



JONATHAN G. JACOBSON
104th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Cities
Corporations, Authorities
and Commissions
Election Law
Insurance
Labor
Local Governments

May 22, 2023

Hon. Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20500

Re: Working Papers for Asylum Seekers in the Town of Newburgh

Dear President Biden:

As you know, New York State has been inundated with asylum seekers. A little more than two weeks ago, New York City Mayor Eric Adams began sending busloads of migrants north to hotels in multiple locations, including the Town of Newburgh in Orange County. As the municipality's Assembly representative, I am adding my voice to that of Governor Hochul and Mayor Adams, asking that you alleviate this difficult situation by taking action now to allow these asylum seekers to work legally in the United States.

New York City is currently providing the asylum seekers, all able-bodied men, with food and shelter at two local hotels. But these men do not want to be cared for by our government. They are here to work so they might provide for themselves and build productive lives here in our country. Unfortunately, they are unable to do so because they lack the ability to work here legally.

As our economy continues to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, local employers have struggled to fill vacancies. Whether it's food service, farming, home healthcare, or a range of other fields, employers are desperate for workers. I have personally received multiple phone calls from business owners asking how they might hire some of the asylum seekers now residing in Newburgh. Again and again, I must tell them that there is no legal way to hire these workers until the federal government provides waivers that will allow them to work.

There are approximately 300 asylum seekers residing in two hotels in the Town of Newburgh. Yesterday, at least one bus of asylum seekers arrived at a hotel in the nearby Town of Poughkeepsie in Dutchess County. Mayor Adams has said that these men will be located in our area for as long as four months.

These men do not want to break the law, but there are bad players who are already seeking to take advantage of this situation. An asylum seeker from Venezuela told one of my staff that he had been offered \$5/hour to work under the table at a construction site. She advised him to turn down this exploitative offer.

I understand that you may be concerned that these asylum seekers will take jobs away from American workers. I can assure you that this is simply not true. By taking prompt action and granting these men the opportunity to work, you will be helping these men and our local economy by alleviating our ongoing workforce shortage.

Thank you for attention to this urgent matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan G. Jacobson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

JONATHAN G. JACOBSON

cc: Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Rep. Patrick Ryan