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Statement by SEIU Secretary-Treasurer Anna Burger on the Immigration Bill Passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee

“During the past week, over one million people have rallied in cities across the U.S. urging Congress to fix our broken immigration system in a way that will help raise standards for all workers in our country. Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee heard their call.”

“In a breakthrough bipartisan compromise, the Committee approved an immigration reform bill that is truly comprehensive, tough, fair, and practical.

“Rejecting the unworkable enforcement-only bill that passed the U.S. House of Representatives, the Senate Committee’s bill reflects reality: to make our country more secure and protect all workers, we not only need to address the nearly 12 million undocumented immigrants currently working in America but also those who come to work here in the future.

“To that end, the Committee bill will create an earned path to citizenship for immigrants who are already here working hard and paying taxes and it will establish a controlled, orderly process for immigration that channels new immigrants and their families through the American legal system.”

“These provisions will help create a more level playing field so we can ensure all workers receive the same protections and maintain wage and benefit standards.

“The Committee’s bill will also allow immigrant students to achieve legal status so they can complete their education and fully contribute to our economy and our communities.

“By approving provisions that both secure our borders and recognize the important contribution of millions of immigrant workers to our economy, the Committee has sent a strong signal that the time has come to work in a bipartisan fashion and pass a common-sense solution.

“Now the full Senate must follow its lead.”

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With 1.8 million members, SEIU is the fastest-growing union in North America. Focused on uniting workers in three sectors to improve their lives and the services they provide, SEIU is the largest health care union, including hospitals, nursing homes, and home care; the largest

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property services union, including building cleaning and security; and the second largest public employee union.