

## **Friends of immigrants especially but not only undocumented immigrants:**

From Facebook post by Attorney Virginia Raymond, 12/13/2024

If you want to help your undocumented immigrant friends, help them start gathering proof that they have been in the U.S. for two (2) years or more (the longer the better); help them start putting this proof together (preferably in chronological order; I recommend at least one document for every quarter of every year); and offer to help make copies so that there are multiple notebooks of this.

Get together proof of addresses: specific addresses with dates.

Get together birth certificates and medical records (vaccination records are good) and kids' report cards. Class photos. Soccer team photos. Notes from teachers.

Apartment leases. Rent receipts.

Parking tickets. Warnings that electricity or gas or whatever utilities are going to be turned off.

This is all golden.

Affidavits are better than nothing, but the more specific the better, and with information about the affiant: how do you know the person, where do you live, what's your immigration/nationality status, what's your phone number.

\*\* I should have explained: 2 years is a cutoff for regular removal proceedings (with an immigration judge in immigration court and some minimal due process) versus expedited removal (no immigration court, no immigration judge, zero due process, UNLESS the person claims United States citizenship or manifests a fear of being returned to home country so that they may have a credible fear interview to see if they \*might\* have a claim for asylum). I am speaking very generally and in shorthand. If person has been here 2 years or more they have at least a few rights (unless the person has been removed aka deported before). \*\*

Expedited removal can whisk your friends away without them ever seeing an immigration judge.

If your friends have been here two years or more, can they prove it?

Also be talking with your friends about what if the should be unthinkable but think about it, what if you got deported, who would you trust to take care of your kids if you don't want to take them back to a place that's not fit or worse, a place you fled because it's dangerous. Start thinking about it. Start talking about it. Begin making contingency plans and drawing up documents/designation of guardian in case need arises or whatever your state law provides for.

**ONE MORE THING:** I hope you do not need to go to the hospital in Texas. But if you do, and someone asks you what your citizenship/immigration status is, please respectfully decline to answer.

(edited by Elvia R Arriola)