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Support Just and Humane Immigration Reform

America's immigration system is broken and is a national shame. Immigrant workers and families are under siege. Workers are being exploited. Families are being divided. Raids leave immigrants feeling unsafe and vulnerable in their own homes and workplaces.

President Obama and Congress need to enact just and humane immigration reform because:

- We need to resolve the issue of 12 million people living and working here without legal status;
- We can no longer afford the human and financial costs of taking an "enforcement only" approach;
- The civil rights of native born and new Americans are routinely violated under the current system.

Just and humane immigration reform must do the following:

Provide a path to citizenship. We must address the more than twelve million undocumented immigrants living and working in this country by creating a registration process that leads to lawful permanent resident status and eventual citizenship.

Treat families with respect and dignity. Family unification brings multiple benefits to our community and to the country as a whole. However, family members are separated for decades because of restrictive visa quotas and lengthy application processes that plague U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents who seek to unify with immediate relatives. The normalization of visa quotas and elimination of such backlogs help to keep families together.

Recommendations

- Speak out in support of just and humane immigration reform.
- Oppose local involvement in enforcement of federal immigration laws.

(see back for detailed recommendations)

Provide worker protections for all. Immigrant workers are actively recruited by U.S. firms but lack employment protections and are afraid to report exploitation by employers. Any employment-based immigration program must include provision for full labor rights; the right to change jobs; and a path to permanent residence and citizenship. The new system must facilitate and enforce equal rights for all workers and minimize the opportunities for abuse by unscrupulous employers.



Implement smart enforcement measures.

Current immigration enforcement policies create fear among immigrant and nonimmigrant communities alike, and are ineffectual, as they are attempting to enforce a system that is broken and unworkable. Fair and sensible enforcement practices tied to realistic immigration laws that serve our nation's interest are critical to rebuilding trust among immigrant communities and protecting the security of all.

Uphold due process and civil rights.

The Constitution guarantees due process for all people in this country. Our government, however, has not fulfilled that guarantee in its treatment of immigrants. Congress must restore basic civil liberties for all individuals in this country and our commitment to core American values of fairness and justice.

Detailed Recommendations:

- **Speak out in support of just and humane immigration reform.** Local leaders can help build pressure and momentum for federal immigration reform that (1) provides a path to citizenship for the more than twelve million undocumented immigrants living and contributing to our nation; (2) supports family unity by providing appropriate family visas and clearing backlogs; (3) provides worker protections for all current and future workers; (4) implements fair enforcement measures tied to realistic immigration laws; and (5) upholds due process and civil rights.
- **City should stay out of federal immigration enforcement efforts.** New York City should not be in the business of helping to enforce federal immigration laws by holding individuals on immigration detainers issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Over the past several years, federal immigration agents have established a permanent presence on Rikers Island and in other New York City Department of Corrections facilities. Without any oversight, accountability, or written agreement, ICE agents have regularly conducted interrogations of pre-trial detainees, effectively denying those detainees their constitutional rights to be presumed innocent, to remain silent, and to have legal representation.