



Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Building Unity, Power, & Justice Since 2002

coloradoimmigrant.org Phone: (303) 922-3344

February 21, 2024

Finance and Governance Committee
Councilwoman Jamie Torres, President
City Council of Denver
1437 Bannock St Rm 451,
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Finance and Governance Committee,

Subject: Support for Charter Change Regarding Citizenship Requirement for Classified Service Applicants

We, at the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC), are writing to express our full support for the proposed charter change regarding the citizenship requirement for applicants to the Classified Service, including the Police and Fire departments. CIRC has long advocated to remove barriers and expand opportunities for Colorado's immigrant residents. We believe that removing this unnecessary criterion is not only a step towards greater inclusivity within the City of Denver but also aligns with the values of diversity, fairness, and inclusion.

The current language in Charter Section § 9.4.1 excludes qualified non-citizen residents who are eligible to work in the United States. By restricting the candidate pool to only U.S. citizens, the city is inadvertently excluding individuals who possess the skills, qualifications, and dedication necessary to serve in these vital roles.

1. Providing Equal Opportunities: All individuals who are eligible to work in the United States should have an equal opportunity to pursue a career in public service, including law enforcement and firefighting. This charter change will ensure that qualified non-citizen residents have a fair chance of employment in our city.

2. Reduction of Employment Discrimination: The current citizenship requirement perpetuates discrimination against non-citizen residents, depriving them of the chance to pursue their



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chosen career paths based solely on their immigration status. Eliminating this requirement is a crucial step towards creating a more equitable society.

With the passage of HB 23-1143, Colorado has demonstrated a growing recognition of the important contributions of non-citizen residents in our state. We urge the City Council of Denver to support the proposed charter change and take decisive action to remove the citizenship requirement for applicants to the Classified Service. By doing so, Denver will reaffirm its commitment to equality, justice, and the fundamental principle that every individual, regardless of immigration status, deserves an equal opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely,

Chau Phan
Denver Organizer
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