

Prepared Testimony of Alejandro Barranco

Senate Judiciary Committee – *Subcommittee on the Constitution*

Protecting American Citizenship: Birthright Citizenship for Illegal Aliens and Tourists

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Alejandro Barranco. I am a United States citizen. I am a Marine. And I am an American because I was born here.

I want to be clear at the start that my views today are my own. While my perspective is shaped by my service in the Marine Corps, I am only speaking for myself.

I was raised to love this country. That was something my parents taught me from a very young age. I was taught to respect the flag, to be thankful for the opportunities this country gave me, and to give back whenever I could. I grew up proud to be American. I still am.

That upbringing is why I chose to join the Marines. I wanted to do something bigger than myself. I wanted to serve my country, set an example for my younger brothers, and make my parents proud.

The Marine Corps gave me that opportunity, and I loved serving my country alongside Marines from every background you can imagine. Different races, different religions, different family histories. What we shared was allegiance to this country. We raised our right hands, wore the same uniform, and followed the same orders. We were judged by our actions and our commitment, not by where our parents were born.

That is what patriotism looks like to me.

I am able to stand here today because I am a citizen by birth. Because I was born here, I was able to go to school. I was able to graduate high school, the first in my family to do so. I was able to go to college. I was able to enlist in the Marine Corps and serve my country.

Without my citizenship, none of that would have been possible. I would not have lived a normal American life. I would not have worn this nation's uniform. I would not be who I am today.

I also want to speak briefly about my family, because I do not believe citizenship is just a legal status on paper. I am a patriotic American with Mexican roots. Those two things are not in conflict. I want to explain why I believe my identity as a U.S. citizen is strengthened, not weakened, by my family's Mexican heritage.

My father is a hardworking man. He has worked since the 1990s to support our family. He always told us to be good people and to give back to this country. He raised three sons who all chose to serve as Marines. He is proud of that. We are proud of him.

Last year, my father was arrested and detained by ICE. During that arrest, he was violently beaten. He was treated in a way that no human being deserves. That experience has left lasting physical and emotional harm. He cannot work the way he used to. He does not feel safe leaving his home. Our family still lives with that trauma.

I share this not to assign blame, but to explain what these policies look like in real life. They affect families who have built their lives here. They affect American citizens like me.

When we talk about birthright citizenship, we are not talking about a loophole or a theory. We are talking about a clear constitutional guarantee that has been part of this country for more than a century.

I believe that birthright citizenship reflects a core American principle that people had to fight for over time. That belonging is defined by presence, contribution, and shared civic life, not ancestry or wealth. The 14th Amendment drew a clear line against systems that limit being American to lineage, ancestry, or wealth.

For me, this is not about politics. It is about certainty. It is about knowing who belongs. It is about making sure that children born in this country are treated equally, no matter what state they are born in or what their parents' status may be.

I cannot imagine a system where my citizenship would have depended on geography or timing. Where I might have been a citizen in one state but not another. That kind of uncertainty would have changed my life forever.

I stand here as proof of what birthright citizenship makes possible. I was born here. I grew up here. I served here. I love this country, and I have shown that through my actions.

I ask this Committee to remember that behind this debate are real people and real families. People like me, who have pledged allegiance not just with words, but with service and sacrifice.

Thank you for listening to my story. I am proud to be an American, and I appreciate the chance to be here today.