

October 18, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: George Tzamaras, (202-216-2410)

**AMERICA URGENTLY NEEDS
COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM
Effective Enforcement & Better Border Security Require New Laws!**

Washington, DC – The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) urges Congress to reject failed border policies and “enforcement-only” rhetoric and to immediately enact meaningful and comprehensive immigration reform.

“Every community and every politician across America recognizes that our current immigration system is broken”, said Deborah Notkin, President of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. “The question is whether Congress is going to pander to those who want to merely throw more money at a broken system, or whether Congress will have the courage to step up to the plate and reform our current immigration laws in a meaningful and comprehensive way.”

While there is consensus that our current system is broken, there is disagreement about the solution. “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 Marshall Fitz, AILA’s Director of Advocacy. “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 in a temporary program that also provides a possible path to permanent legal status”, stated Mr. Fitz.

AILA has joined with a wide array of business, family, religious and immigrant community organizations in applauding 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. (For a list of endorsers of the Secure America Bill, please go to www.cirnnow.org)

“We, along with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, trade unions such as SEIU and UNITE/HERE, and countless religious and immigrant community groups across the country, support 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”, stated Mr. Fitz.

AILA urges Congress to carefully consider the results of recent polls, such as those released by the Manhattan Institute on October 17*, and by the National Immigration Forum and AILA on April 17**, which demonstrate that American voters overwhelmingly support real solutions and comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform.

“As the American public is well aware, our current immigration system is unworkable, outdated, and in disarray. In a debate too easily obscured by fear and threats, it is time for serious solutions to this serious challenge. We need a secure and controlled immigration system that will help keep us safe and fulfill the promise of liberty and opportunity that America represents. Congress needs to listen, and act,” concluded Ms. Notkin.

*The poll of 800 registered “likely” Republican voters, was conducted October 2-5, 2005 by The Tarrance Group for the Manhattan Institute. See www.manhattan-institute.org.

**The Tarrance Group and Lake, Snell, Perry, and Mermin conducted this poll between March 20-22, 2005 of 800 likely voters nationwide. See www.aila.org.

###AILA###

Founded in 1946, AILA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides its Members with continuing legal education, information, professional services and expertise through its 35 chapters and over 75 national committees. AILA also advocates before Congress and the Administration, as well as providing liaison with the INS and other government agencies in support of pro-immigration initiatives. AILA is an Affiliated Organization of the American Bar Association and is represented in the ABA House of Delegates.