

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2024

The Honorable Eric Adams  
Office of the Mayor  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams,

We are concerned with your Immediate Response Card program to distribute prepaid debit cards to illegal immigrant families in New York City (NYC). This \$53 million program is a free handout to foreign nationals who illegally circumvented our immigration processes. Not only does this plan fail to address the underlying source of New York's surging immigrant population, but it further incentivizes the arrival of illegal aliens who will feel justified in receiving these taxpayer-funded benefits.

Your office has claimed the program, which is reportedly designed for purchasing food and baby supplies, will save New York City around \$7.2 million per year by reducing food waste. In reality, these "savings" are worthless when compared to costs created by the incentives your city continues to reinforce.<sup>1</sup> This is especially true when considering the program will provide eligible migrants with up to \$350 per week until the end of their stay at contracted hotels. While the program claims the prepaid cards may only be used at bodegas, grocery stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores, it does not specify these locations. Distributing untraceable cash on transferable debit cards will only result in an increase of immigrants residing in NYC, which you once said would be "destroyed" by the migrant crisis.<sup>2</sup>

This initiative is even more egregious when considering similar programs designed for New York citizens. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), designed to help low-income, elderly, and disabled U.S. citizens, provides only \$291 per month.<sup>3</sup> To reiterate, migrants eligible for prepaid cards will receive more than that each week. Moreover, the monthly amount awarded to illegal immigrants will be over twice the amount given to veterans living in the city.<sup>4</sup> In total, the \$53 million planned for the entire program is more than double the amount New York State has budgeted for its Department of Veterans Affairs or Office of National and

---

<sup>1</sup> Craig McCarthy and Emily Crane, "NYC Migrant Families Could Make Up To \$15K Per Year Under Controversial \$53M Pre-paid Credit Card Program," *New York Post*, February 20, 2024.

<https://nypost.com/2024/02/20/us-news/nyc-migrant-families-could-make-up-to-15k-per-year-under-controversial-53m-pre-paid-credit-card-program/>

<sup>2</sup> Khaleda Rahman, "New York City Will Be Destroyed by Migrant Influx—Eric Adams," *Newsweek*, September 7, 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/eric-adams-migrant-influx-destroy-new-york-city-1825250>.

<sup>3</sup> Danielle Wallace, "Adams Defends Prepaid Migrant Cards, Part of \$53M NYC Pilot Program: 'Not Giving People American Express'," *Fox News*, February 6, 2024. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/adams-defends-pre-paid-migrant-cards-part-53m-nyc-pilot-program-not-giving-people-american-express>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Community Services in 2025. It is disturbing to see New York City prioritizing undocumented, illegal immigrants over the needs of its own citizens.

Since you announced the pilot program with Mobility Capital Finance in February, no information has been released explaining how the city plans to track spending or enforce program guidelines beyond claiming funds will be monitored, and eligible migrants must sign an affidavit. In order to understand the full extent of the Immediate Response Card program's policies and guidelines, we request answers to the following questions:

1. Is Mobility Capitol Finance, New York City, and its contracted hotels working with ICE to obtain accurate identification on hotel residents enrolling in the Immediate Response Card initiative?
  - a. Please describe the identification a migrant must provide to enroll in the program.
2. Can a migrant be eligible for the Immediate Response Card program if they have not been vetted by Border Patrol?
3. Please describe how a migrant's eligibility for the program is decided.
  - a. Please include how many adult migrants in a family unit can be eligible and the parameters for family unit eligibility.
4. How will New York City and Mobility Capitol Finance account for and track the use of the funds across the designated locations?
  - a. Please include the selected bodegas, grocery stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores accepting these cards.
  - b. Please include the guidelines and policies in place to ensure weekly funds are only spent on food and baby supplies as described by your office.
  - c. Please include any contingency plans or guidelines to deal with potential fraud and/or other abuse of the program.
5. Will any remaining balance on the cards be transferable on a weekly basis?
6. How long are migrants allowed to be enrolled in the program? Can that migrant or another adult migrant re-enroll in the program?
7. Are any federal funds, including any recent funds approved for New York City from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, being used to finance the Immediate Response Program?

Illegal immigrants are flooding into NYC because of its sanctuary city status and transportation and housing programs facilitating their arrival. Your refusal to coordinate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has created a safe haven for migrants who believe they can illegally cross our borders, obtain a free bus ticket to Manhattan, and receive free food and housing without risk of being deported. The Immediate Response Card program, which reportedly began on Monday, March 25, 2024, will do nothing to curb the migrant crisis.

We hope you will contemplate the long-term and burdensome cost to American citizens and taxpayers in New York City, and we strongly encourage you to acknowledge these consequences

when considering future projects for your city. We look forward to your timely and adequate response.

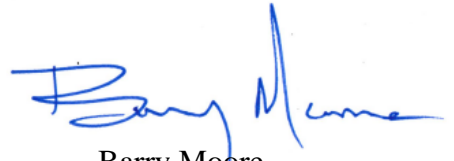
Sincerely,



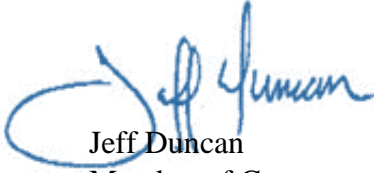
Lance Gooden  
Member of Congress



Ralph Norman  
Member of Congress



Barry Moore  
Member of Congress



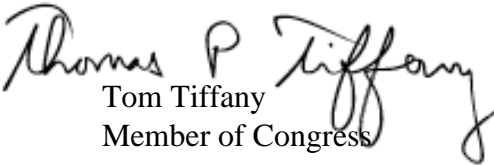
Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress



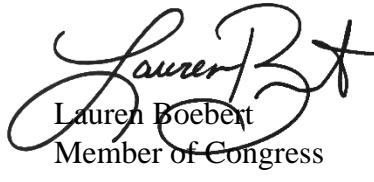
Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress



Tom Tiffany  
Member of Congress



Lauren Boebert  
Member of Congress