



HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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December 16, 2012

Via First Class Mail

Senator Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Dear Senators Reid and McConnell:

On behalf of the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”), I write to express our support for Congress’ continuing work toward comprehensive immigration reform, beyond an enforcement-only approach. Consistent with our mission to promote equal justice for all Hispanics, the HBA-DC supports reform of our nation’s immigration laws and efforts to address our undocumented immigrant population. To that end, the HBA-DC supports legislation that addresses the following issues:

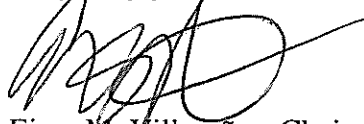
- Feasible and humane immigration and border policies that enhance security, help reunite families, protect immigrant workers, promote citizenship and civic participation, and do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, or country of origin;
- Humane treatment of children and adults while in custody, including due process and access to justice;
- Increased penalties for individuals engaged in the business of human smuggling and trafficking;
- Increased funds for our immigration courts to address current backlogs and continued efforts to ensure that individuals in immigration proceedings are treated fairly;
- A program of earned adjustment to legal status for undocumented workers who are willing to fulfill reasonable requirements;
- A temporary worker program that can provide for labor that is needed by American industries;
- Equitable wages and improved working conditions for immigrant workers;

- Employment verification processes that are fair to both employers and employees;
- Eligibility for immigrant students already in this country to continue their education through college and to earn a path to legal permanent residency;
- Acceptance of the contributions made by faith-based non-profit organizations and others that provide services to immigrants regardless of their legal status;
- More effective enforcement of the immigration laws without criminalizing immigrants, without subjecting immigrants to mandatory deportation, indefinite detention, and denial of due process, and without giving local and state police unprecedented and legally inappropriate authority to enforce federal immigration laws that would compromise public safety and unfairly target particular immigrant communities.

While Congress continues what is the difficult work towards comprehensive immigration reform, we support, as a first priority, passage of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (“DREAM”) Act. We believe that the DREAM Act is a fair and just resolution to the unjust difficulties faced by undocumented immigrants brought to this country as children who find themselves, as Americans in all but legal status, in the position of being unable to continue their education or otherwise contribute to the society of the country they know as home.

The HBA-DC is a non-profit organization established in the District of Columbia in 1977. The HBA-DC membership includes several hundred lawyers practicing in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, Latino students attending local law schools, and other non-lawyers who join as associate members. The HBA-DC is affiliated with the Hispanic National Bar Association, and we support their efforts in this endeavor as well. We thank you for your attention and consideration of our concerns.

Very truly yours,



Eissa M. Villaseñor, Chairperson
Legislative & Policy Issues Committee