



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 230

Resolution calling on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant humanitarian parole, of at least two years, to asylum seekers who entered the United States prior to the date this parole is announced.

By Council Members Brewer, Hanif, Cabán and Rivera

Whereas, The path to accessing employment authorization is a lengthy and complex process for asylum seekers; and

Whereas, Due to the complexity of the applications, the processing backlogs, and the 150 day waiting period, asylum seekers may not be able to access employment authorization for over 2 years after their entry into the United States.; and

Whereas, According to a recent report from *Make the Road New York*, in New York City, 97% of asylum seekers surveyed did not have work permits; and

Whereas, Without access to work permits, tens of thousands of asylum seekers do not have the option to work legally in the United States, which could force them to enter an underground employment market where they may be victims of wage theft and other forms of exploitation; and

Whereas, However, asylum seekers who have come to New York City over the past year are also eligible for humanitarian parole; and

Whereas, Often these individuals are fleeing countries suffering from significant political, economic, or humanitarian crises; and

Whereas, Humanitarian parole provides temporary lawful status to individuals for ‘urgent humanitarian reasons’ or ‘significant public benefit’; and

Whereas, Although individuals from countries such as Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba have been included in parole programs specific to their countries, this program only applies to individuals who have entered the United States after October 19, 2022 for Venezuelans, and after January 9, 2023 for Cubans, Venezuelans, and Nicaraguans; and

Whereas, The existing parole program does not encompass the asylum seekers who crossed into the U.S. before those dates or individuals who are part of the recent asylum seeker influx from other countries; and

Whereas, USCIS and the Secretary of Homeland Security have the authority to temporarily designate humanitarian parole and can use their discretion to apply parole to any noncitizen who fulfills the relevant criteria; and

Whereas, Although humanitarian parole is temporary and does not provide a pathway to citizenship, it does not preclude individuals from applying for asylum; and

Whereas, Individuals can immediately apply to employment authorization by filing an I-765 employment authorization application after being paroled; and

Whereas, Asylum seekers in New York City are struggling to navigate a lengthy and complicated process to safely and legally work in the United States; and

Whereas, Without access to work permits, asylum seekers will not be able to provide for themselves or their families; and

Whereas, USCIS can use their discretion for humanitarian parole to give our newest New Yorkers temporary lawful status and an easier pathway to access work in their new city; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York Resolution calling on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant humanitarian parole, of at least two years, to asylum seekers who entered the United States prior to the date this parole is announced.

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