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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 69

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WHEREAS, Under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC §1182(d)(5), the federal government has the discretionary authority to grant parole, permission to temporarily remain in the United States and apply for employment authorization, to any noncitizen "on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit," and the US Supreme Court has recognized this authority as recently as its 2022 decision in Biden v. Texas, 597 U.S. \_\_\_, 142 S. Ct. 2528; and

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WHEREAS, The U.S. government has exercised its parole authority in a wide variety of ways for humanitarian reasons and significant public benefit; and

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WHEREAS, A program known as Military Parole in Place already exists for spouses, parents, or children, who are undocumented, of active-duty or former active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces and the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve; and

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WHEREAS, President Biden has utilized parole more than any other U.S. president in history, extending the program to more than 1 million people over the past three years; and

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1           WHEREAS, Illinois is home to 1.8 million immigrants,  
2           comprising 14% of the State's population, the great majority  
3           of whom are naturalized citizens or legal permanent residents,  
4           according to the Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force Report;  
5           and

6           WHEREAS, Immigration is critical to maintaining Illinois  
7           populations levels, compensating for declines in the  
8           native-born population; and

9           WHEREAS, Immigrants play a key role in the State of  
10          Illinois through cultural, economic, and social contributions,  
11          and the dignity and humanity of our immigrant communities  
12          transcend their substantial role in the labor force; and

13          WHEREAS, The U.S. is experiencing an unprecedented labor  
14          shortage across multiple sectors of our economy that are vital  
15          to our national well-being; and

16          WHEREAS, In the State of Illinois, the fifth largest  
17          economy in the United States, critical industries, such as  
18          manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, agriculture,  
19          healthcare, childcare, senior/home care, hospitality,  
20          construction, and education, are experiencing a prolonged  
21          staffing shortage that is harming their growth and  
22          competitiveness; and

1           WHEREAS, According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as  
2 analyzed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Illinois has, on  
3 average, 76 available workers for every 100 jobs; and

4           WHEREAS, The Illinois Department of Employment Security  
5 (IDES) reports that the largest number of high-demand,  
6 high-wage job openings through 2030 are in occupations that  
7 require short-term or moderate-term on-the-job training,  
8 including over 56,000 annual openings in the restaurant  
9 sector, over 41,000 annual openings for laborers, assemblers,  
10 and maintenance workers, over 59,000 annual openings for  
11 cashiers and retail sales and customer service  
12 representatives, and over 15,000 annual openings in home  
13 health and personal care aides; and

14           WHEREAS, The Illinois Farm Bureau has indicated that local  
15 worker shortages are among the top current challenges for  
16 Illinois farmers, suppliers, and processors, including  
17 locating qualified truck drivers to haul grain and sourcing  
18 enough hands to pick vegetables or manage livestock, and  
19 furthermore, that this shortage in the agricultural supply  
20 chains continues to not only undermine the financial health of  
21 farms in Illinois but, more importantly, threaten food  
22 security, and, ultimately, our national security; and

1           WHEREAS, The Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE)  
2 2023 Unfilled Positions Report shows that school districts in  
3 Illinois reported more unfilled positions in FY23 than they  
4 did in FY22; there continues to be a high demand for  
5 paraprofessionals and teachers, particularly in the City of  
6 Chicago, the Northeast region, and the East Central region,  
7 and the demand for paraprofessionals, who often serve special  
8 education and bilingual students, outweighs the supply; and

9           WHEREAS, The Illinois Nursing Workforce Center reports  
10 that the State is facing an estimated shortfall of nearly  
11 15,000 nurses by 2025 and a deficit of 6,200 physicians by  
12 2030, fueled in part by pandemic burnout and by providers  
13 leaving the profession or retiring, as 52% of the almost  
14 195,000 RNs in Illinois are over the age of 55 with 27%  
15 planning to retire in the next five years and less than 8,000  
16 nurses graduating each year; and

17           WHEREAS, The Migration Policy Institute estimates that  
18 there are more than 12,000 Illinois residents with  
19 international healthcare degrees who are prohibited from  
20 providing care due to licensing or worker authorization; and

21           WHEREAS, The Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
22 reports that many seniors in the Illinois Community Cares  
23 Program (CCP) are already going without the care they should

1 receive due to a severe workforce shortage, and the number of  
2 authorized CCP hours not serviced has increased by 46%; much  
3 of the increased need for home care is associated with the  
4 increasing number of senior Illinoisans, a strong preference  
5 for in-home rather than nursing facility services, and a  
6 strong preference for culturally competent care; IDES projects  
7 that Illinois will need an additional 9,000 home care workers  
8 annually for each of the next ten years; and

9 WHEREAS, In the education sector alone, Illinois school  
10 districts report a high number of unfilled teaching and  
11 paraprofessional positions; and

12 WHEREAS, Teachers and paraprofessionals are essential for  
13 primary and secondary school students in our State,  
14 particularly for special education and bilingual students; and

15 WHEREAS, The existing worker shortage is so great that  
16 many school districts have been forced to contract workers  
17 directly from abroad, even though long-term immigrants are  
18 well-suited to fill these positions; and

19 WHEREAS, Despite the State's critical need for labor,  
20 nearly half a million Illinoisans who are undocumented are  
21 still unable to legally work; and

1           WHEREAS, Nearly 30% of Illinoisans who are undocumented  
2 have been residing and contributing to the workforce in the  
3 U.S. for over 20 years; and

4           WHEREAS, The majority of residents in Illinois who are  
5 undocumented reside in mixed status families with U.S. citizen  
6 and lawful permanent resident family members; and

7           WHEREAS, Long-term immigrant workers in Illinois who are  
8 undocumented empower key sectors of the economy, including  
9 manufacturing, farming, food production, senior/home care,  
10 child care, healthcare, education, construction, hospitality,  
11 and warehousing, contributing to our State's prosperity and  
12 also contributing approximately \$1.5 billion in taxes per  
13 year; and

14           WHEREAS, Granting work permits will provide a significant  
15 public benefit to Illinois' economy by expanding the formal  
16 workforce to include all who have the eligibility to work,  
17 while increasing taxes paid to the State; and

18           WHEREAS, The exclusion from federal benefits leaves  
19 long-term immigrant workers who are undocumented and their  
20 families vulnerable and forces the State of Illinois to spend  
21 our tax dollars to provide critical health care and other  
22 benefits; and

1           WHEREAS, Illinois provides limited benefits and resources  
2           for individuals who are undocumented, including limited  
3           healthcare coverage for low-income qualifying immigrants, much  
4           of which would be unnecessary if the undocumented had work  
5           permits and could secure such benefits through their  
6           employment; and

7           WHEREAS, Granting work permits would allow workers to earn  
8           a fair wage and secure benefits, including health insurance;  
9           and

10          WHEREAS, Granting work permits would aid in the  
11          enforcement of existing labor laws, thereby reducing the  
12          exploitation of our lowest wage workers, the majority of whom  
13          are workers of color and immigrants; and

14          WHEREAS, Work permits would enable tens of thousands of  
15          students in Illinois who are undocumented and without the  
16          protection of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to  
17          support themselves and their families, fund their continued  
18          education, and contribute to the State and national economies;  
19          and

20          WHEREAS, Despite the protections Illinois has enacted to  
21          protect long-term immigrant workers who are undocumented, they

1 continue to be at risk of deportation, family separation,  
2 exploitation at work, and exclusion from health care and other  
3 benefits due to their immigration status, all of which  
4 negatively affects Illinois' economy and public safety and the  
5 quality-of-life in our communities; and

6 WHEREAS, For all of these reasons, work permits for  
7 long-term immigrant workers would be a significant public  
8 benefit to the State of Illinois; and

9 WHEREAS, Only the federal government can issue work  
10 permits to people who are undocumented under its parole  
11 authority; and

12 WHEREAS, Undocumented immigrants in Illinois and  
13 throughout the United States ultimately need permanent  
14 solutions, such as updating the federal registry program and  
15 other broad legalization legislation, that would enable them  
16 to gain permanent lawful status and more fully live with  
17 dignity and participate in the economic, civic, and social  
18 life of our nation; and

19 WHEREAS, The U.S. Congress and the White House must act  
20 urgently to pass such permanent solutions; and

21 WHEREAS, Short of Congressional action, the White House



1 and the Department of Homeland Security must use all available  
2 tools to protect and improve the lives of immigrants as  
3 members of our community; therefore, be it

4       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
5 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
6 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the President of the  
7 United States to authorize the DHS Secretary to establish a  
8 program to evaluate parole and work authorization on a  
9 case-by-case basis for long-term immigrant workers who are  
10 undocumented and residing in Illinois to address this State's  
11 critical need for labor and to secure the family life for tens  
12 of thousands of mixed status families in Illinois and to work  
13 with DHS and the US Department of Justice to zealously defend  
14 any such program from potential legal challenges; and be it  
15 further

16       RESOLVED, That we urge the Governor to work with federal  
17 partners to urge, by all possible means, the establishment of  
18 such a parole and work authorization program for the long-term  
19 immigrant population who are undocumented and residing in  
20 Illinois; and be it further

21       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
22 delivered to the Office of the President of the United States  
23 and to all members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation.