

March 27, 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist 509 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Frist:

The undersigned national Latino organizations write to express our concerns regarding your recent announcement to rush the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee and bring the immigration reform debate to the full Senate as early as March 28, 2006. We are also disturbed by your threats to bypass the Committee entirely and bring your own border security bill to the floor.

Under the leadership of Chairman Arlen Specter, the experts of the Senate Judiciary Committee had made groundbreaking inroads toward passing comprehensive immigration reform legislation during the last markup session. They had entered into productive discussions on how to treat the 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country and any "future flow" of legally admitted workers.

Abruptly interrupting the legislative process in this way and bypassing the Committee's expertise and years of lawmaking will make for bad policy and bad law. The enforcement-only House bill, for example, was introduced on December 6, 2005 and debated by the full House just two days later. For the past quarter century, virtually every major immigration reform bill enacted into law took longer than one Congressional session to pass. We need smart legislation, not a quick rush to judgment.

The colossal task of reforming our broken immigration system is too complex, and the stakes too high, to be rushed. We urge you to respect the Senate Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction and process and allow its members to move forward with their important work.

The Latino community, whose interests we represent, expects Congress to enact feasible and humane immigration policies that will restore the rule of law and enhance security, reunite families, protect workers, promote citizenship and civic participation and help local communities.

Thank you for taking our views into consideration.

Sincerely,

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund National Council of La Raza (NCLR)