

Maria fled Venezuela with her two young children, escaping economic collapse and political turmoil that left her unable to feed her family. After a dangerous journey to the U.S., she now faces an uncertain future, living only as a temporary resident with limited access to work, healthcare, and security. America was built on the values of opportunity and asylum, and passing legislation to grant permanent status to Venezuelan refugees is not just compassionate—it is a moral and strategic necessity.

The Venezuelan refugee crisis remains one of the world's largest yet most overlooked. As of August 2023, CSIS reports that nearly 7.7 million have fled, many facing perilous journeys. Even in the U.S., most remain in temporary status with limited rights. Maria's story is not unique—as a global humanitarian leader, the U.S. must provide a direct path to permanent residency, ending this cycle of uncertainty. Moreover, Amnesty International emphasizes in October of 2023 that returning Venezuelans, with temporary status, given the risks to their lives, violates international law.

First, let's address the humanitarian imperative. Some argue that admitting more migrants threatens security, but this fear is unfounded. Venezuelan refugees aren't coming to participate in crime; rather, Harvard International Review (August 2024) highlights that poverty and lack of education—not migration status—are the key factors pushing individuals into criminal networks. By denying a secure path to residency, we only exacerbate these issues. This bill prevents that by offering structured support, ensuring access to stable housing, employment programs, and community integration. This approach mitigates risks while reinforcing security, proving that humanitarian action and safety go hand in hand. Additionally, Rep. K argues that most Venezuelans aren't able to fill labor shortages because of limited work opportunities, but guess what? That is exactly what this legislation solves.

Second, Rep. ___ & Rep. ___, you argue that we don't have enough funds to host refugees, apart from the fact that saving lives completely outweighs this, even when we take you at your highest ground, this legislation benefits the U.S. economy. History proves that refugees revitalize economies by filling these gaps, starting businesses, and adding cultural diversity. According to Global Refuge, migrants have historically contributed more to the economy than they take in public benefits. Third Way in November 2023 further confirms that Venezuelan migrants support themselves and boost economic growth when given work authorization. This is tackled by facilitating work visa approvals, allowing Venezuelan migrants to sustain themselves while contributing to the economy. Meanwhile, Section 3C incentivizes higher education and workforce development, ensuring a qualified labor force that strengthens the U.S. industries rather than burdening them.

In conclusion, this legislation upholds our values, strengthens our economy, and provides millions like Maria a pathway to stability and success. It ensures security while reinforcing the U.S. as a leader in humanitarian efforts. It's time to act—affirm today's resolution.