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Subcommittee Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law

Congressmen I want to thank you for inviting me to testify before the committee and allowing

me to share with you my thoughts and views on America's immigration problem.

Being a union construction worker and an immigration activist I'm in a unique position because I travel to many different jobsites and have the opportunity to speak with co-workers about immigration.

Union workers have set wages for the different trades. Since the influx of legal immigrants and illegal alien workers into our trade, I have witnessed the wage an illegal alien receives is significantly lower than what union scales are.

Because illegal aliens are willing to work for lower wages than an American and legal immigrant who is doing the same job, employers are willing to hire an illegal alien over an American citizen and legal immigrant. If an illegal alien is competing for the job available, the American citizen and the legal immigrant will not get the job. This is just one of many problems I see with the current state of legal and illegal immigration in America at the present time.

The language barrier on the job site is a serious safety hazard with many illegal aliens not being unable to understand even simple English. This problem will continue and may become worse because Senate Bill 1348 doesn't adequately address the requirement to speak English, in the current version.

I've witnessed immigrants taking chances no American would take to complete a job. For example someone using a broken piece of equipment or not using personal protective equipment when using power tools that could result in eye or hearing injury.

Some of the problems I've mentioned have led to higher accident and death rates among illegal alien construction workers. I believe any law you pass increasing foreign workers, will only make these problems worse.

Lately I've been asking my co-workers how they feel about the Senate's immigration bill 1348 and its provision to increase the amount of foreign workers into our country. Congressmen, I have never heard so many angry responses from my co-workers in all the years that I've been involved in the immigration reform movement.

Congress cannot bring in hundreds of thousands of uneducated, non-English speaking people into America and expect that our work environment and living standards will remain the same.

The single biggest complaint from my co-workers is about the amnesty. Granting a path to earned citizenship for people who have no respect for the rule of law, is a slap in the face to those of us who abide by the laws you pass! Lawmakers should never be in the position of advocating and rewarding law breaking. Our current immigration law does not exempt anyone illegally in America from deportation simply because they are hard workers!

The founder of the AFL, Samuel Gompers, wrote a letter to congress in 1924 concerning immigration. He stated America must not be overwhelmed! Every effort to enact good immigration reform legislation must expect to meet a number of hostile forces. Currently there

are two hostile forces of considerable strength.

One of these is composed of corporate employers who desire to employ physical strength (broad backs) at the lowest possible wage. They prefer a rapidly revolving labor supply at low wages, to a regular supply of American wage earners at a fair and livable wage.

The other is comprised of organizations, some radical, who benefit from illegal aliens. They oppose all restrictive legislation suggesting that the immigration policy of the United States should be based on the best interest of immigrants, not the best interest of the United States and its citizenry. America cannot sustain the mass immigration it is currently being asked to receive. We are on an undisputable path to a bleak future of limited air quality, limited water resource, poor living conditions, failing public education and any resemblance of the American Dream. What if...so many people received the American Dream...one day it was depleted?

Congressmen history is repeating itself as this hearing is taking place. The self interest groups are at the table, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, La Raza (which means "the race") who primarily represent people who are Mexican, Big Corporate America, none of which have the best of intentions for the American worker.

My whole reason for being a union member and an immigration reform activist is to support the rights of the American worker to be first in the job market and require a safe work place with a fair, livable wage. In my opinion the large scale increase in workers you plan to legalize and import, be a serious problem to my fellow American workers and their quality of life.

Thank you