

IMMIGRATION

RI immigration advocates describe relief after Supreme Court birthright citizenship ruling

The Trump administration had sought to block children born to undocumented parents from automatically receiving citizenship

[Isabella Jibilian](#) | June 30, 2026



Protesters gather to demand the return of a student at Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven, on July 30, 2025. The student was detained by ICE while at work. TYLER RUSSELL/CONNECTICUT PUBLIC

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immigrant aid group Dorcas International. “Not just for us, but the clients that we serve.”

[The decision struck down President Trump](#)’s 2025 executive order that sought to block children born to parents who are in the U.S. illegally or temporarily from automatically receiving citizenship.

“Today is a big relief to everybody in the community and to thousands of individuals just in our small state,” said Omar Bah, founder of the Refugee Dream Center in Providence. “These are the things that make citizens continue to have hope in the system.”

President Trump issued the executive order in January 2025, on the first day of his second term. Since then, the order has been tied up in legal challenges.

The year-and-a-half waiting game has been stressful for many immigrants in Rhode Island, advocates said.

“People lived in fear and uncertainty and not knowing what the future would hold for their children,” said Bah.

The Refugee Dream Center serves over 4,000 families across the state, Bah said. Many families are undocumented with multiple children, he explained. “Some families even started talking about potentially going home back to their countries of origin since their children had no future here,” he said.

On Tuesday, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution protects birthright citizenship. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the majority opinion. “Citizenship, then and now, was the right to have rights — to freely participate in our political community,” Roberts wrote. “The Framers of the Fourteenth Amendment extended that promise to ‘every free-born person in this land.’ We keep that promise today.”

David Veliz, executive director of Providence’s Olneyville Neighborhood Association, praised the decision.

“Someone out there is still trying to uphold the values that we believe in America,” Veliz said.

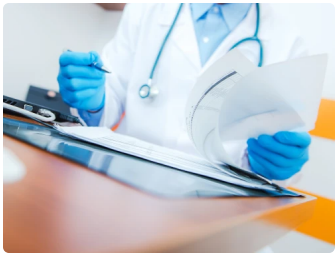
“The immigrant community is a big part of America,” he added. “We strive to

status from hundreds of thousands immigrants from Haiti and Syria.

And, Veliz said, while they can now breathe easier about birthright citizenship, the immigrant communities of Olneyville continue to be concerned about immigration enforcement and racism.

“We’re going to continue working,” he said. ”But for today, that’s good news.”

Isabella Jibilian Isabella Jibilian is a producer for the newsmagazine broadcast, “Rhode Island PBS Weekly.” She covers topics including politics, the environment, health, and the arts. She has been honored by the New England Emmys and the National Educational Telecommunications Association for her reporting. Previously, she reported for Business Insider and Reuters News. She is a graduate of Stanford University. In her free time, she enjoys bicycling and making pottery.



HEALTH

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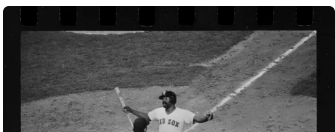
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