

What Immigration Advocates Say about A New Way Forward Act

“The New Way Forward Act will [correct](#) many of the injustices embedded in our immigration laws, which empowered and emboldened the Trump administration's deportation force and abject cruelty towards Black, Brown, and immigrant communities. Immigrants deserve due process and compassion — core tenets of this legislation. The New Way Forward Act is necessary to change the lives of countless immigrants and communities.” — **Madhuri Grewal, Federal Immigration Policy Counsel, ACLU**

“UndocuBlack understands the brutality of America's immigration system first hand and believes that we must overturn the shameful group of 1996 laws that codifies anti-Blackness in immigration. The deliberate criminalization of Black and brown people continues to put our community at a cross-section of systemic racism in criminal and immigration enforcement. The creation of the expansion of terms like conviction, aggravated felony, mandatory detention, and others have gridlocked any future progress for us and hindered our collective freedom. It must end now. UndocuBlack calls for a full repeal of the laws that criminalize migration, encourage racial profiling and ensnare Black and people in the prison to deportation pipeline. All branches of government, including the Executive, are complicit. As we emerge from years of state-sanctioned white supremacist violence, we welcome a New Way Forward, you should too.” - **Patrice Lawrence, Co-Director of UndocuBlack Network**

“Fairness, freedom and opportunity should be at the core of our immigration system. Immigration detention has no place in a just system. People should be able to proceed with their immigration cases in community, not behind bars. The New Way Forward Act takes bold steps in the direction of phasing out immigration detention completely.” - **Setareh Ghandehari, Advocacy Director, Detention Watch Network**

“For more than two decades, the Immigrant Defense Project has fought to undo cruel immigration laws that rely heavily on a criminal legal system that systematically criminalizes and punishes Black and brown people and other communities of color. New Way Forward is a bold rejection of that racist system and a step towards a more just future. We reject criminalization and perpetual punishment, and call for a redirection of resources to support healthy and vibrant communities where no one is disposable. We applaud Rep. Garcia, Rep. Pressley, Rep. Jayapal, Rep. Bass and other members of Congress for standing with our communities.” —**Mizue Aizeki, Interim Executive Director of the Immigrant Defense Project**

“We must finally confront the systemic racism embedded in our immigration system. For decades, this country has used mass detention, criminalization, and deportation to separate families and disrupt communities. In this moment of urgency, Congress must create laws that uphold our values of compassion, fairness, and respect for human rights. The New Way Forward Act is a significant step to addressing the harms caused by the immigration and criminal legal systems.” - **Oliver Merino, Coordinator, Immigrant Justice Network**

“The New Way Forward Act is a powerful step towards ending the devastation caused by the massive immigration enforcement and deportation system. The bill addresses systemic injustice in the immigration system and the criminalization of Black and Brown immigrants. The Immigrant Legal Resource Center looks forward to working with Congress to restore racial equity and strengthen due process and fairness in the immigration system.” – **Nithya Nathan-Pineau, Policy Attorney & Strategist at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center**

“As the new congress debates immigration reform proposals, the New Way Forward legislation goes a long way in undoing the racism that is written into our immigration laws. The right wing xenophobia of the Trump administration exposed a decades long trajectory of nativist bipartisan immigration policy that criminalizes Black and brown immigrant communities and separates families through mass detention and deportation. The bill includes critical provisions that decriminalize migration and reunite families that were separated through a decades long policy of mass deportation.”- **Paromita Shah, Executive Director of Just Futures Law.**

“U.S. immigration law criminalizes people through a series of unjust laws imposed not only on those entering the United States in the hopes of a better life, but also on those members of our community who aren’t yet citizens and who have already endured a racially discriminatory criminal legal system. As long as the U.S. government continues to criminalize migration, immigrant members of our community will continue to be unjustly and doubly penalized. We are grateful to Rep. Garcia, Rep. Pressley, Rep. Jayapal, and the other members of Congress who are working to correct these wrongs.” - **Nayna Gupta, Associate Director of Policy, National Immigrant Justice Center**

“The time is now for bold, transformative change to our immigration laws. For decades our immigration system has taken the worst excesses of a structurally racist criminal legal system and used it to impose double punishment on Black and Brown immigrants and people of color. It’s time for a New Way Forward into a future where all can live freely and without fear in their communities, regardless of the accident of their place of birth. We are grateful to Rep. Garcia, Rep. Pressley, Rep. Jayapal, and all the co-

sponsors of this bill for standing up for what is right and look forward to continuing to work closely with Congress to end the criminalization of immigrants.” - **Sirine Shebaya, Executive Director, National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG) and IJN member.**

"Our country's outdated and inhumane immigration policies need to undergo bold transformation, in which Southeast Asian American communities are no longer targeted and punished because of where they were born or the color of their skin. When people have completed their sentences, we should honor the values of transformation and redemption and give them the opportunity to reunite with their loved ones. The New Way Forward act is a milestone bill for our communities, because it would provide a new vision of justice and equity inclusive of all immigrant communities. SEARAC is excited to continue working with Congress to help advance this bill." - **Katrina Dizon Mariategue, Acting Executive Director, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)**