

# Rio Grande

## GUARDIAN

### International News Service

#### **COMMENTATORS: U.S. NOT PRODUCING ENOUGH FUTURE WORKERS TO KEEP ECONOMY STRONG**

By Luis Montoya  
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SAN JUAN, Texas - A discussion has taken place between Justin Yancy, president of the Texas Business Leadership Council, and Rio Grande Guardian columnist Samuel Freeman over President Biden's recent executive action to protect Dreamers and noncitizens spouses of citizens.

The Texas Business Leadership Council is a network of Texas based CEOs and senior business executives that seeks to advance a long-term vision of a prosperous Texas in a globally competitive business environment.

The correspondence started with a guest column from Yancy in the Guardian titled, "Biden must enact affirmative relief measures to protect long term undocumented." Click here to read the column.

To which Freeman responded:

"Mr. Yancy, I certainly agree with everything you said in your recent Rio Grande Guardian column on immigration and the value of immigrant workers for the Texas and national economy.

"There are a few important facts I wish you had included in your column that would have been evidence supporting your arguments. First, the U.S. population is stagnant with birth rates only slightly more than death rates. Consequently, the U.S. is not producing enough future workers for our economy to remain strong and not begin actual contraction because of insufficient workers to fill available jobs. As you note, we already are experiencing this. Second, as the Baby Boomer generation retires and dies, this inadequacy of sufficient workers is only going to worsen. Third, as you note, the only way to fill the vacancies we have now and to fill the increasing number of vacancies in the future is to change our immigration policies and laws to enable more people to migrate LEGALLY to the U.S.

"Certainly you are correct; we must control our borders. In particular, we need to prevent drug and human trafficking. With our antiquated immigration laws and so many resources being squandered on preventing illegal entries because we do not permit enough LEGAL entries, we are doing a poor job of preventing entry of trafficked drugs and people. We need more enlightened policies

and policies that better fit the employment needs of both Texas and the nation.

"I suspect you will get some push back from anti-immigrant racists. I hope not much, but I also hope you will not allow these people who only pretend to care about our wonderful nation to intimidate you. I applaud your courage for speaking out in favor of our immigrant brothers and sisters."

To which Yancy replied:

"Dr. Freeman, apologies for the delay. Thank you for your note.

"I agree that the points you make below are strong arguments and I have made them in other venues. It's a shame that an issue like immigration has become so politically divisive but it is and we plan to keep advocating with facts until a comprehensive plan is approved by Congress.

"Congress moves very slowly, until it doesn't. Meaning that I continue to hope that the tides will turn sooner than later. Certainly a Majority Leader Cornyn in January 2025 would give us the best opportunity we've had in quite a while.

"Thanks again."

The Texas Business Leadership Council commented on President Biden's executive actions the day they were announced. Here are Yancy's comments:

"At a time when we have more job postings in Texas than available workers, we must maximize all available resources and today's executive action will provide a needed boost to our workforce by providing lawful protections and work authorization for long-term undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens. I am constantly hearing from Texas business leaders about the need for additional labor and this executive order supports what's best for Texas employers and the economic health of our state."

Here is what the rest of the TBLC's press release stated:

"Today the President is authorizing an executive order to protect undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens and provide work authorization that will help support labor market needs. Previous policy allowed for undocumented spouses to apply for lawful permanent residency - a status they already qualify for - but they had to leave the country

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to do so. As a result of the executive order, undocumented spouses and their children can “parole in place” while applying for residency.

“Across the country there are approximately 500,000 undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens that are eligible for this affirmative relief with more than 20 percent in Texas. Recipients will now be protected from deportation and can apply for work authorization, similar to successful programs like military parole in place or DACA. In Texas, these individuals who have spent an average of 22 years in the U.S. will add an estimated \$1.5 billion to the economy and more than \$500 million in tax revenue annually through the actions taken today by the Administration.”

“Texas is a thriving state for business, but recent data demonstrates that the labor market is tight. In April, reports showed that we tripled the U.S. job growth rate, setting records for the most filled jobs and the highest number of employed residents. To sustain our strong economy in Texas, we need to make sure that we keep our labor force growing – and that would not be possible without the contributions of the 3.3 million immigrant workers who call our state home.”