

## 40-mile walk for immigration reform kicks off Saturday in Petaluma

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**Section:** STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

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**Byline:** Jeremy Hay, The Press Democrat

### Body

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Aug. 4—Dozens of North Bay residents are set to walk 11 miles from Petaluma to Novato Saturday, the first leg of a three-day march to San Francisco calling for sweeping changes to immigration law.

The "All in for Registry" march is one of at least 10 planned nationwide — in cities including Los Angeles, Miami and Washington, D.C. — to rally support for a bill in Congress that would allow as many as 8 million undocumented immigrants to apply for legal permanent residency.

The marchers from Petaluma, after overnight stops in Novato and Mill Valley, are to reach San Francisco on Monday. There they will join another group arriving from San Jose, meeting for a 4 p.m. rally at the Federal Building.

The 40-mile North Bay march was organized by the Northern California Coalition for Just Immigration Reform, which is made up of dozens of immigrant rights groups including ALMAS LIBRES, a Sonoma County organization of immigrant and Indigenous women.

Coalition members wanted to "highlight the urgency for the passage of this bill," H.R. 1511, said Renee Saucedo, program director of ALMAS LIBRES.

"They're exhausted from having to hide in the shadows in fear of being deported when all they're doing is breaking their backs working and sustaining many industries, such as agriculture and hospitality," Saucedo said.

Known as the Registry Bill, H.R. 1511 would be the most significant immigration-related legislation since 1986, when any immigrant who'd entered the country before 1982 became eligible for amnesty under the Immigration Reform and Control Act signed by President Ronald Reagan.

The Registry Bill was reintroduced into the House of Representatives this year by Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-San Jose. It would update a 1929 law and make most immigrants who have lived in the United States for at least seven years eligible to apply for permanent residency.

"No more suffering," Socorro Diaz, a leader of NCCJIR and of ALMAS LIBRES, said in a statement. "We ask that Congress pass H.R. 1511 so that migrants have a reasonable process to apply for residency, and they may come out of the shadows of work exploitation and fear."

## 40-mile walk for immigration reform kicks off Saturday in Petaluma

The Saturday march leaves from Petaluma's Walnut Park, 201 Walnut St., at 9 a.m.

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## US Senators make another attempt to broaden the pathway to a green card

The Times of India (TOI)

August 1, 2023 Tuesday

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### Body

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MUMBAI: Last week, US Senator Alex Padilla introduced a bill to expand a pathway to permanent residency for millions of long-term US residents. 'The Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929', would update the existing Registry statute so that an immigrant may qualify for lawful permanent resident status (green card) if they have lived in the US continuously for at least seven years before filing the application and are of good moral character. The Senate version of the bill is co-sponsored by Dick Durbin, Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker and Ben Ray Lujan. In the House of Representatives a companion legislation has been introduced by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren. The legislation would provide a much-needed pathway to a green card for more than 8 million people, including dreamers, forcibly displaced citizens (TPS holders), children of long-term visa holders, 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. Owing to the existence of a per country cap of 7% for green cards, the Indian diaspora is badly impacted. According to a recent study done by David J Bier, Immigration Policy Analyst at Cato Institute, a Washington headquartered think-tank, the employment based green card backlog for skilled Indians had reached 7.19 lakh in September 2021, with an expected wait time of 90 years (or up to 46 years after adjusting for death and ageing out of those in the queue). More than 2 lakh Indians who are mired in this backlog are likely to die before they can conceivably receive a green card (absent a change in the law). Only about half of the pending Indian immigrants will likely receive green cards under current law.

Another 90,000 children of immigrants-mainly Indians-will 'age out' of green card eligibility during their waits, adds the study. TOI has in the past in several articles pointed out the woes of H-1B families. Children of non-immigrant visa holders, like H-1Bs are forced to self-deport when they turn 21 or have to transit to another visa such as an international student visa (F visa). Last September, this bill was introduced, but it did not fructify. Thus, a renewed attempt is being made. 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 lawful permanent resident 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. This Bill aims to 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 US for at least seven years before filing an application under Registry. It also aims to 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. Voices of the Senators "America's outdated immigration system is hurting countless people and holding back our country and our economy," said Senator Padilla. "My bill would update the Registry cutoff date for the first time in more than 37 years so that more immigrants are eligible to apply for permanent resident status. This would have a profound impact on millions of immigrants, some of whom have been living,

## US Senators make another attempt to broaden the pathway to a green card

working, and contributing to the US for decades, by allowing them to live freely without the fear of an uncertain future." "Our immigration system is deeply broken and has prevented many long-term US residents from earning citizenship from the country they now call home. We cannot rely on antiquated laws to dictate modern day immigration policy," said Senator Durbin. "This legislation would allow immigrants to claim lawful permanent resident status after living in the US 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, the sense of certainty and stability that everyone deserves." "Millions of immigrants have made crucial contributions to the US, only to be met with a broken system that shuts the doors on them," said Senator Warren. "Expanding the registry pathway to citizenship for people who have lived in this country for years will provide the stability and opportunity they deserve." "Immigrant communities contribute and enrich our society," said Senator Lujan. "Yet, our current immigration system leaves countless lives in limbo and prevents undocumented immigrants from fully participating in our economy. That's why I'm proud to join my colleagues to reintroduce this legislation that updates the Registry cutoff date for the first time in 35 years, providing a pathway for millions of immigrants to adjust their status and unlock their boundless potential." For Reprint Rights: [timescontent.com](https://timescontent.com)

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## Concerns over privacy mount after LS passes Registration of Births & Deaths (Amendment) Bill

Siasat Daily (India)

August 2, 2023 Wednesday

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**Dateline:** Hyderabad

### Body

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Hyderabad, Aug. 2 -- The Lok Sabha on Tuesday, August 2, passed the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2023. The legislation aims to create a database recording all registered births and deaths, which the government dubs as the 'next step to digitize governance'.

The Bill comes as the first-ever amendment to over 50-year-old Registration of Births and Deaths Bill, 1969, which dealt with the registration of births and deaths in the country. It also describes a hierarchical functions of the registrars and sub-registrars, in charge of documenting and maintain the death and births.

What the amendment entails

The bill, which was tabled by the Central government during the ongoing session of the Parliament on July 26, makes the birth certificate official single-document proof of date and place of birth of an individual born on or after the date of commencement of the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

Moreover, the birth certificate will be a mandatory document required for admission into educational institutions, issuance of Aadhaar number and driver's license, registration of marriage, preparation of voter's list, application for jobs in state or Central government, public sector, or government-affiliated organisations, and any other purpose the Central government deems necessary.

It also requires all medical institutions to provide a certificate of death, stating the cause, to the registrar, with a copy to the nearest relative. In case of a death outside of an institution, the last doctor that had examined the deceased is required to submit the certificate of death to the registrar, to be updated to the database.

The bill also asks for the collection of Aadhaar numbers of parents, for registration of births. It also aims to 'facilitate and streamline' the issuance of birth and death certificates by digitizing it and ensuring electronic delivery of the certificates. Additionally, the bill ought to streamline the process of registration of adopted, orphaned, abandoned, surrogate child, as well as a child of a single parent or unwed mother.

The bill also defined the hierarchy of the registrars - the registrar general of India is tasked with maintaining the database of registered deaths and births at the National level. While the chief registrar is obligated to maintain the database at the state level, using the portal approved by the registrar general.

## Concerns over privacy mount after LS passes Registration of Births & Deaths (Amendment) Bill

Furthermore, the amendment states that the database of registered deaths and births will be shared with authorities maintaining population register, electoral rolls, Adhaar, ration card, passport, license, property registration and other databases at the national level.

### Privacy concerns mount

While keeping up with conforming to the latest technology is essential in this fast-paced world, it is equally important to ensure the safety and privacy of the citizens of the country.

Concerns have already been raised in courts regarding the use of Adhaar in multiple databases, potentially putting at risk the privacy of citizens. As it potentially violates Section 29 of the Aadhaar Act, which restricts sharing of information for any purpose other than generation of Aadhaar numbers and authentication.

The compulsion to present the birth certificate to access basic necessities is unfair to the citizens and gives them very little control over their privacy, threatening to violate their fundamental rights.

The possibility of disproportionate or biased use of the databases to target any individual or a group has alarmed many privacy advocates and human rights activists.

### 'Backdoor NRC'

The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was passed amid protests from the Opposition leaders. Speaking in Lok Sabha, AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi likened the propositions mentioned in the bill to the National Registry of Citizens (NRC). He said the government was trying to bring NRC through the backdoor by passing the amendment bill.

Calling the government a 'Jhaanku uncle' (peeping Tom), he said, "The government feels entitled to collect our personal and private data and use it for its own end. But when members sought the data for COVID-related deaths, the government said they had no data available."

Talking about the centralised database, Owaisi said that it could be used to create mass surveillance infrastructure, which can be used against citizens, discriminatorily. "The government can target and delete genuine voters thereby creating an exclusive criteria for the 2026 delimitation exercise," he added.

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