

My name is Marco Bohorquez and I'm the Director of Operations and Workforce Development of the Community Resource Center. Our organization is a 501 C nonprofit social services and advocacy organization dedicated to empowering and integrating new immigrants in Westchester County, NY. I am testifying today in support of replenishing the Excluded Workers Fund with \$3 Billion and establishing a permanent alternative to unemployment for excluded workers.

The coronavirus pandemic has revealed the lack of power far too many U.S. workers experience in the workplace. Many of these workers are required to work without protective equipment. They have no effective right to refuse dangerous assignments and are not even being granted premium pay, despite working in difficult and dangerous conditions. Policymakers must address the needs of working people in relief and recovery legislation.

As an immigrant, I understand and recognize the important role that our immigrant workforce have in our state economy. Those workers are essential to other workers to perform their jobs. Thousand of those workers were left out of the Excluded Workers Fund because the funding ran out quickly. Excluded workers didn't receive any financial assistance from the government so the Excluded Worker Fund is their only hope to recover. This is why it's so important for the state legislature to replenish the fund with \$3 Billion more.

Workers can lose their jobs at any time. But not all workers are eligible for unemployment insurance. We need to ensure that all workers especially vulnerable workers such as domestic worker, day laborers, and cash earners have access to safety net during time of crisis. Vulnerable workers shouldn't be scrambling around to provide for their families. For this reason, I ask the legislature to include a permanent alternative program similar to the unemployment for vulnerable workers.

By replenishing the Excluded Workers Fund with an additional \$3 billion dollars, in the Lower Hudson Valley it would mean that New York State can serve an additional 13,000 workers benefiting and \$205 million economic boost.

It is vital that the issues excluded workers face, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, are not forgotten past this moment of emergency relief programs. A permanent alternative to unemployment for excluded workers is fair, the safety net that excluded workers require now is also one they need in the future on a permanent basis, giving them and their families the security they deserve. For this reason, we need to create a permanent fund based of the Excluded No More legislation.

Cordially,

Marco Bohorquez
Director of Operations and Workforce Development
Community Resource Center