lawfully present already do not receive non-emergency Medicaid or ACA subsidies. Many immigrants are ineligible for Medicaid, and one must have 40 work quarters to generally qualify for Medicare. Even when immigrants obtain green cards, many have to face a five-year waiting period before accessing Medicaid. We must work to roll back, not build on, these policies that harm the lives and health of families.

The ongoing pandemic has shown us that access to benefits is critical to the well-being of all of our communities. Immigrants are already heavily restricted from accessing public benefits and we have seen the impact that this has had during the pandemic, especially given immigrants are disproportionately essential workers.

The health of immigrants is the health of our communities and we should not deny someone access to a healthy life because of where they were born. In addition, immigrants pay significant taxes, which fund public assistance programs, yet they are unable to access the benefits that their own taxes pay for.

Georges Benjamin, the head of the American Public Health Association says, "Denying vaccination to undocumented immigrants would be wrong from not just a moral perspective but from a public-health standpoint." Even the Federation for American Immigration Reform says, “Public health experts should determine who should be prioritized for the vaccine.”

The COVID-19 virus does not discriminate based on immigration status, but our policies and actions have led to health disparities in communities across the country. We must prioritize ensuring that those who are most exposed and most vulnerable to this pandemic have access to the vaccine, regardless of where they were born.



We should all work to include more Americans in relief and recovery efforts - not create barriers that will leave frontline immigrant and citizen workers at risk of hunger, homelessness, and disease. America cannot recover from the COVID pandemic if we are not all included in relief. **Please vote against these harmful, discriminatory, and un-American amendments.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Virginia Kase'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Virginia Kase, CEO