Center for an Urban Future

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Commentary/Op-Ed - August 2020

Staying a city of immigrants: Newcomers keep us strong

In this New York Daily News op-ed, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles urges the city to take initiative to prevent an exodus of New York immigrants, many of whom are facing unprecedented economic hardships, but are critical to the city's recovery.

by Jonathan Bowles

This economic crisis — with its disproportionate impact on low-wage fields like restaurants, hotels and nail salons — could hasten the departures of working New Yorkers, especially immigrant New Yorkers. In many communities, more than half of immigrants have lost their main source of income as a result of the crisis, and only a shockingly small number of the city's immigrants have benefited from the federal government's cash relief efforts. In this op-ed for the New York Daily News, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles urges the city to prevent an exodus and continue attracting new immigrants by creating a local Excluded Workers Fund and a displaced workers voucher program, opening up city parks for street vendors, and developing a multilingual marketing campaign that urges all New Yorkers to remain in New York.

You can read the op-ed here.

This op-ed builds on the Center's extensive research on immigrants and its recent work on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including Under Threat & Left Out: NYC'S Immigrants and the Coronavirus Crisis and a recent virtual policy forum series, "What NYC's Immigrant- and Minority-Owned Small Businesses Need Now."

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