TALKING POINTS

DEPORTATION-ONLY PROPOSALS ARE NOT SOLUTIONS

DEPORTATION ONLY PROPOSALS WILL NOT SOLVE OUR IMMIGRATION CRISIS

For the past twenty years, this country has been steadily increasing immigration enforcement at the border and in the interior, and the effort has not only failed, but backfired. Throwing more money at the border has not ended undocumented immigration but only increased it.

- The United States has spent billions of dollars on ineffective border enforcement. At the same time that spending on immigration enforcement has skyrocketed, the number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States has roughly *tripled* from 3.5 million in 1990 to 11.9 million in 2008¹.
- The recent decrease in the number of unauthorized border crossings have little to do with enforcement, but are due primarily to the downturn in the U.S. economy. Undocumented migration clearly responds to changing U.S. economic conditions, with steep increases in the flow toward the end of expansion phases of the business cycle and significant decreases during economic downturns. Moreover, the pattern of undocumented migrants responding to economic conditions rather than policy decisions has continued during the border enforcement build-up that began in 1993².
- Regulating the flow of unauthorized immigration requires more than physical barriers to the country. The 645 miles of pedestrian and vehicle fencing, plus 33 miles of reinforced physical and virtual fencing along the southwestern border have only served to divert determined border crosses to less patrolled, and more dangerous, sections of the border. Policymakers should work to secure our borders by uniting smart enforcement measures with robust visa programs that allow workers who mean us no harm to enter the country legally.
- The American public is pragmatic and overwhelmingly rejects the notion that we can or should deport 12 million people. Americans know that immigrants contribute to our society and they want a long-term solution.

INTERIOR ENFORCEMENT MEASURES ARE FAILING AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND WORKERS

Increases in border enforcement have been accompanied by increased worksite enforcement including expansion of the E-Verify program and also partnerships between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and state and local police agencies and jails to identify, apprehend, and remove immigrants.

- E-Verify is not a perfect solution. Expanding mandatory E-Verify would threaten the jobs of thousands of U.S. citizens and saddle U.S. businesses with additional costs—all at a time when we need to stimulate our economy. Expanding E-Verify now would be in direct contradiction to the goal of creating jobs and would slow America's economic recovery.
- **E-Verify does not detect unauthorized workers**³. A new evaluation of the federal employment authorization program by Westat found that 4.1% of initial responses were wrong—0.7% of the

¹ Ewing, Walter, *Money for Nothing: Immigration Enforcement without Immigration Reform Doesn't Work* (Washington, DC: Immigration Policy Center, a division of the American Immigration Council, May 2008), p. 7.

² Wayne A. Cornelius, et al., Controlling Unauthorized Immigration From Mexico: The Failure of "Prevention through Deterrence" and the Need for Comprehensive Reform

³ Findings Of The E-Verify® Program Evaluation, Westat, Dec 2009

time legally authorized workers were flagged as not work authorized, and 3.3% of all E-Verify cases involved unauthorized workers who got through the system. According to Westat, "many unauthorized workers obtain employment by committing identity fraud that cannot be detected by E-Verify." The "inaccuracy rate for unauthorized workers" is about 54%.

• DHS partnerships with state and local police have undermined safety and increased civil rights violations in American communities. Unauthorized immigrants are often reluctant to report crimes they have witnessed or been victims of because they fear they may be deported as a result of coming forward. Additionally, immigration laws are so complex that even with extensive training and experience, mistakes are very likely, and legal immigrants and U.S. citizens can be the victims of costly errors by state and local police agencies.

WE NEED COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

- Only through a realistic, long-term solution for the undocumented population living in the U.S., and targeted, effective enforcement of realistic laws will we gain control over our immigration system. In the interim, we should strenuously avoid half-baked measures that will do lasting damage to our country.
- A majority of Americans favors realistic reform over unachievable rhetoric: Polls consistently find that Americans support a tough but comprehensive solution for those here illegally over an enforcement-only immigration policy. By a 57-28% margin, nationwide voters preferred "a comprehensive approach that secures the border, cracks down on employers who hire illegal immigrants, and requires all illegal immigrants to register and meet certain requirements to become legal" over the enforcement-only approach that "secures our border, stops giving taxpayer funded benefits to illegal immigrants, and makes sure that those who broke our laws by entering this country illegally are forced to leave." The same was true for swing district voters by a 60-30% margin.