## AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

## **Press Release**

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## STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION on the Introduction of the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act

Washington, DC – The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) applauds Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Edward Kennedy (D-MA), and Representatives Jim Kolbe (R-AZ), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) for their efforts to reform our immigration law and their introduction of the bipartisan Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act.

"We commend these Members of Congress for not only recognizing that our current immigration system is broken, but doing something about it by introducing comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform," said Jeanne Butterfield, Executive Director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Ms. Butterfield continued, "The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act reflects the following important facts: the federal government must step up to the plate and reform out current immigration laws; that this nation cannot have border security unless we undertake such reform; that fixing our immigration system to make it safe, legal and orderly will make us more secure; we need a controlled immigration system that would replace an illegal flow with a legal immigration flow; and finally, we need an immigration system that is consistent with the basic American values of fairness and equal treatment under the law."

While there is consensus that our current system is broken, there is some disagreement about the solutions. "Clearly, continuing to enforce our current dysfunctional system leads only to more dysfunction. In fact, experience tells us that an enforcement-only approach simply will not work," said Ms. Butterfield. AILA supports reform that would enhance our security, reunite families, give a permanent status to hard-working, tax-paying people already here and allow American business to bring in needed workers. "Such reform is central to this bipartisan measure," continued Ms. Butterfield.

AILA supports the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act because it recognizes that change is urgently needed to enhance our national security and address the concerns of American businesses and families. The bill includes many important provisions that will help address the problems that plague our current immigration system, not the least of which is that a dysfunctional system breeds disrespect for the law. Transformation of our current unworkable and outdated system to one that promotes a controlled, legal, and orderly immigration system is long overdue.

AILA looks forward to working with Members of Congress and the Bush Administration in support of an immigration system that works and applauds the introduction of the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act.

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Founded in 1946, AILA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides its Members with continuing legal education, information, and professional services. AILA advocates before Congress and the Administration and provides liaison with the DHS and other government agencies. AILA is an Affiliated Organization of the American Bar Association.