

# CIRC Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

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**Press Release 12/14/06**

**For immediate Release**

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## **U.S. ICE RAIDS VIOLATE CIVIL RIGHTS AND TERRORIZE FAMILIES**

### **SIMULTANEOUS STATEWIDE PRAYER VIGILS FRIDAY**

### **CALL FOR MORATORIUM ON WORKPLACE RAIDS... COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM NEEDED NOW!**

The Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC), a statewide coalition of over 80 community, faith and labor organizations, denounces the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in Greeley, Colorado and in six other states. CIRC calls for a moratorium on all U.S. ICE workplace raids and for the U.S. Congress and the President to pass comprehensive and humane reform solutions.

CIRC stands in solidarity with the workers and their families who have been detained and separated, and with Latinos Unidos, Congregations Building Communities, Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church and other organizations in Greeley responding to the crisis of children currently without their mother and/or father and families without income to survive or certainty of the future.

CIRC believes that reasonable Coloradans, from across the political spectrum, can recognize the human impacts of the ICE raids on hard working people and families in our community—an impact often left out of press coverage. What will happen to the many children left behind without a parent or both parents? What about the paychecks not received by now detained workers, will families receive pay for their backbreaking work in the meatpacking plant? What about the holiday spirit ruined for hundreds of families? What about the Greeley community, will it rebuild after losing hundreds of its hard working residents?

Today's struggle to support the separated families and hold the U.S. ICE accountable for the inhumane raids must also be our continued fight for fair and humane comprehensive immigration reform. The SWIFT workers and their families are an integral part of the Colorado community and economy, and our immigration policy must reflect this reality.

This tragedy is not about "identity theft" or "criminal activity" as the U.S. ICE contends. It is about women and men working to feed their families and provide for a better life. It is about a U.S. and global economy that depends on immigrant labor, yet operates within a broken immigration system that forces some workers to choose between working with improper documents or not feeding their family.

Reckless raids that uproot communities, separate families, create fear and confusion for children whose parents were arrested, destroy family plans for the holidays, and disrupt local economies are not the solution. We need

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realistic comprehensive immigration reform and CIRC calls upon the Bush Administration to halt all workplace raids and instead work with the Congress to find a solution to a broken immigration system.

### **Simultaneous Statewide Prayer Vigils Friday December 15th, 7pm**

The Greeley community will protest the raids and call for comprehensive immigration reform with a candlelight prayer vigil at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church in Greeley on Friday, December 15th at 7pm. In statewide solidarity and unity, CIRC members in Durango, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Grand Junction and other communities will also hold simultaneous candlelight prayer vigils across the state on Friday December 15th at 7pm.

### **How you can support workers and their families**

Coloradans that wish to support the SWIFT workers and families who have been separated and left without income can make a donation payable to: "Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church" with "fund for families affected by ICE" in the memo-line. Mail to: Our Lady of Peace; Att: Rev. Bernard Schmitz; 1311 Third Street Greeley, CO 80631. Phone: 970.353.1747. Your contribution will go towards emergency rent and food expenses.