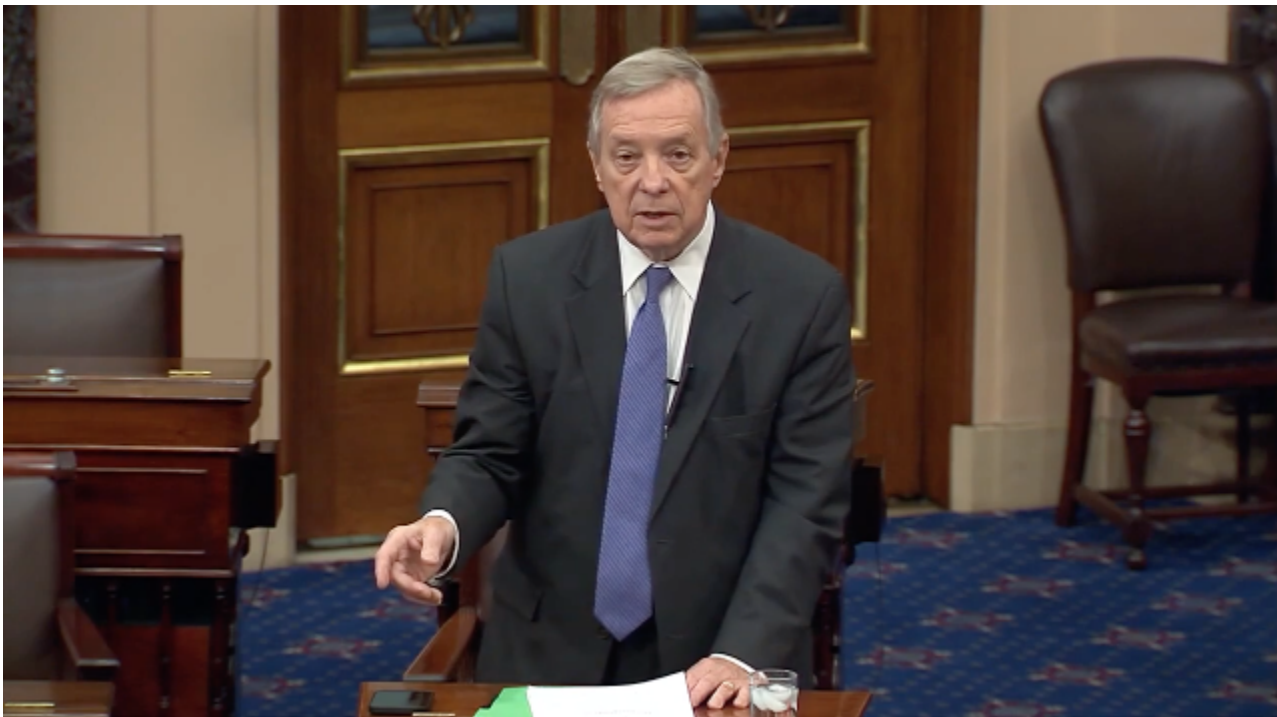


Durbin, Padilla Introduce Legislation To Broaden Legal Pathway To Citizenship

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety, introduced legislation to expand a pathway to legal permanent resident (LPR) status for millions of long-term U. S. residents. The *Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929* would update the existing Registry statute so that an immigrant may qualify for LPR status if they have lived in the U.S. continuously for at least seven years and are of good moral character. The bill is also cosponsored by Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Ben Ray Luján (D-NM).

The legislation would provide a much-needed pathway to a green card for up to eight million people, including Dreamers, forcibly displaced people, Temporary Protected Status holders, children of long-term visa holders who face deportation, essential workers, and highly skilled members of our workforce such as H-1B visa holders who have been waiting years for a green card to become available. According to [FWD.us estimates](https://www.fwd.us/estimates), if the undocumented individuals covered in this bill became citizens, they would contribute approximately \$83 billion to the U.S. economy annually and about \$27 billion in taxes.

“Our immigration system is deeply broken and has prevented many long-term U.S. residents from earning citizenship from the country they now call home. We cannot rely on outdated immigration laws to address modern day immigration,” said Durbin. “This legislation would allow immigrants to claim lawful permanent resident status after living in the U.S. for seven years and demonstrating good moral character. Updating the existing Registry statute would give immigrants, who have been working and contributing to our country for nearly a decade, a sense of certainty and stability that everyone deserves.”

“Our outdated immigration system is hurting countless people and holding back America’s economy,” said Padilla. “My bill would update the Registry cutoff date for the first time in more than 35 years so that more immigrants can apply for legal permanent residence. This could have a profound impact on millions of immigrants, some who have been living, working, and contributing to the United States for decades, by allowing them to live freely without the fear of an uncertain future.”

Section 249 of the *Immigration and Nationality Act*, also known as the Registry, gives the Secretary of Homeland Security the discretion to register certain individuals for LPR status if they have been in the country since a certain date and meet other requirements. Section 249 was first codified in 1929 and Congress has modified it four times, most recently in 1986. No changes have been made since 1986 and the cutoff date for eligibility remains January 1, 1972, more than 50 years ago.

The *Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929* would:

- Amend the existing Registry statute by moving the eligibility cutoff date so that an immigrant may qualify for lawful permanent resident status if they have been in the U.S. for at least seven years before filing an application under Registry.
- Preempt the need for further congressional action by making the eligibility cutoff rolling, instead of tying it to a specific date, as it is now.

Companion legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren (D-CA-19).

Full text of the bill is available [here](#).