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Every day, undocumented people trying to stay on the right path are filling out paperwork they know they need to lead their daily lives in this country. They have often lived in the community for many years, paying taxes and staying out of trouble.

You probably have people like them in your community, you might know them well. Many are exactly the kind of person you would want as an American citizen, and in fact, lead lives valuing the same things that many other Americans value: faith, family, children, job security, safety in daily life, a supportive community. The commonality among all the diverse cases is that the prices of USCIS services is a hardship to pay for most hard-working families.

In several examples around the world, insightful folks are realizing that the way out of poverty, and towards justice for all, is collective efforts focused on caring for people, not charging them.

On behalf of myself and the many concerned citizens I have talked to that feel similarly, I urge you to consider a more permanent source of funding for USCIS than the very people driven here by necessity, now trying to become American.

Tess Wilkes