



The Bell Policy Center

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Remove Barriers to Certain Public Opportunities (SB21-199)

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Veterans & Military Affairs

Nazia Hasan, Policy Analyst • April 13, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am Nazia Hasan, policy analyst at the Bell Policy Center. The Bell Policy Center provides policymakers, advocates, and the public with reliable resources to create a practical policy agenda that promotes economic mobility for every Coloradan.

Bell Policy Center supports [SB21-199](#), which advances equity and inclusion by eliminating barriers for undocumented immigrants to obtain professional and occupational licenses and access to state and locally funded public benefits.

According to New American Economy's 2019 research, more than 160,700 undocumented immigrants live in Colorado and collectively contribute to [\\$156.5 million in state and local taxes and \\$272.8 million in federal taxes](#) a year. Like their peers living and working in the U.S., undocumented immigrants pay:

- Sales taxes when they purchase goods
- Property taxes on their homes or indirectly as renters
- Many file income taxes using Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs), or have taxes deducted directly from their paychecks

Despite their contributions into public benefit systems, undocumented immigrants cannot access benefits equal to U.S. citizens and are often excluded from welfare policies.

Undocumented immigrants also contribute to our economy by [filling critical gaps](#) in our labor force and make up 4 percent of Colorado's workforce. For example, Colorado has a shortage of licensed child care providers to adequately meet the needs of working families. Undocumented immigrants have played a vital role to families who otherwise were unable to access child care. By easing undocumented immigrants' pathway to obtaining a child care license and access to child care subsidies like Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), Colorado will be able to increase access to licensed care for working families.

By eliminating barriers for undocumented immigrants, Colorado can support their families build upward economic mobility. Not only is it beneficial for Colorado's economy to support undocumented immigrants, but it is the right thing to do. Bell Policy Center supports SB21-199 because it can move Colorado one step closer to a more equitable tax code and advance inclusive policies.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.