

# TALKING POINTS

## AMERICA NEEDS SMART IMMIGRATION REFORM

### OUR IMMIGRATION CRISIS IS HURTING AMERICA

Everyone agrees that the U.S. immigration system is broken. Congress and the President must enact broad scale reform.

- Millions of hardworking immigrants are living in the shadows
- Families are separated for decades from loved ones
- Businesses still need immigrant workers even in these economic times.
- One out of twenty workers lack legal status

### AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND OUR ECONOMY WILL BENEFIT FROM IMMIGRATION REFORM

- Real problems demand real solutions. Any lasting, meaningful solution requires a top-to-bottom overhaul of the system that: advances 21<sup>st</sup> century American interests, and protects our core values as a generous, welcoming nation committed to the rule of law.
- **Immigration reform will benefit the American economy.** Comprehensive immigration reform will generate new spending that will sustain new jobs at a time when the economy desperately needs them.
  - Employment is not a zero-sum game. Workers are not competing for a fixed number of jobs. Raising the wages of all workers, regardless of where they were born, benefits the entire U.S. economy. Higher wages means more workers buy goods and services from U.S. businesses; more taxes to federal and state governments; more jobs; and more growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
  - Mass deportation won't help the economy. Attempting to deport unauthorized but productive workers would be expensive and socially destructive. Mass deportation would shrink the consumer base and reduce the total number of jobs.
- **Politics** Americans support immigration reform and expect our leaders to act.
  - Acting on immigration reform is an opportunity where both Democrats and Republicans can show leadership.
  - Latino voters are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. electorate. Immigration is among the most important issues to them and is a "litmus test" in their voting.
  - Both major parties must deliver on this issue or risk fall-out from major voting blocks.
- **Key elements of CIR.** Only a practical, flexible, forward-looking approach that adheres to the following policy prescriptions can restore the integrity of our system.
  - Require the undocumented population to register, get legal, pay taxes, and learn English
  - Reduce the counterproductive backlogs in family-based and employment-based immigration and reform the immigration system to provide adequate permanent visas to meet the needs the American families and businesses.
  - Preserve and restore fundamental principles of due process and equal protection even as we take steps to protect national security and the rule of law
  - Provide fair and lawful ways for American businesses to hire needed immigrant workers who will help us dig out of this recession while protecting U.S. workers from unfair competition.

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