



The American Jewish Committee

Office of Government and International Affairs

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Dear Senator:

The American Jewish Committee, the nation's first human relations organization, has long been a strong voice on behalf of immigrant rights and a vocal advocate for a broad, multifaceted response to threats of terrorism both at home and abroad. As the Senate considers legislation aimed at replacing the current disorganized and dysfunctional immigration system, we urge you to pursue comprehensive reform that regulates immigration in a safe, orderly, legal, and just manner while simultaneously bolstering national security.

A comprehensive approach is the only effective way to fix our flawed system and protect our homeland security. There are millions of people currently living in the shadows throughout the United States, unable to gain full access to fundamental needs such as health care and education. Moreover, the fact that we do not know who is entering, and has entered, our country poses obvious security risks. Mass deportations of this population must be rejected out of hand—such actions would violate family unification principles, fail to address security concerns, and run counter to the values of American society.

On behalf of AJC's more than 150,000 members and supporters represented by 33 regional chapters, we urge you to support legislation that will allow undocumented immigrants the opportunity to come out of the shadows, pay back taxes and appropriate fines, pass a background check, and ultimately legalize their status. A better organized immigration system that offers legal channels for immigrants to enter the United States, including more legal work visas and more visas for immigrant families, will be consistent with our democratic values as well as contribute to the economic well-being of the United States.

At the same time that America must work towards better integration of immigrants into our society, we must keep in mind pressing national security concerns. Comprehensive immigration reform would increase our national security through enhanced border security and effective enforcement, giving us better information about and control over who enters our country, while also protecting immigrants and integrating them into our society through earned legalization and increased worker protections. This comprehensive approach to immigration reform will bolster national security by better preventing those who wish to do us harm from entering this country.

AJC is encouraged that Congress appears eager to resolve the problems with our current immigration system. We are committed to working with the Senate to reform our immigration system in a manner that treats immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in a fair, sensible, and safe fashion while addressing national security concerns.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Respectfully,

Richard T. Foltin
Legislative Director and Counsel