THE TIME IS NOW FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM!

Background

Our immigration system is broken.

There are more than 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the shadows who have no path available to them to become American citizens. Both native and immigrant workers are harmed by the status quo. Vulnerable immigrant workers are at the mercy of unscrupulous employers who exploit their undocumented status by paying low wages and providing poor working conditions. This ability to exploit immigrants lowers wages and workplace standards for all workers and threatens middle class security and growth.

The existing guest worker programs exacerbate the harm to both native-born and immigrant workers. The number and types of temporary worker visas issued to employers are not based on actual labor market shortages, depriving U.S. workers of jobs. And, many foreign labor recruiters and U.S. employers exploit foreign workers by failing to keep promises made on wages, hours, living conditions and working conditions, sometimes sinking to the level of human trafficking.

The Senate’s passage of its bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) bill with a roadmap to citizenship (S. 744) by the overwhelming margin of 68-32 represents a major step forward towards fixing our immigration system.

The Fight Continues in the House

AFSCME and our allies are now urging House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) to hold a vote on H.R. 15, which is modeled on the Senate bill and has 200 bipartisan co-sponsors. The discharge petition seeking to force a vote on H.R. 15 has over 190 signers. Poll after poll shows that the American people support reform by wide margins. Latino, Asian American and other immigrant communities want the deportations that are tearing families apart to stop. And, they justly seek the opportunity to legalize their status with a road map to becoming full citizens. Now is the time for the House to pass immigration reform.
Congressional Action Needed

To make comprehensive immigration reform a reality, we need to:

- Demand that Speaker Boehner and the rest of the House GOP leadership hold a vote on CIR that includes a road map to citizenship.

- Make CIR a part of House debate whenever possible, including the effort to insert CIR into as many House bills as possible, such as Rep. Tony Cárdenas’ (D-CA) amendment to Budget Chair Paul Ryan’s (R-WI) FY 2015 budget to add implementation funding for H.R. 15.

- Support in-state and D.C. public actions in support of CIR.

*Department of Federal Government Affairs*

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