

Expansive House Coalition Keeps Promise: Introduces Comprehensive Immigration Reform Legislation Before Holidays

CIR ASAP outlines a progressive vision and workable solution to America's broken immigration system

Washington D.C. – Today, Congressman Luis Gutierrez, joined by a large and diverse number of Congressional allies, introduced the first comprehensive immigration reform legislation of the 111th Congress. Representatives of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Asian and Pacific American Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Progressive Caucus and more than 70 co-sponsors have signed on and unveiled the “Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America’s Security and Prosperity Act of 2009” (CIR ASAP) in the House of Representatives. The bill is the first step in a process that will finally fix our broken immigration system. The legislation will protect workers, keep families together, and promote our national security while ensuring that we stay true to our values as a nation of immigrants. CIR ASAP outlines a progressive vision that is the result of thousands of conversations with people of faith, civil rights advocates, immigrant rights advocates, and families all across America. CIR ASAP is a common sense solution that will restore fairness to our labor markets, acknowledges and values the contributions made by immigrants to our country, and is a step toward economic recovery – because we can’t fix our economy on top of a broken immigration system. It provides a fair pathway to legalization, protects opportunity for education, protects the due process rights of all, and better targets our national security resources. It’s also a step toward making sure our economy has the right foundation to grow and prosper as it recovers from the worst crisis since the Great Depression.

“Congressman Gutierrez knows that the American people want their leaders to step up and solve tough problems, and he has done amazing work with his colleagues in the House to introduce legislation that finally puts us on a path toward a common sense immigration system that works,” said Rich Stolz, Campaign Manager for Reform Immigration FOR America. “America needs comprehensive immigration reform now, and Reform Immigration FOR America is building an enormous coalition across the country to push Congress to act. Gutierrez has stepped up, kept his promise to introduce legislation before the holidays, and forged a coalition in the House to get this done. This bill is the first step – the right step – toward a solution that works for America. Now it’s time for the Senate to act.”

Gutierrez’s bill is a sensible solution that will strengthen communities. Any system that keeps loved ones apart for years, even decades, like our current one, is clearly broken. This legislation would ensure that families could be reunited in a reasonable time. Every day that we don’t act, our broken system hurts workers, costs taxpayers, undercuts honest employers, and undermines the rule of law.

Americans all over the country are organizing to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Last month, at least 60,000 Americans participated in more than 1,000 house parties in 45 states. They have been mobilizing, taking action, and making their voices heard by texting “justice” or “justicia” to 69866 and getting connected to the Reform Immigration FOR America campaign. They are also calling 1-866-974-8813 to tell the White House to keep its promise, and act to pass comprehensive immigration reform this year. Americans are taking action all over the country to celebrate the introduction of the CIR ASAP and International Migrants Day.

Individuals available for comment that will be on hand:

Ali Noorani, Executive Director National Immigration Forum (English)

Jeanne Butterfield, Senior Advisor National Immigration Forum (English)

Martine Apodaca, Communications Director National Immigration Forum (English)

Katherine Vargas, Press Secretary, National Immigration Forum (Spanish)

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ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN: The Reform Immigration FOR America campaign is a coalition of more than 600 faith, labor, business, progressive, and immigration reform groups that have joined together to get comprehensive immigration reform passed. For more information please visit www.reformimmigrationforamerica.org or www.reformamigratoriaproamerica.org