



CARECEN

LATINO RESOURCE AND JUSTICE CENTER

Strengthening the Latino Community in the Washington, D.C. Area

January 24, 2021

The Central American Resource Center, CARECEN, established in 1981, is an immigration law legal service provider that also provides direct services in housing and citizenship, and promotes empowerment, civil rights advocacy, and civic training for Latinos.

CARECEN urges the passage of the Universal Representation bill for immigrants facing deportation. The importance of counsel for an immigrant in a removal proceeding cannot be understated. An immigrant who is forced to return to their home country could be facing the deprivation of life, liberty and property, and should not face such a proceeding without the assistance of counsel. Deportation can mean returning to a country where an immigrant's life or liberty could be at risk. Furthermore, an immigrant that is forced to abandon their life in the US could be separated from their families who are dependent on them for financial and emotional support. Such immigrants could also be forced to abandon a home, other property, businesses, jobs and the lives that they have built for themselves in the US. The effect on the families of immigrants is likewise profound and could lead to drastic results. Due to these possible dire consequences, Immigrants facing deportation require representation for a fair proceeding and an advocate that can navigate the incredibly complicated immigration laws to ensure that any possible relief from deportation is sought.

Studies by the American Immigration Council confirm what every immigration practitioner already knows...immigrants with representation are more likely to succeed in their cases and are also more likely to be released from detention. In turn, the ability to fight one's case outside of detention is also correlated with more successful outcomes.

We urge that the legislature take quick action to ensure that immigrants in Maryland who may be gravely affected by their deportation, have access to justice through representation in removal proceedings. True justice cannot exist without it.

Sincerely,

Genevieve Augustin
Director of Legal Services

Cc: Personnel File

CARECEN

1460 Columbia Road, N.W. Suite C-1, Washington, D.C. 20009
Tel (202)328-9799 • Fax (202)328-7894 • www.carecencdc.org

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IN MEMORIAM

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(1933–1989)
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