

**Congressman Kweisi Mfume (MD-07)**  
**Statement for the Record**  
**April 16, 2024**

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The United States has long been a beacon of hope and a safe haven for those fleeing persecution, violence, and hardship. I am disheartened by the rampant vilification of the immigrant community and the lack of regard for the major contributions immigrants have made to our nation.

I speak on this topic with a heavy heart, having recently lost six men to the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse in my Congressional District. While the stories and lives of these men have not yet been fully told, we do know that they were fathers, brothers, and sons. Their six grieving families can never get enough of our condolences, our prayers, or our sympathies.

Immigrants take on some of the most demanding professions in the country. For instance, the construction, agriculture, and meat processing industries rely heavily on immigrant labor. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, undocumented immigrants make up more than half of hired labor on farms, and fifteen percent of hired labor in the construction industry.

The six men who died on the bridge should be remembered not just as victims of a tragic accident, but as essential contributors to America's post-COVID labor market recovery. It is imperative for my colleagues to recognize and honor the indispensable role migrant workers play in rebuilding our nation's workforce. Instead of succumbing to anti-immigrant rhetoric, let us unite in appreciation of immigrants' invaluable contributions and work towards policies that ensure fair treatment and equal opportunity for all workers, regardless of their background or nationality.

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