

**AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
ACT OF 2000** (Senate - September 28, 2000)

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CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Cloture Motion

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending first-degree amendment (No. 4177) to Calendar No. 490, S. 2045, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to H-1B non-immigrant aliens:

Trent Lott, Gordon Smith of Oregon, Judd Gregg, Wayne Allard, Conrad Burns, Craig Thomas, Rick Santorum, Thad Cochran, Bob Smith of New Hampshire, Spencer Abraham, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Connie Mack, George Voinovich, Larry Craig, James Inhofe, and Jeff Sessions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 4177 to S. 2045, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to H-1B non-immigrant aliens, shall be brought to a close? The yeas and nays are required under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCain) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. Thomas) are necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. Feinstein), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. Lieberman), and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. Murray) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Washington (Mrs. Murray) would vote 'aye.'

The yeas and nays resulted--yeas 92, nays 3, as follows:

Rollcall Vote No. 260 Leg.

[Rollcall Vote No. 260 Leg.]

YEAS--92

Abraham
Akaka
Allard
Ashcroft
Baucus
Bayh
Bennett
Biden
Bingaman
Bond
Boxer
Breaux
Brownback
Bryan
Bunning
Burns
Byrd
Campbell
Chafee, L.
Cleland
Cochran
Collins
Conrad
Craig
Crapo
Daschle
DeWine
Dodd
Domenici
Dorgan
Durbin
Edwards
Enzi
Feingold
Fitzgerald
Frist
Gorton
Graham
Gramm
Grams
Grassley

Gregg
Hagel
Harkin
Hatch
Helms
Hutchinson
Hutchison
Inhofe
Inouye
Jeffords
Johnson
Kennedy
Kerrey
Kerry
Kohl
Kyl
Landrieu
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Lincoln
Lott
Lugar
Mack
McConnell
Mikulski
Miller
Moynihan
Murkowski
Nickles
Reid
Robb
Roberts
Rockefeller
Roth
Santorum
Sarbanes
Schumer
Sessions
Shelby
Smith (NH)
Smith (OR)
Snowe
Specter
Stevens

Thompson
Thurmond
Toricelli
Voinovich
Warner
Wyden

NAYS--3

Hollings
Reed
Wellstone

NOT VOTING--5

Feinstein
Lieberman
McCain
Murray
Thomas

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 92, the nays are 3. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, may I ask about the order and the unanimous consent that is pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator now has 20 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT--S. 2045 (Senate - September 28, 2000)

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Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, with regard to the H-1B legislation, I now ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, following the previously ordered morning business speeches, the Senate resume consideration of S. 2045, the H-1B bill, and the following pending amendment Nos. 4214, 4216, and 4217, be withdrawn and the motion to

recommit be withdrawn in order to offer a managers' amendment containing cleared amendments limited to 5 minutes equally divided in the usual form.

I further ask consent that following the adoption of the managers' amendment, no further amendments be in order, and amendment No. 4177, as amended, be agreed to, the committee substitute, as amended, be agreed to, the bill be advanced to third reading, and final passage occur at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, without any intervening action or motion or debate, and that paragraph 4 of rule XII be waived. I further ask consent that the time between 9:30 and 10 a.m. on Tuesday be equally divided between the two managers for closing remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Let me just say, Mr. President, we have one additional part of this H-1B request we hope to be able to clear momentarily. But the interested parties are reviewing the language of the substitute. When we get that reviewed, then we will ask consent that the bill be laid aside until 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday and that the Senate proceed to the visa waiver bill. But we will clarify that in just one moment.

**AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
ACT OF 2000--RESUMED (Senate - September 28, 2000)**

[Page: S9449]

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on H-1B, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now resume S. 2045, the H-1B bill, and the managers' amendment be agreed to, which is at the desk, and all other provisions of the consent be in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments (Nos. 4214, 4216 and 4217) were withdrawn.

The motion to recommit was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 4275) was agreed to.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's Record under 'Amendments Submitted.')

The amendment (No. 4177), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2045), as amended, was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, let me highlight our intent about how the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) should implement this legislation with respect to physicians who seek H-1B visas. The INS currently requires that each applicant for an H-1B visa who wishes to work as a physician must have passed the three parts of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and, if required by the state in which he or she will be practicing, be licensed. Due to the increased number of physicians who may work in the U.S. under H-1B visas with the passage of this legislation, it is even more important that the INS confirm successful completion of all parts of the USMLE each time an individual physician applies for, or seeks renewal of, an H-1B visa.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, our Nation's economy is experiencing a time of unprecedented growth and prosperity. This strong economic growth can, in large measure, be traced to the vitality of the fast-growing high technology industry. Information technology, biotechnology and associated manufacturers have created more new jobs than any other part of the economy.

The rapid growth of the high-tech industry has made it the nation's third largest employer, with 4.8 million workers in high-tech related fields, working in jobs that pay 70 percent above average income. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the number of core IT workers will grow to a remarkable 2.6 million by 2006--an increase of 1.1 million from 1996.

With such rapid change, the economy is stretched thin to support these new businesses and the growth opportunities they present. The constraint cited most often on future growth of the high-technology industry is the shortage of men and women with the skills and technical background needed for jobs in the industry. Several factors are contributing to this shortage, including an inaccurate, negative image of IT occupations as overly demanding, the under-representation of women and minorities in the IT workforce, and outdated academic curricula that often do not keep pace with industry needs.

All of us want to be responsive to the nation's need for high-tech workers. We know that unless we take steps now to address this growing workforce gap, America's technological and economic leadership will be jeopardized. The H-1B visa cap should be increased, but in a way that better addresses the fundamental needs of the economy. Raising the cap without seriously addressing our long-term labor needs would be a serious mistake.

The legislation before us today includes provisions that respond to what American workers, students and employers have been telling Congress: that any credible legislative proposal must begin with a significant expansion of career training and educational

opportunities for our workers and students. Expanding the number of H-1B visas to meet short-term needs is no substitute for long-term solutions to fully develop the potential of our domestic workforce. It makes sense to ask that more of our workers be recruited and trained for these jobs.

I commend Senator Lieberman, Senator Conrad, and other colleagues for their valuable contributions to the proposed training provisions. The training provided will ensure that the H-1B program will provide our workers with the skills needed to benefit from this growing economy and to help our companies continue to grow.

**A REASONABLE INCREASE IN THE H-1B VISA CAP IS
JUSTIFIED, BUT IT MUST BE TEMPORARY AND
SUFFICIENTLY TAILORED TO MEET EXISTING SHORT-TERM
NEEDS**

A temporary influx of foreign workers and students is needed in the short-term to help meet the demands by U.S. firms for high skilled workers. But we shouldn't count on foreign sources of labor as a long-term solution. It is unfair to U.S. workers, and the supply of foreign workers is limited.

It makes sense to insist that more of our domestic workers must be recruited into and placed in these jobs. Countless reports cite age and race discrimination as a major problem in the IT industry, along with the hiring of foreign workers and lay-off of domestic workers.

A Dallas Morning News article describes how Ken Schiffman of Texas received only one or two responses to his resume over a long period of time, until he deleted all direct and indirect references to his age. After that, he received 26 messages in one day. A human resource executive at a trade association confirms that this problem is a constant issue. Employers often ask the age of an applicant and reject older applicants without ever interviewing them.

John Miano, head of the American Programmer's Guild, argues that once a worker is laid off, it is very difficult to find a new job, in contrast to younger workers. Companies often

unfairly view older workers as 'dirty linen.' These and countless other experiences support the need for a more responsible approach to H-1B legislation. And similar problems face women and minorities who are under-represented in the IT workforce.

Although many new jobs are created in the IT industry each year, we also know that thousands of IT workers were laid off in 1999. For example 5,180 workers lost their jobs at Electronic Data Systems, 2,150 at Compaq, and 3,000 at NEC-Packard Bell.

We also know that some IT companies classify their workers as independent contractors or temporary workers, rather than as employees, to avoid paying them benefits. In fact, it

has been said that 'if all categories of contingent workers are included--temporary, part-time, self-employed, and contract workers--almost 40% of all employment in Silicon Valley are contingent workers.' This mis-classification scheme also contributes to numerous positions being seemingly 'unfilled,' because official 'employees' are not performing those functions. This practice perpetuates an artificially higher number of 'open' positions than actually exist.

Although it makes sense to provide an increase in the H-1B cap through FY 2002, the unprecedented cap exemptions in the Hatch bill are unwarranted. Those exemptions would permit 40,000 workers above the 195,000 cap to receive an H-1B visa. The resulting figure is well above the number of visas that even the most ardent IT lobbyists claim are needed. Exempting all those with advanced credentials will result in a significant increase in the number of persons within the cap who have less specialized skills, and who are in occupations ranging from therapists to super models. This is not the direction in which the H-1B visa program should be moving. The bill should not focus solely on the number of visas available for foreign skilled workers. It should also emphasize employers' needs for as many workers with the highest professional credentials as possible, who possess specialized skills that cannot be easily and quickly reproduced domestically.

I am strongly in favor of supporting our institutions of higher education and research groups. But the two types of exemptions in the bill overlap and are unnecessarily complex. The first exemption addresses a genuine need of universities who face difficulty competing with the high tech industry for visas. But universities and research organizations would be just as easily served by reserving for them 12,000 a year within the cap.

The second exemption is for students graduating in the U.S. with any advanced degree, as long as they apply within a certain time frame. But it should not matter when they graduated or where they graduated. The exemptions will cause administrative problems that we should not impose on INS.

Instead, we should ensure that workers with an advanced degree have priority for H-1B visas within the cap, and are subject to the same requirements as all other applications. No evidence exists that proves or even implies that there is a shortage of American advanced degree holders in all subject areas. Yet the bill ignores this point and specifically permits all foreign

graduates to receive a visa.

The unprecedented exemptions contained in this bill will only add to the already troublesome task faced by INS to process visas. We should not make a bad situation for U.S. students and the INS even worse by passing this bill with the current exemptions.

The exemptions in the bill and the abundance of IT workers they would create are an irresponsible approach to increasing the cap, especially given the very real existing questions about the true extent of the IT skill shortage.

As we address the needs of the IT industry, in addition to raising the H-1B visa cap, we must place laid off workers in new jobs, enforce our labor laws, and recruit and train more women, minorities, and people with disabilities, so that the current IT workforce gets the pay, benefits, working conditions and job opportunities to which they are entitled.

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EXPANDING JOB TRAINING FOR U.S. WORKERS IS CRITICAL AND PROVIDES THE ONLY LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO THIS LABOR SHORTAGE

When we expanded the number of H-1B visas in 1998, we created a modest training initiative funded by a modest visa fee in recognition of the need to train and update the skills of U.S. workers. Today, as we seek to nearly double the number of high tech workers available to American businesses, we must also ensure a significant expansion of career training and educational opportunities for American workers and students.

Now more than ever, the strong employer demand for high tech foreign workers shows that there is an even greater need to train American workers and prepare U.S. students for careers in information technology. Expanding the number of H-1B visas to meet short-term needs is no substitute for long-term solutions to fully develop the potential of our domestic workforce.

The magnitude of this need for training is increasing year after year. According to the Information Technology Association of America, roughly two-thirds of unfilled jobs requiring workers with computer-related skills are for technical support staff, such as customer service and help desks, database administrators, web designers, and technical writers. According to the survey's own description of these occupational fields, these positions simply require entry-level and moderate-level skills. We clearly need to greatly accelerate training for all skill levels, not just the most advanced level.

Recent studies have also demonstrated the strong correlation between educational attainment and increases in worker productivity. A year of structured employer-directed training can also produce a substantial increase in productivity.

Congress must help fund such efforts. We cannot turn our backs on American workers and employers who need our help.

Many high-tech companies are investing significant resources in education, and to a limited extent, in training programs. In reviewing these examples, however, it is clear that the focus of their contributions is on education, not worker training.

This effort does not come close to meeting the nation-wide need for investment in training. Only when businesses address the shortage of highly skilled workers as a national problem with a national solution--rather than a company-by-company approach

to worker training--will our workforce be able to meet the growing demand for high skills, so that our economy will continue to prosper. The federal government has an obligation to bridge the high tech skill gap which today separates millions of workers from the 21st century jobs they desire.

RAISING NECESSARY FUNDS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

At a time when the IT industry is experiencing major growth and record profits, it is clear that even the smallest of businesses can afford to pay a higher fee in order to support needed investments in technology skills and education. The only effective way for Congress and industry to provide sufficient long-term solutions to the high-tech skills shortage is by increasing H-1B visa user fees. We should ensure that 55% of all revenues go to worker training and increased educational opportunities for U.S. students.

We must train at least 45,000 workers a year if we are to responsibly address the need for technological skills. Unfortunately, due to blue slip issues that would arise if the Senate were to propose an increase in H-1B fees, I will not be offering an amendment with such a provision.

However, the Senate should send to the House a request for a modest increase in the H-1B visa fees. An increase in H-1B funds collected is necessary to expand training and education programs. A modest increase in the user fee will generate approximately \$280 million each year compared to current law, which raises less than one-third of this amount. Revenues can be reasonably and fairly obtained by charging \$1,000 per new visa, or visa extension, or request to change employers. As in current law, employers from educational institutions and non-profit and governmental research organizations should remain exempt from all fees.

This fee is fair. Immigrant families with very modest incomes were able to pay a \$1,000 fee to allow family members to obtain green cards. Certainly, high tech companies can afford to pay at least that amount during this prosperous economy.

PROVIDING STATE-OF-THE ART TRAINING FOR 46,000 U.S. WORKERS

With such a reasonable and fair fee structure, the training plan in this amendment will receive roughly \$154 million to substantially expand the existing program to provide state-of-the-art high tech training for 46,000 workers a year, primarily in high tech, information technology, and biotechnology skills.

It requires the Department of Labor, in consultation with the Department of Commerce;

to provide grants to local workforce investment boards in areas with substantial shortages of high tech workers. Grants would be awarded on a competitive basis for innovative high

tech training proposals developed by the workforce boards collaboratively with area employers, unions, and higher education institutions.

The training proposal builds on the priorities specified in current H-1B law. It will serve those who are currently employed and are seeking to enhance their skills, as well as those who are currently unemployed.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. STUDENTS MUST BE INCREASED

As we enter the 21st century, careers increasingly require advanced degrees, especially in math, science, engineering, and computer sciences. Eight of the ten fastest growing jobs of the next decade will require college education or moderate to long-term training.

We must encourage students, including minority students, to pursue degrees in math, science, computers, and engineering. Scholarship opportunities must be expanded for talented minority and low-income students whose families cannot afford today's high college tuition costs. According to the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, minority retention rates tend to be higher at institutions with high average financial aid awards, and the financial aid is a significant predictor in retaining minority students.

With increased opportunities for scholarships, students completing two-year degrees will be provided with incentives to continue their education and obtain four-year degrees, and retention rates among four-year degree students will be higher.

CONCLUSION

In sum, it would be irresponsible of Congress to address the shortage of high tech workers solely by expanding the number of visas for foreign workers. Immigration is only a short-term solution to the long range, national skill shortage problem.

The U.S. is currently not providing domestic workers with enough opportunities to upgrade their skills so that they can fully participate in the new economy. They deserve these opportunities, and American business needs their talents.

I commend Senators Hatch and Abraham for agreeing to include these training provisions in the bill before us today, and for committing to help bridge the high tech skills gap.

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CONGRESS MUST REJECT THE VIEW THAT THE ONLY PRO-IMMIGRANT AGENDA THIS SESSION IS AN H-1B AGENDA

Finally, Congress cannot continue to ignore other equally important immigration issues which are as critical to immigrants in our workforce as H-1B visas are to the information technology industry. Unfortunately, unlike the H-1B issue, these other equally important issues have been ignored by too many members of Congress.

Last year, a broad coalition of immigrant and faith-based groups launched the 'Fix '96' campaign to repeal the harsh and excessive provisions in the 1996 immigration and welfare laws, to restore balance and fairness to current law, and to correct government errors which prevent certain immigrants from receiving the services Congress intended.

All of the issues raised in the 'Fix '96' campaign are still outstanding. A number of bills, including the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act, have been introduced proposing solutions to these problems. However, the Republican leadership continues to block action on these important proposals. These issues include parity legislation for Central Americans and Haitians, restoring protections to asylum seekers, restoring due process in detention and deportation policy, restoring public benefits to legal immigrants, and restoring protections to battered immigrant women and children.

The Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act provides us with an opportunity to end a series of unjust provisions in our current immigration laws, and build on the most noble aspects of our American immigrant tradition.

It restores fairness to the immigrant community and fairness in the nation's immigration laws. It is good for families and it is good for American business.

The immigrant community--particularly the Latino community--has waited far too long for the fundamental justice that this legislation will provide. These issues are not new to Congress. The immigrants who will benefit from this legislation should have received permanent status from the INS long ago.

Few days remain in this Congress, but my Democratic colleagues and I are committed to doing all we can to see that both the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act and the H-1B high tech visa legislation become law this year. I urge my colleagues to give equal priority to these basic immigration issues that affect so many immigrant families in our workforce. The time to act is now, and there is still ample time to act before Congress adjourns.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, we in the Senate cannot originate a revenue measure to fund the new training and education program. But it would be a serious mistake to enact a final bill that does not call on employers to pay \$1,000 per visa for the training and education necessary to improve the skills of U.S. workers and students.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I, too, am committed to seeing to it that there is funding for these programs and a \$1,000 fee is appropriate and would accomplish this goal. As the

Ranking Member knows, I believe that as far as the shortage of highly skilled workers is concerned, we have both a short term and long term problem, and I believe these programs are an integral part of addressing our long term problem. I very much appreciate your ongoing willingness to work on these important programs for training and educating Americans so that they will be ready to take these jobs, and the leadership you have shown on these matters. I pledge to work with you, the other Members of this body, the business community, and other affected outside interests to seek ways to help fund these programs consistent with the principle you articulated.

Mr. KENNEDY. In addition, I believe it is important to exclude from that fee any employer that is a primary or secondary education institution, an institution of higher education, as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965, a nonprofit entity which engages in established curriculum-related clinical training of students registered at any such institution, a nonprofit research organization, or a governmental research organization.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I agree with the Ranking Member, and I support his objectives. I will work with Senator Kennedy to ensure that these institutions are excluded from the imposition of fees.

Mr. KENNEDY. In conclusion, I would simply like to thank Senator Abraham for his ongoing willingness to work on these important programs for training and educating Americans so that they will be ready to take these jobs, and the leadership he has consistently shown on these issues.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent the Senate now lay aside S. 2045 until 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sessions). Without objection, it is so ordered.

END

National Immigration Forum

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Time Sent : Thursday, Aug 17, 2000 03:01PM
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Attached are editorials on the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act".

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POLITICS: With the Hispanic vote becoming increasingly important, both Bush and Gore are taking a softer approach to immigration.

August 15, 2000

By MINERVA CANTO
The Orange County Register

When it comes to immigration, the major-party presidential candidates aren't saying much. And when they are, they sound amazingly alike:

"Immigration is not a problem to be solved. It is the sign of a successful nation," Republican candidate George W. Bush said during a speech in Washington, D.C., a few weeks ago. "New Americans are to be welcomed as neighbors and not to be feared as strangers."

Compare that with what Democratic contender Al Gore said in a debate in January: "We are a nation of immigrants and with pride. It is what has made us a great nation."

On the surface, both candidates appear to be vying to see who can be more immigrant-friendly either by saying very little or being vague about most immigration issues, reflecting the importance they are placing on the increasingly powerful Hispanic vote. It's also indicative of good economic times.

The Republican platform deals with immigration issues in the same amiable tone, a turnaround from the 1996 platform which advocated an end to granting automatic citizenship to children born to undocumented immigrants. The latest platform does not mention "illegal immigration," said Steven Camarota, director of research at the Washington-based Center for

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Immigration Studies, which advocates limits on immigration.

"They just want to try to convince everyone they're not as scary as everyone thought they were," Camarota said.

Some in Orange County, particularly those concerned about the high levels of illegal immigration, share Camarota's concerns.

They believe the Republicans' softer tone on immigration is merely an attempt to garner votes from the growing Hispanic constituency.

Frank Sharry, who advocates on behalf of immigrant rights as head of the National Immigration Forum in Washington is "really happy" with Bush's tone on immigration.

"But the problem is that with specific issues before the campaign, he has been resistant to take a stand," Sharry said. "Meanwhile, Gore and the Democrats have taken a stand that we like."

Sharry has been working with other immigrant-rights advocates such as National Council of La Raza, the nation's oldest Hispanic civil rights organization, to push legislation that is now known as the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act. The act collates three pieces of legislation that Democrats unsuccessfully tried to attach as amendments to a bill that would raise the cap on the number of H-1B visas for high-skilled foreign workers needed to fill computer and engineering jobs.

The amendments have stalled the H-1B visa bill in Congress, much to the chagrin of the high-tech businesses that say they desperately need the workers.

The Fairness Act, introduced three weeks ago, would allow:

- Immigrants who have been in the United States since 1986 to become permanent residents.
- Certain immigrants who are eligible for residency to remain the United States while their documents are being processed.
- Nicaraguans and Cubans fleeing human rights violations to become legal immigrants.

The legislation immediately received support from President Clinton and Gore, but Sharry said supporters have yet to hear from Bush or other GOP leaders.

Many in Orange County believe it's the kind of legislation that is sorely needed to deal with problems faced by undocumented immigrants who have been living in the United States many

Sounding similar

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years. They say the Fairness Act is a first step in addressing some of these problems but want more aggressive legislation that currently is not being addressed by either candidate.

Lillian French, principal of Wally Davis Elementary School in Santa Ana, believes Gore will do a better job of helping resolve problems resulting from illegal immigration. French, 40, a delegate at the Democratic convention, said she often hears of students who can't take advantage of higher education opportunities because they are undocumented.

"I think there are many instances where we need to look at our immigration laws and make sure we're not denying residency to people who could benefit us economically," French said.

Adam Acosta, a representative of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which represents about 5,500 employees in Orange County, also thinks immigrants play a key role in the economy but said it is difficult to protect their rights as workers because they are more hesitant to join unions.

Although neither candidate has publicly stated support for amnesty, he figures Gore, who often sides with labor, will be more likely to help pass an amnesty act of the type favored by the AFL-CIO to legalize undocumented workers.

Bush, who is known for his oft-repeated statement that "family values do not stop at the Rio Grande," has proposed changing immigration policy to encourage family reunification by allowing spouses and minor children of permanent residents to apply for visitor visas while their immigration applications are pending.

Republican convention delegate Pablo Molina, 60, whose Anaheim travel agency serves a predominantly immigrant clientele, believes a Republican in the White House would be better at reuniting families because he sees many families who are torn apart by current policies.

The real question will be whether Republicans in Congress would echo the immigrant-friendly sentiments expressed by Bush, especially if it's a Republican-controlled Congress that results after the elections.

"I think it's a very visible and high-stakes showdown to see whether the GOPs in Congress can follow their leader," Sharry said.

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Hispanics want GOP to follow diversity displays with action

Miriam A. Garcia American-Statesman Washington Staff

08/12/2000
Austin American-Statesman
Page A19
(Copyright 2000)

WASHINGTON -- Republicans will have to back up their message of inclusion with action if they expect to gain Hispanic votes in November, Hispanic and immigrant advocates said this week. Despite the spotlight afforded several Hispanics at last week's Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, leaders of the congressional majority have hesitated to act on immigration bills affecting about 900,000 Latin Americans, said members of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, a nonpartisan coalition of Hispanic organizations.

"We appreciate these symbolic marketing and outreach efforts," said Raul Izaguirre, a coalition member and the president of the National Council of La Raza. "But issues and substance more than marketing and symbols will decide who Latinos will vote for at all levels of government."

The coalition is pushing Congress to take action in September on the Latino Immigration Fairness Act, which would upgrade the status of immigrants already working in this country.

Coalition members wrote to Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore seeking support for the legislation. Bush has not responded. Gore wrote back in support of the bill.

"We want results, not issues," said **Frank Sharry**, executive director of the **National Immigration Forum**. "There was a chance to have a vote on these issues in the Senate and the GOP said no."

A Bush spokesman said the campaign's response was delayed by preparations for the Republican convention.

Meanwhile, Congress is seeking to vote on the H-1B bill, which would raise the limit on high-tech worker visas.

Some Democrats have said they want to add two parts of the Latino Immigration Fairness Act to the legislative agenda:

- * Changing immigration law to allow hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants to apply for permanent residence if they can show they have been in this country continuously since 1986. The eligibility cutoff is 1972 under current law.

- * Granting the same immigration benefits to Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians that were given Cubans and Nicaraguans. Haitians, for example, are treated much differently than Cubans when seeking permanent residence.

The coalition is also seeking to change the law that would permit immigrants to remain in this country while their permanent residency papers are being processed. That measure has less support among Democrats.

In a letter to the coalition, however, Gore expressed support for all three measures.

Dow Jones Interactive

Bush supports allowing families to remain in this country while immigration applications are being processed, said Ray Sullivan, a campaign spokesman. However, he said, "Gov. Bush does not support blanket amnesty and has not endorsed a specific bill currently pending in Congress."

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HISPANICS-IMMIGRATION HISPANIC LEADERS DEMAND APPROVAL OF RESIDENCY BILL

Rosendo Majano

08/10/2000

EFE News Service

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Washington, Aug 10 (EFE).- A coalition of Hispanic groups said Thursday that Hispanic voters "will be angered and frustrated" if the Republican-controlled Congress does not approve a bill soon which would benefit Hispanics.

This bill, which is backed by President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, would legalize the status of more than one million Hispanic immigrants who have been living in the United States for years.

Hispanic defense organizations, united under the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLEA), remain attentive to all promises made by Democratic and Republican legislators, who are energetically seeking to win the Hispanic vote before the November presidential elections.

Frank Sharry, of the **National Immigration Forum**, said Thursday that "Republicans spend more time talking about values than concrete proposals," and that Hispanic voters "would be angered and frustrated if politicians from the two main parties do not convert their words into actions."

During a press conference in Congress, Sharry and other Hispanic leaders said Hispanic issues were barely addressed in last week's Republican National Convention, despite the community's strong representation.

"Fortunately, there will be many opportunities in upcoming weeks for the Republican Party, and in particular its members in Congress, to show they are serious about the issues that are important to the Hispanic community," National Council of La Raza (NCLR) head Raul Yzaguirre said.

According to Yzaguirre, there are currently many bills in Congress that enjoy bipartisan support and which will benefit thousands of Hispanics and other minorities.

The NCLR leader also called for efforts to control illegal immigration along the U.S.-Mexican border to be more "humane," since many illegal immigrants have suffered abuses at the hands of U.S. Border Patrol agents.

Hispanic leaders confirmed their support for a bill that would allow illegal immigrants to present proof that they resided in the United States between 1972 and 1986, enabling them to get their permanent residency.

Another bill proposes that all Central American and Haitian refugees be included in the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), which is currently limited to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The NHLEA is also seeking to reinstate Section 245-I, which will allow prospective immigrants to live in the United States while their applications for permanent residency are processed.

The immigration clause expired in January 1999, separating thousands of people from their families, since they were forced to await their residency approvals in their homeland.

Hispanic leaders want Congress to approve a bill that will give children and pregnant women with U.S. residency access to health programs.

They also want legislators to issue food stamps to legal immigrants who entered the United States before the 1996 Social Security reform.

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Metro; Op Ed Desk

Commentary Latinos Want Substance in the Form of Amnesty Politics: Latino voters want more substance, less symbol. Granting amnesty to those here would go a long way.
FRANK del OLMO

08/15/2000

Los Angeles Times

Home Edition

Page B-9

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Latino Democrats, with the help of some labor union allies, have found a way to top Republicans in appealing for **Latino** voter support this election year--a gutsy, if risky, stance on behalf of amnesty for illegal **immigrant** workers. Will Vice President Al Gore, the presumptive Democratic nominee for president, heed their advice?

Texas Gov. George W. Bush, the GOP nominee, still has **Latinos** buzzing over the show of simpatico inclusiveness that the Republicans put on two weeks ago in Philadelphia. The party that most **Latinos** identify with **immigrant**-bashing measures like Proposition 187 sought **Latino** votes with prime-time speeches in Spanish, mariachis and salsa music.

But it was mostly a show--the kind of symbolism, rather than substance, Democrats used to get away with when they could take **Latino** voters for granted. Now that Bush has made it clear he will bid for **Latino** votes in key states like California, the Democrats must counter.

Last week's vote by California's Democrat-dominated Legislature to create a state holiday honoring the late farm-labor leader Cesar Chavez was a step in that direction, but is still just symbolism. With **Latinos** voters feeling empowered now that both major parties are courting them, it will take substance to win them over.

That is why a grass-roots coalition of **Latino**, religious and labor activists are urging Democrats to take a courageous stand on the divisive issue of illegal **immigration**. They are using the 2000 convention to lobby Gore and Democrats in Congress to support a new amnesty for illegal **immigrants** who have established roots in this country.

"We want to make sure we don't just get a smile and a pat on the back," said Eliseo Medina, a vice president of the Service Employees International Union who is leading the pro-amnesty campaign. "Speaking to us in Spanish is very nice, but we want our political leaders to show us something real."

The Democrats surely didn't plan it this way, but there is no better place to grasp the importance of **immigrant** voters in American politics than California. This state is the modern-day Ellis Island--the port of entry where thousands of ambitious young people from abroad come pursuing the American Dream.

There was a backlash against this **immigrant** wave in the early '90s, when California's economy was adjusting to the end of the Cold War. The nadir was Proposition 187 in 1994, but the tide has turned. Thousands of **immigrants** who were eligible for citizenship were frightened by the backlash into becoming citizens--fast! And they started voting in big numbers for the party that had opposed Proposition 187.

That is why Democrats now control the state Legislature, why there is but one statewide official who is a Republican--and why there is both idealism and pragmatism in the pro-amnesty stance

Latino Democrats are urging on their party.

Idealism because **Latino** citizens are spending hard-won political capital to benefit thousands, perhaps millions, of non-citizens.

Pragmatism because at least some of the **Latino** immigrants who may benefit from amnesty have friends and family members who do vote. And pragmatism in the possibility that **immigrants** who may become citizens after another amnesty will someday also vote for Democrats.

That's what happened with many of the 2.9 million **immigrants** legalized under the last big amnesty program approved by Congress, as part of the **Immigration** Reform and Control Act of 1986.

IRCA's history offers a precedent well worth the attention of Gore and other Democrats.

The last time the Democrats met in California--in 1984 in San Francisco--another **immigration** reform issue had **Latinos** riled up. That year they were out to stop the Simpson-Mazzoli bill, a proposal they considered draconian, but which was on the verge of final approval by Congress.

Then, as now, the presidential nomination had been largely determined before the convention began. Walter F. Mondale was widely expected to be nominated on the first ballot. But, led by former U.S. Rep. Edward R. Roybal, of Los Angeles, many of the 340 **Latino** delegates there threatened to embarrass Mondale by abstaining on the first ballot as a protest against Simpson-Mazzoli.

The threat worked. Former House Speaker Jim Wright and other top Democrats struck a deal with Roybal. Simpson-Mazzoli was shelved, and an effort to draft an **immigration** reform law more acceptable to **Latinos** began when a new Congress was seated in 1985. The result of all that convention maneuvering was IRCA, and its generous amnesty, in 1986.

There are currently a half dozen bills on Capitol Hill to liberalize U.S. **immigration** laws, some including new amnesty programs. Inside the Washington Beltway, conventional wisdom has it that none of those bills will become law. Medina and other **Latinos** think they can prove the conventional wisdom wrong. Don't count them out.



CARECEN

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

August 23, 2000

**To: Maria Echaveste
(Deputy Chief of Staff at the White House)**

**From: Randy Jurado Ertll
(Civic Participation Director, CARECEN)
(213) 385-7800 x159**

Re: Letters and Resolutions supporting the NACARA Amendment

I am faxing to you letters of support that we have obtained here in California from elected officials, labor, churches and Jewish organizations. We have passed the Los Angeles City Council, Los Angeles County, and California State Senate Resolutions in support of the NACARA Amendment.

We greatly appreciate your support and we hope that the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act (S. 2912) passes.

Thank you.


CARECEN

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

CENTRAL AMERICANS - THE NEW AMERICANS
SHARE THE AMERICAN DREAM OF OPPORTUNITY
THE VALUE OF HARD WORK
THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY AND HOME
 and
PRIDE IN BECOMING A PART OF AMERICA'S SUCCESS STORY

Central Americans are recognized as one of the most important new
immigrant groups in the United States. The majority
arrived during the 80s as a result of the
civil wars that engulfed the Central American region.

According to the 1990 census there were 1,041,100 Central Americans in the United States, including 458,700 Salvadorans and 216,000 Guatemalans. Although the majority fled political persecution and the conditions of war and civil unrest, their applications for asylum were routinely denied during the 1980s and they lacked access to refugee assistance available to such groups as Cubans and Vietnamese.

Central American immigrants differ from many other immigrant groups in that they are neither strictly economic migrants nor accepted as refugees, although they possess characteristics of both.

Central Americans are located in the main metropolitan centers in the United States: Los Angeles; San Francisco; Houston, Texas; New York; New Jersey; Chicago, Ill; Arlington, VA; Washington, D.C.; Seattle, WA; Boston, MA and Miami, Florida. Fifty two percent of the Central American population in the United States resides in the greater Los Angeles area.

Central Americans have been living and working legally in the United States since 1990.

In 1990, the United States granted temporary protected status, known as TPS, to Salvadorans who met certain prerequisites. Those that registered for TPS became eligible for Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). In addition, under the 1991 American Baptist Church v. Thornburg "ABC" settlement Salvadorans and Guatemalans who were class members could continue to reside and work legally in the United States while their asylum cases remained pending.

Central Americans entered the labor force in traditional low-wage industries such as garment and manufacturing and service jobs fueled by high tech industries, aerospace, information-linked industries, finance, shipping, and tourism. Their high work force presence has contributed to stemming inflation.

They pay payroll taxes, social security taxes, medical and sales tax, promoting economic vitality in the central cities where a majority of Central American immigrants reside.

Central Americans are keen entrepreneurs.

Central Americans are very proud of their tremendous work ethic; they understand the power they have as a buying force; and, they understand that Central Americans are leaders in bringing new

business and growth to areas where little economic opportunity previously existed. Salvadorans are the second largest Latino group in Southern California, after Mexican Americans. Almost a third are U.S. citizens, and about 13% are homeowners. Nearly 30% have annual household incomes of more than \$35,000; about 9% earn more than \$50,000. One-tenth of the community owns a business and 2% hold college degrees from American universities.

Considering that most of the Central Americans have been living in the United States less than 20 years, these statistics are remarkable

In addition to contributing to building strong communities in the United States, Central Americans are a strong pillar of the economies of the Central American region. Central Americans send an estimated \$3.5 billion in family support to their families in their countries of origin. A significant percent of the remittances is used by Central Americans to buy American products sold in the region.

In addition, the remittances help fuel the economies of Central America which, in turn, create jobs that help reduce migration to the north. The economic stability of the region is critical in supporting the nascent democracies of the Central American region.

Central Americans are proud to be Americans

Central Americans are becoming citizens and voting. For example, in the Los Angeles and Orange counties there are approximately 100,000 registered voters. These are new voters who are eager to participate in the democratic process of their adopted new country.

Many young men and women are also joining the U.S. military. For example, Spc. Angelica Ortiz, a 22 year-year-old Salvadoran woman, is among the thousands of U.S. military reservists from 18 states participating in a three-month training program in El Salvador. Spc. Ortiz left El Salvador as frightened 8-year-old. Fourteen years later she is back in El Salvador as a member of the U.S. army.

The Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) gave unequal treatment to Central American refugees.

In 1997, Congress enacted NACARA to provide immigration relief for certain Central American refugees with deep ties in the U.S. NACARA created two tiers of immigration relief: Nicaraguans and Cubans were given the opportunity to apply for permanent residence if they resided continuously in the U.S. since December 1, 1995, while Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees were provided with a much more limited and restricted relief called NACARA suspension of deportation. Honduran refugees were completely left out of NACARA. NACARA, as it stands now divides families.

Many young children of NACARA beneficiaries cannot seek NACARA relief once they turn 21 years of age, unless they entered the country before October 1, 1990. Because the U.S. Justice Department has taken so long to implement NACARA, thousands of once eligible young people have turned 21 and thus "aged-out" of eligibility. Many young, law abiding, students cannot continue their higher education and their dreams of becoming professionals in various fields such as math and science are ended. Such is the case of Jaime Osorio. His mother, Ms. Osorio fled El Salvador in 1989. In August 1991, her children Jaime and Ana reunited with their mother in California. Jaime, who arrived at age thirteen, graduated with honors from Francis Polytechnic

High School at age seventeen and was an outstanding ROTC member. He started studying at Cal State University Northridge, planning to major in Health Science, but due to an increase in tuition, he had to transfer to a two-year community college. Having received an Associate of Arts degree and completed additional courses in advanced physics, chemistry, calculus and biology, he hopes to return to Cal State Northridge to earn a bachelor of science degree so that he can achieve his long-term goal of obtaining a Ph.D. in biochemistry. Sadly, however, because he entered the U.S. after October 1990 and because he reached 21 before his mother could have her case adjudicated, Jaime does not have a means of becoming a lawful permanent resident.

However, given the opportunity to continue their dream young people like Jamie Osorio can, in the future, fill the high-tech jobs that are strongly needed in the United States.

In addition, NACARA's unduly burdensome and complex application process for Guatemalans and Salvadorans generate high administrative costs for INS.

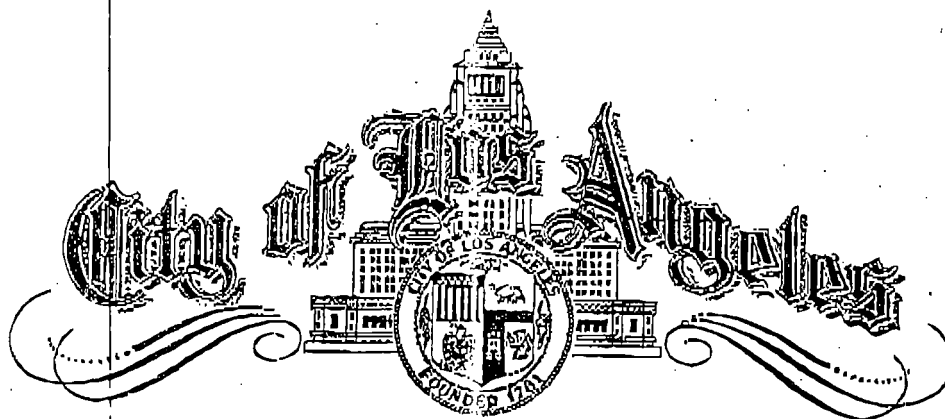
INS estimates that the parity legislation would cover 330,000 Salvadorans, 220,000 Guatemalans, 80,000 Hondurans and 50,000 Haitians. These statistics include, 190,000 Salvadorans and 50,000 Guatemalans already covered by NACARA. Therefore, approximately 440,000 people would benefit with a NACARA amendment.

The Central American Resource Center, CARECEN along with many national organizations and bi-partisan local, state, and federal elected officials strongly support the inclusion of the "Central American and Haitian Parity Act of 1999" (HR 2722 and S1592) in the H-1B visa legislation proposal. HR 2722 legislation sponsored by Congressman Christopher Smith (R-NJ) amends NACARA to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Hondurans, and Haitians an opportunity to apply for adjustment of status under the Act.

It is time that their newly adopted country end the legal immigration limbo and allow Central Americans to be full-fledged AMERICANS.

LEGISLATION THAT GIVES PARITY TO ALL CENTRAL AMERICANS
PROMOTES STABILITY IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD.

Prepared by Angela Sanbrano, Executive Director, CARECEN, 2845 W 7th St. Los Angeles CA 90005. For more information contact: Randy Jurado Ertll, Director of Civic Participation, (213) 385-7800 ext. 159. Cell phone (213) 924-4290. E-mail address: rjurado@carecen-la.org



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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
MAYOR

May 4, 2000

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
United States Congress
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemalan and Honduras an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans as were accorded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

John

Richard J. Riordan
Mayor

The New York Times: Editorial

July 5, 2000

Immigration Injustices

With unemployment rates at a 30-year low and strong growth in the high-tech sector, many technology companies are hard pressed to find enough programmers and other skilled workers to meet their needs. One way industry has dealt with the labor shortage has been to hire skilled foreign workers who are allowed to come to this country under special, temporary H-1B visas. But now demand for skilled workers is outstripping the number of such workers allowed in each year by statute. Congress needs to raise the visa cap temporarily to ease the shortages. It should also correct some severe injustices in the immigration laws that have hurt immigrants who have been in this country for more than a decade.

Under current law, H-1B visas, which permit foreign workers to stay in the United States for up to six years, are capped at 115,000 for fiscal year 2000 and will decline to 65,000 in 2002. There is bipartisan support in Congress to increase that cap for a limited time. One reasonable proposal, sponsored by Representatives David Dreier, Republican of California, and Zoe Lofgren, Democrat of California, would increase the cap to 200,000 visas per year through 2003. Their bill would set aside a number of the visas for nonprofit research institutions and would require that 60,000 visas be reserved for people with advanced degrees. The proposal would also increase the visa application fee to \$1,000 from \$500 and direct the money toward job training and education programs.

The Clinton administration supports a temporary increase in the visa cap, but with higher fees than the Dreier-Lofgren plan. It also wants Congress to correct some other immigration problems.

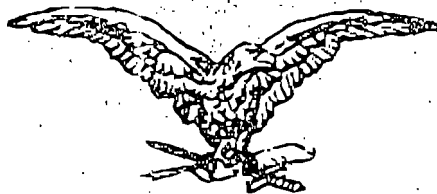
In 1997, Congress granted permanent residency to Nicaraguan and Cuban refugees who fled oppression by their leftist regimes in the 1980's. But it granted only lesser forms of relief to Guatemalans and Salvadorans who fled right-wing regimes, and it neglected Haitians and Hondurans. Congress should dismantle these distinctions and allow Central American refugees to apply for permanent residency on an equal basis.

Congress should also cure a legal mess left over from the 1986 immigration overhaul. At that time Congress granted amnesty to illegal aliens who had been in the country before 1982. But some 300,000 people were improperly denied the opportunity to apply for amnesty by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Years of litigation followed, with the courts ruling in favor of the immigrants. Then in 1996, Congress stripped the courts of jurisdiction over these cases, leaving these immigrants, a great number of whom had been granted work authorization, in legal limbo. A sensible bill now pending in Congress would allow these individuals and other similarly situated people who have been here since the mid-1980's to stay permanently.

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LOS ANGELES TIMES EDITORIALS



MARK H. WILLES, *Publisher*

KATHRYN M. DOWNING, *President and Chief Executive Officer*

MICHAEL PARKS, *Editor and Executive Vice President*

JANET CLAYTON, *Editor of the Editorial Pages and Vice President*

Rule Now on Immigrants

As President Clinton tours four countries in the storm-devastated Central American isthmus this week, he will be pressed to help solve the region's problems, and there is none more pressing than the fate of almost a quarter-million immigrants driven out not by storms but by war. They have lived in the United States since the 1980s and deserve a resolution of their status. Yes or no, stay or go.

Clinton should seize the occasion to state clearly, and immediately, that he intends to resolve the situation of the 190,000 Salvadorans and 50,000 Guatemalans who fled the Central American wars of the 1980s, most of them to Southern California.

At issue are the heads of families now living in the United States mainly under a disputed residence status. When they arrived, they were denied asylum by U.S. officials, despite the fact that most of them met the asylum requirement of being refugees fleeing from repressive regimes. The refugees sued and reluctantly Washington agreed to provide some relief, granting them permission to work in this country while their status was examined.

Then came the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act of 1997, which provided blanket amnesty to fleeing Nicaraguans and Cubans. The bill stipulated that Salvadorans and Guatemalans would have to apply on a case-by-case basis.

According to Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.), one of the authors of the so-

called NACARA bill, the law intended that Guatemalans and Salvadorans "be provided with a fair and equitable opportunity to demonstrate that they should be permitted to remain in the United States and pursue permanent residency." But that is not the message coming from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which has adopted an unnecessarily restrictive interpretation of the law.

Instead of presuming that these immigrants would suffer in their native countries if they were deported, the Immigration Service insists they present proof to an immigration official that deportation would mean

"extreme hardship" for them and their family members. Supporters estimate that requirement will cost each immigrant between \$2,000 and \$6,000 in lawyers' fees. And it will be up to an INS official to decide what constitutes extreme hardship.

Here, Clinton has an opportunity to redress a wrong. He can and should make a fair decision on this group of Central Americans who got caught up in wars in which Washington had a significant hand.

The president should consider that these immigrants have grown roots in America, borne children here and made a life and a living. That they became victims of war was largely a matter of chance. Clinton should eliminate that element in this situation and give a fair hearing and then amnesty to all deemed worthy of it. And he should hesitate no longer.

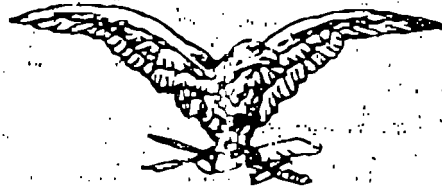
Clinton should resolve the situation of the 190,000 Salvadorans and 50,000

Guatemalans who fled the Central American wars of the 1980s.

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TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 1999

LOS ANGELES TIMES EDITORIALS

MARK H. WILLES, *Publisher*KATHRYN M. DOWNING, *President and Chief Executive Officer*MICHAEL PARKS, *Editor and Executive Vice President*JANET CLAYTON, *Editor of the Editorial Pages and Vice President*

Play Fair With These Refugees

The Clinton administration has devised a plan that should help resolve one of the nation's most difficult immigration issues, the status of nearly 500,000 Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees who fled their countries during the Central American wars of the 1970s and 1980s.

They will not receive the blanket amnesty that Congress granted two years ago to Cubans and Nicaraguans who fled Communist-led regimes. The status of the Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees is murkier. The regimes they fled were supported by U.S. administrations during Central America's civil wars. They will not get a free pass, but that does not mean they should be denied an opportunity to make a case to stay.

Under the Clinton administration program, those seeking to remain must file new documents to back their claim to refugee status and, ultimately, to remain as legal residents. Failure to make a case could lead to deportation. That judgment will be made by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

It won't be easy for applicants to complete the complex and intimidating process. Paperwork will require the help of a professional consultant, counsel that most immigrants

cannot afford. In all fairness, the INS should simplify the rules and be as generous as the cases allow in making its decisions.

Advocates say the refugees should have been given asylum and some sort of legal status the moment they set foot on U.S. soil. But the Reagan and Bush administrations held that only 3% of them were victims of a war fought with U.S. assistance. From postwar evaluations by knowledgeable investigators, that number seems incredibly low. The INS should take a hard look at what appears to be a dubious barrier.

Now, more than a decade after fleeing the genocide in Guatemala and death squads in El Salvador, many of these immigrants have put down roots in the United States and borne children who are American citizens. In many cases they could not return to their home countries without risk. Like all civil wars, those in El Salvador and Guatemala have long shadows.

The INS will begin accepting applications for refugee status June 21. Community-based support groups like the Central American Resource Center should deploy their resources to assure that the refugees get a fair hearing. They have paid the price.

A32 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1999

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Without Taxpayer Expense

THERE IS A way to provide hurricane-struck Central America with billions in prompt, steady and effectively targeted aid without a penny's expense to U.S. taxpayers. But it will take some legislative and bureaucratic agility to produce it.

The smart way would be to provide the option of immediate permanent residence to those who fled upheaval in Central America in the '70s and '80s and whose immigration status is uncertain now. That status is already given to Nicaraguans as a class, but it is offered to Salvadorans and Guatemalans only on a slow, costly and uncertain case-by-case basis. Permanent residence would allow the several groups of beneficiaries to continue sending home the billions in remittances crucial to a region that was still gasping for rebirth even before Hurricane Mitch delivered its once-in-a-century haymaker in November.

So why not make it fairer and easier for Salvadorans and Guatemalans, who otherwise face being deported or going underground?

Because the immigration law of 1997 compels them to prove *on an individual basis* that their deportation would result in "extreme hardship"—a proof, as we say, slow, costly and unreliable to make.

And why was the law written in this unequal fashion? Because Cold War immigration law has consistently favored those who fled communist-led regimes (such as Nicaragua in the '80s, unlike Guatemala and El Salvador). And, adds House immigration Chairman Lamar Smith of Texas, because this is what immigration groups asked for in a famous suit alleging unfairness in administration of the law.

To treat immigration privileges as foreign aid to friends in distress—this cannot be the law's first purpose. But in the special circumstances of Central America, which is (1) devastated, (2) close and (3) dependent, it is a good second purpose. The case is strong for touching up the law while administering it as flexibly as possible and otherwise supporting President Clinton's appeals for the reconstruction of the region.

LOCAL NEWS / WEATHER

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METRO

SPECIAL REPORT / LOCAL ELECTIONS

Issues May Be Scarce,

Los Angeles Times

but Passion and Politics Aren't

LOCAL NEWS / WEATHER

METRO

SECTION

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SUNDAY

APRIL 11, 1999



PERRY C. RIDDLE / Los Angeles Times

Salvadoran Vice Consul Oscar Sariles, center, talks with, from left, Maria Julia de Melendez, Sussy Quintilla and Ana Mello at Sal-PAC fund-raiser.

Salvadorans Stake Their Claim in Southland Political Game

By ANTONIO OLIVO
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Sure, \$550 spread among three City Council candidates is not likely to win any elections.

But to Southern California's approximately 750,000 residents with roots in El Salvador, that money—raised for races in Los Angeles and Glendale by Salvadoran Americans—represents a major victory. With it, members of this fast-growing community have staked their claim in local politics, hoping to emerge from obscurity and elect

a few of their own.

Those are goals of the Salvadoran American Political Action Committee, or Sal-PAC, the only registered lobby for Central Americans living in the U.S.

This group of lawyers, entrepreneurs and other professionals—most of them in their 20s—aims to push the Salvadoran perspective on an array of issues affecting the region's about 1.5 million Central Americans—including crime, health care and immigrant rights.

Their efforts are a sign of what

Please see GROUP, B5

GROUP

Continued from B1

observers call growing sophistication in the Central American community as Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Nicaraguan families who fled civil wars in the 1980s sink deeper roots in Southern California.

"There is no political voice yet among Central Americans," said Mari Lopez, a Sal-PAC board member who coordinates community programs for the National Assn. of Latino Elected Officials. "What there is amounts to a little squeak."

But as they apply for citizenship in greater numbers, "People from Central America are starting to look for attention from their elected officials," she said. "We have our own issues that are different than the rest of the Latino community. But when it comes to public education and the quality of life in our neighborhoods, we have the same concerns as everybody else."

Second-Largest Latino Group in Southland

A 1996 demographic study of local Central Americans conducted by the Latino officials association and the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute in Claremont showed signs of prosperity in the Salvadoran community, slightly more than among Guatemalans and Nicaraguans.

Already, Salvadorans are the second largest Latino group in Southern California, behind Mexican Americans. Almost a third are U.S. citizens, the study found, and about 13% own their own homes. Nearly 30% have annual household incomes of more than \$35,000; about 9% earn more than \$50,000. One-tenth of the community owns a business, the study found, and 2% hold American college degrees.

The numbers are promising, considering that most have been living in the United States less than 20 years, said Sal-PAC President Randy Jurado-Ertll, 26, a political strategist with the California League of Conservation Voters.

"We're becoming a vibrant community with a growing middle class, kids who go to universities and become professionals and families who follow politics here and not in El Salvador," said Jurado-Ertll.

Like leaders in the Jewish or Irish communities before them, he said, Sal-PAC intends to establish its community's political clout in true American fashion—with money. The group also hopes to carve a political bloc from the about 100,000 Salvadoran American registered voters in L.A. and Orange counties.

State Sen. Liz Figueroa (D-Fremont) and Duarte school board member Reyna Diaz are the only Salvadoran Americans now holding public office in California. "Our ultimate goal is to have one of our own board members run," Jurado-Ertll said.

For Tuesday's elections, Sal-PAC endorsed city council candidates Alex Padilla and Madison Shockley in Los Angeles, and Gus Gomez in Glendale, splitting the \$550 among them and providing campaign volunteers. The group raised about \$5,000 for the state elections in November, divided among five candidates, including Gov. Gray Davis.

The money isn't much, but "every little bit helps," said Padilla, a 26-year-old Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate who has collected \$200,000 in his bid to fill the council seat in the northeast San Fernando Valley that Richard Alarcon left vacant when he became a state senator.

At their fund-raisers and meetings, Sal-PAC members tell politicians that Central Americans will someday play a key role in local elections.

More and More Move Out of Pico-Union

Salvadoran American families are increasingly moving from the Pico-Union area near downtown L.A., where most new arrivals settle, to the northeast Valley, southeast Los Angeles County and north Orange County, community leaders said.

Noting the same shift in his hometown of Pacoima, Padilla, a Mexican American, said, "One of my favorite taco stands as a kid is now a *pupuseria*."

Along Van Nuys Boulevard, in what for years was a mostly Mexican American area, there are clusters of Salvadoran restaurants specializing in *pupusa* meat pastries.

The group's outward migration from its barrio near downtown provides Sal-PAC with increased clout, group leaders say. "We can be the swing vote in several districts," Jurado-Ertll said.

In November, Sal-PAC helped register more than 5,000 Salvadoran American voters on behalf of Anaheim Democrat Lou Correa, providing the Mexican American with breathing room in an Assembly race he won by 5,300 votes.

"My area has the second lowest voter turnout in the state," said Correa, whose district includes the Salvadoran Consulate in Santa Ana. "Voter turnout is the key to any victory. To us, [the registration drive] was golden." Beyond mobilizing voters, the value of Sal-PAC is getting people to become aware of their issues," he said.

A chief concern among Salvadorans is what the group calls unfair treatment of immigrants under the federal Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997.

A byproduct of lingering Cold War views, the federal immigration statute grants blanket amnesty to Nicaraguans and Cubans who fled the Sandinista and Castro regimes. For Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees, however, who fled U.S.-backed dictatorships during the 1980s, the law requires each individual to prove that he or she would suffer "extreme hardship" if deported, a costly legal hurdle.

Sal-PAC and other Central American activists say the policy cripples immigrant efforts to gain legal residency and ignores proof of widespread human rights violations in El Salvador and Guatemala.

Sal-PAC has begun lobbying to change the law, which the Clinton administration is already scrutinizing. When President Clinton toured Central America last month to witness the destruction left by Hurricane Mitch, Jurado-Ertll was part of a contingent that flew to El Salvador to lobby for changes in the immigration law.

The issue, said Jurado-Ertll, took a back seat to the hurricane.

"We didn't have much access to the Clinton administration," he said. "But we've advised other groups on what to say to his aides. Hopefully, the message got through."

'A Continuation of the American Dream'

Some legislators have agreed to champion Sal-PAC causes. At a recent fund-raiser at the San Salvador Restaurant near downtown, aides to Rep. Xavier Becerra, Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard and Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa, all Los Angeles Democrats, sampled a \$25-per-plate *pupusa* buffet and talked over live *cumbia* music.

Assemblywoman Gloria Romero (D-Alhambra) told the audience of 50 or so Salvadoran activists and business leaders that the formation of Sal-PAC "is a continuation of the American dream." She also urged unity among Central Americans and Mexican Americans.

The sentiment is spreading, as local Guatemalan, Nicaraguan and Honduran leaders view Sal-PAC as a model for their own aspirations.

Guatanet—a national nonprofit group for Guatemalan Americans, who number about 500,000 in Southern California—predicts a Guatemalan political lobby being formed this year. About 100,000 Nicaraguan Americans live in the Southland too.



**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held June 13, 2000, the Board took the following action:

56

Supervisor Burke made the following statement:

"The Central American population in Los Angeles County is one of the largest in the nation. In 1997, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). While this much needed legislation allowed the adjustment of status for permanent residency by Nicaraguan and Cuban refugees, it neglected to include other similarly situated groups.

"In light of the similar circumstances endured by Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans in their countries of origin, it is imperative that they be treated with equity by U.S. immigration laws. Like the Nicaraguans and Cubans, thousands of people that form these neglected groups have suffered from human rights violations, political repression, economic instability and violent persecution.

"Currently, thousands of Central American families (many with American born children) contribute greatly toward Los Angeles County's social and economic prosperity. As law-abiding taxpayers, Central-Americans offer tremendous diversity and exhibit a very strong commitment toward democracy. Recognizing their importance in our communities, Congress is presently considering the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act (HR 2722, S.1592) that will offer the opportunity of permanent residency to qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans who have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995.

"Adoption of this legislation would afford Central Americans similar protections to those previously extended toward Cambodians, Chinese, Cubans, Hungarians, Laotians, Nicaraguans, Yugoslavians, Vietnamese and many others."

(Continued on Page 2)

Syn. 56 (Continued)

Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Burke, seconded by Supervisor Molina, duly carried by the following vote: Ayes: Supervisors Burke, Yaroslavsky, and Molina; Noes: Supervisors Knabe and Antonovich, the Board took the following actions:

1. Went on record in support of adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), legislation which would provide qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans that have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995, the opportunity to adjust status to permanent residents of the United States; and
2. Instructed the Executive Officer of the Board to send a letter to the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation, Senators Feinstein and Boxer, and President Clinton, expressing the Board's support for enactment of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), or its inclusion in other immigration legislation.

5061300-56

Copies distributed:
Each Supervisor
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel

Letters sent to:
The President
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Richard J. Durbin
Congressman Christopher H. Smith
Each Member, Los Angeles County Congressional
Delegation



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

383 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

GLORIA MOUNA
YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
ZEY TAROSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411

June 14, 2000

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
SR-364 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1304

Dear Senator Durbin:

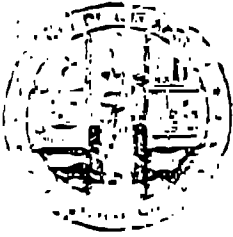
At its meeting held June 13, 2000, on motion of Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors went on record in support of adoption, or inclusion in other immigrant legislation, the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592, legislation which you authored. Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich voted in opposition to this action.

Very truly yours,

Violet Varona-Lukens

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

5061300-56

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

383 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**GLORIA HOUNA
YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
ZEY YABOSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH****VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411**

June 14, 2000

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Congressman
United States House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0530

Dear Congressman Becerra:

At its meeting held June 13, 2000, on motion of Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors went on record in support of adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), or its inclusion in other immigrant legislation. This legislation would provide qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans that have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995, the opportunity to adjust status to permanent residents of the United States. Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich voted in opposition to this action.

Very truly yours,

*Violet Varona-Lukens***VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

5061300-56



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

392 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

GLOEIA MOUNA
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ZEN YANOSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411

June 14, 2000

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Senator
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer:

At its meeting held June 13, 2000, on motion of Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors went on record in support of adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), or its inclusion in other immigrant legislation. This legislation would provide qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans that have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995, the opportunity to adjust status to permanent residents of the United States. Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich voted in opposition to this action.

Very truly yours,

Violet Varona-Lukens

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

561300-56

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

385 KENNETH MANN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90013

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

GLORIA MOLINA
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ZEV VABOSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICHVIOLET VARONA-LUKENS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411

June 14, 2000

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Senator
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0504

Dear Senator Feinstein:

At its meeting held June 13, 2000, on motion of Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors went on record in support of adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), or its inclusion in other immigrant legislation. This legislation would provide qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans that have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995, the opportunity to adjust status to permanent residents of the United States. Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich voted in opposition to this action.

Very truly yours,

*Violet Varona-Lukens*VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

5031300-56



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

393 KENNETH MAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

GLORIA MOLINA
YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
ZEY TAROSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411

June 14, 2000

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

At its meeting held June 13, 2000, on motion of Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors went on record in support of adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, H.R. 2722 (Smith) and S. 1592 (Durbin), or its inclusion in other immigrant legislation. This legislation would provide qualified Guatemalans, Haitians, Hondurans and Salvadorans that have continuously resided in the United States since December 1995, the opportunity to adjust status to permanent residents of the United States. Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich voted in opposition to this action.

Very truly yours,

Violet Varona-Lukens

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

5051300-56



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FAX (213) 847-0707

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Member of the City Council
Seventh District

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(818) 756-9115
FAX (818) 756-9270

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8135 SAN FERNANDO ROAD
SUN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 91352
(818) 756-7558
FAX (818) 756-8512

SYLMAR DISTRICT OFFICE
12517 HUBBARD STREET
SYLMAR, CALIFORNIA 91342
(818) 756-8409
FAX (818) 962-4857

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: May 16, 2000

TO: Ramirez

FACSIMILE#: (213) 385-1094

SENDER: Ana Cubas

SUBJECT: Resolution

COMMENTS: May 23 10:00 AM

OF PAGES (including cover sheet) _____

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, two years ago, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), which protects Nicaraguan and Cuban refugees by enabling them to remain permanently in the United States as immigrants. But many Central Americans and Haitians were unfairly excluded from that bill; and

WHEREAS, we must correct the unfairness and discrimination involved in treating Nicaraguans and Cubans more favorably than similarly situated Central Americans and Haitians — all of these refugees should be treated equally; and

WHEREAS, legislation is currently pending in Congress which would end this disparity; it would remedy this omission by adding Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians to the list of deserving refugees; and

WHEREAS, these Central American and Haitian refugees, like Nicaraguans and Cubans, fled decades of violence, human rights abuses, and economic instability resulting from political repression. They suffered persecution at the hands of successive repressive governments. Central Americans and Haitians supporting democracy have faced torture, extra-judicial killings, imprisonment, and other forms of persecution; and

WHEREAS, like other political refugees, Central Americans and Haitians have come to this country with a strong commitment to democracy, their children, that have been born here, are U.S. citizens; and in the City of Los Angeles, just as in other places where they have settled, they have made lasting contributions to the economic vitality and diversity of our communities and our nation; and

WHEREAS, these refugees through their own private efforts are able to send funds to their families and these amounts have become a primary source of income for families who lost their jobs as a result of the hurricanes that ravaged these countries last year. Repatriating thousands of Central Americans and Haitians will impose a great burden on these countries. Allowing Central Americans and Haitians to remain here as legal residents will enable them to continue to provide assistance that will contribute substantially to vital economic recovery and reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, the Central American and Haitian Parity Act (HR 2722, S.1592) will provide qualified Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians who have lived in this country since December 1995 with the opportunity to become permanent residents of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, this type of opportunity is similar to the assistance this nation has given to other refugees, including Hungarians, Cubans, Yugoslavs, Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, Poles, Chinese, and many others — Central American and Haitian refugees deserve protection too — the same protection we gave to Nicaraguans and Cubans; and

WHEREAS, there is a window of opportunity to have this important legislation enacted by including it into another bill, the American Competitiveness in the Twenty-first Century Act of 2000 (HR 4227, HR 3983 and S. 2045) which would increase the number of highly skilled foreign workers to come to the United States through the H-1B visa;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles supports the Central American and Haitian Parity Act (HR 2722, S.1592) to provide qualified Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians who have lived in this country since December 1995 with the opportunity to become permanent residents of the U.S.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Los Angeles hereby also supports the inclusion of, and urges Congress to include this legislation, the Central American and Haitian Parity Act (HR 2722, S.1592) into another measure, the American Competitiveness in the Twenty-first Century Act of 2000 (HR 4227, HR 3983 and S. 2045), which is currently being actively considered for enactment by Congress.

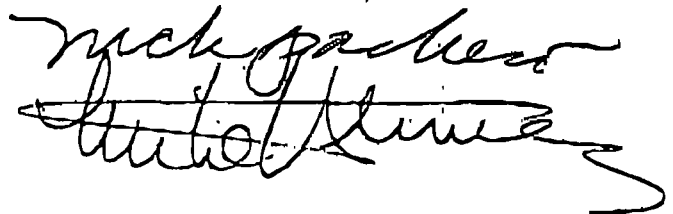
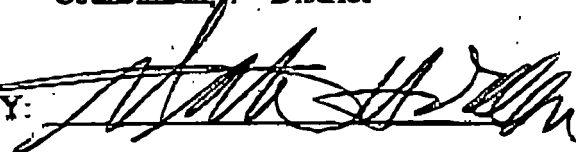
PRESENTED BY:



ALEX PADILLA

Councilman, 7th District

SECONDED BY:



CALIFORNIA SENATE
Regular Session 20-1-00, August 18, 2000
Rollcall 10:30 AM

passed

AYES: 20
NOES: 8
NOTV: 12

F# 60
SENATE 3RD READING
SR31 FIGUEROA

AYES

Alarcon
Alpert
Bowen

Chesbro
Costa
Dunn

Figueroa
Hayden

Hughes

Johnston

Kelley

Murray
O'Connell
Ortiz

Perata

Sher
Solis
Soto
Speier
Vasconcellos

NOES

Brulte

Haynes

Knight
Leslie

Monteith

Mountjoy

Poochigian

Wright

NOT VOTING

Burton

Escutia

Johannessen
Johnson

Karnette

Lewis
McPherson

Morrow

Peace

Polanco

Rainey
Schiff

SENATE RULES COMMITTEE	SR 31
Office of Senate Floor Analyses	
1020 N Street, Suite 524	
(916) 445-6614	Fax: (916)
327-4478	

THIRD READING

Bill No: SR 31
Author: Figueroa (D), et al
Amended: As introduced
Vote: 21

SENATE RULES COMMITTEE : 3-0, 8/7/00
AYES: Hughes, O'Connell, Burton

SUBJECT : Federal Central American and Haitian Adjustment
Act

SOURCE : Author

DIGEST : This resolution urges the President and Congress
to enact the proposed Central American and Haitian
Adjustment Act into law.

ANALYSIS : The passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform
and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 would have
applied, retroactively, strict regulations to a form of
relief from deportation (Suspension of Deportation) to many
individuals who have been living and working in the United
States for many years. In order to prevent the unfair
retroactive application of the new law to persons who came
to the United States fleeing civil wars, civil unrest, and
communism, Congress passed the Nicaraguan Adjustment and
Central American Relief Act (NACARA) in 1997. This act
provided immigration relief for certain Central American
refugees with deep ties in the United States. NACARA
created two tiers of immigration relief: Nicaraguans and
Cubans were given the opportunity to apply for permanent

CONTINUED

SR 31
Page

2

residence if they resided continuously in the United States

since December 1, 1995, while Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees were provided with a much more limited and restricted relief. Honduran refugees were completely left out of NACARA.

Resolution Findings :

1. Congress is currently considering legislation, the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act, that would amend the NACARA to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.
2. If enacted, the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act would extend to qualified people from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti the same opportunity to apply for permanent residence as was previously granted to qualified Cubans and Nicaraguans through NACARA.
3. The majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in the proposed Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; and, of these, the majority are from California.
4. These Central Americans and Haitians contribute many millions of dollars in taxes and are fueling the economic engine of California.

This resolution urges the President and Congress, and in particular Members of the California Delegation, to enact the proposed Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act into law, in order that nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti residing in this country are provided an opportunity to apply for an adjustment of immigration status and that qualified people may become permanent residents of this country.

Related Legislation:

S. 1592 (Sen. Richard Durbin) introduced September 15, 1999, and H. R. 2722 (Rep. Christopher Smith) introduced

SR 31
Page

3

August 5, 1999, (referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee) amends the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act to provide to certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of status under that Act and extends the application filing deadline.

Permits certain pending applications filed by Salvadoran or Guatemalan nationals under the Act or Haitian nationals under the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998

to be converted to an application for status adjustment under the Act.

Amends such Acts to: (1) authorize the Attorney General to waive certain grounds of inadmissibility; and, (2) provide for issuance of immigrant visas to certain spouses and children.

Provides for the limited reopening of certain orders of deportation, exclusion, or removal by certain Haitian, Cuban, or Nicaraguan nationals.

FISCAL EFFECT : Fiscal Com.: No

SUPPORT : (Verified 7/18/00)

MALDEF, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Board of Supervisors, Los Angeles County
CHIRLA, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)
Proyecto Pastoral at Dolores Mission
First United Methodist Church of Los Angeles

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT : Proponents contend that adoption of the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act would afford Central Americans similar protections to those previously extended toward Cambodians, Chinese, Cubans, Hungarians, Laotians, Nicaraguans, Yugoslavians, Vietnamese and many others.

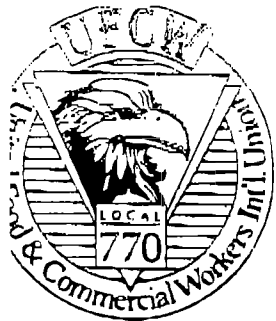
LC:sl 8/8/00 Senate Floor Analyses

SR 31
Page

4

SUPPORT/OPPOSITION: SEE ABOVE

**** END ****



UFCW LOCAL 770

UNITED FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION • AFL-CIO-CLC

RICARDO F. ICAZA, *President*

April 25, 2000

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

We are writing in support for the inclusion of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to H-1B legislation, which is being co-sponsored by you, Senator Spencer Abraham and other Congressional representatives.

As you know, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in this country continuously as of December 1, 1995. While NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians as were acceded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

Further, the vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S.1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more that a decade. In addition, the majority are residents of California.

By including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S.1592 in H-1B legislation, you will help ensure that Central Americans receive equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Your Southern California Director, Guillermo Gonzales, met with the undersigned and Miguel Contreras, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, today at the Federation's office. We have asked him to set up a meeting with you on our behalf, and on behalf of Angela Sanbrano and Randy Juardo Ertell of the Central American Resource Center, on Friday, May 19, or Saturday, May 20, in Los Angeles.

April 25, 2000

Honorable Dianne Feinstein

Page 2

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you regarding this critical matter. Although I will be out of the country, my representative, Jim Rodriguez, would attend in my place.

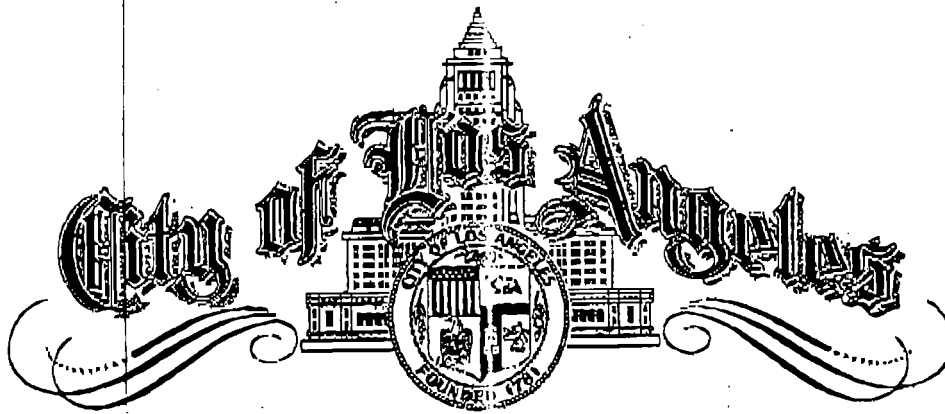
I look forward to an early reply to this request.

Sincerely,

UFCW LOCAL 770

Ricardo F. Icaza, President

RFI:jd



CITY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 847-2489

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
MAYOR

May 4, 2000

Honorable Representative David Dreier
U.S. House of Representatives
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Representative Dreier:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemalan and Honduras an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans as were accorded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Riordan
Mayor

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 842849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0048
(916) 319-8048
FAX (916) 319-2148
DISTRICT OFFICE
OVIATT BUILDING
617 SOUTH OLIVE STREET
SUITE 710
LOS ANGELES, CA 90014
(213) 833-2900
(213) 833-2907 FAX

E-mail: Gil.Cedillo@assembly.ca.gov

Assembly
California Legislature



GILBERT A. CEDILLO
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-SIXTH DISTRICT
ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

CHAIR:
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #1
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEES:
BUDGET
APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY
ELECTIONS, REAPPORTIONMENT
AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

July 27, 2000

Honorable David Dreier
United States Representative
237 Cannon Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Dreier:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust the immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians, as were granted to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade. This issue is of particular importance for me since I represent one of the districts with the highest concentration of Central Americans in the United States.

I am joining California legislators in asking you to play a leadership role in ensuring that Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians are given equal treatment by our immigration laws. Therefore, I respectfully request that you support our Central American communities in California and throughout the United States.

Sincerely,

Gil A. Cedillo
Assemblymember 46th District

Serving the communities of downtown Los Angeles, Civic Center, Boyle Heights, Koreatown, Little Tokyo, Pico Union, Pilipino Town, South Park, Temple-Beaudry, Westlake, Wilshire Center, portions of Chinatown and East Los Angeles

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(213) 833-2907 FAX

E-mail: Gil.Cedillo@assembly.ca.gov

July 27, 2000

Honorable Trent Lott
United States Senator
487 Russell Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Lott:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust the immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians, as were granted to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade. This issue is of particular importance for me since I represent one of the districts with the highest concentration of Central Americans in the United States.

I am joining California legislators in asking you to play a leadership role in ensuring that Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians are given equal treatment by our immigration laws. Therefore, I respectfully request that you support our Central American communities in California and throughout the United States.

Sincerely,



Gil A. Cedillo
Assemblymember 46th District

Assembly
California Legislature

GILBERT A. CEDILLO
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-SIXTH DISTRICT
ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

CHAIR:
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ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Serving the communities of downtown Los Angeles, Civic Center, Boyle Heights, Koreatown, Little Tokyo, Pico Union, Filipino Town, South Park, Temple-Beaudry, Westlake, Wilshire Center, portions of Chinatown and East Los Angeles


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Assembly
California Legislature


GILBERT A. CEDILLO
ASSEMBLY MEMBER, FORTY-SIXTH DISTRICT
ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

CHAIR:
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #1
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

COMMITTEES:
BUDGET
APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY
ELECTIONS, REAPPORTIONMENT
AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

July 27, 2000

Hon. Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust the immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Honduras, and Haitians, as were granted to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade. This issue is of particular importance for me since I represent one of the districts with the highest concentration of Central Americans in the United States.

I am joining California legislators in asking you to play a leadership role in ensuring that Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians are given equal treatment by our immigration laws. Therefore, I respectfully request that you support our Central American communities in California and throughout the United States.

Sincerely,



Gil A. Cedillo
Assemblymember 46th District

Serving the communities of downtown Los Angeles, Civic Center, Boyle Heights, Koreatown, Little Tokyo, Pico Union, Pilipino Town, South Park, Temple-Beaudry, Westlake, Wilshire Center, portions of Chinatown and East Los Angeles


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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
MAYOR

May 4, 2000

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
United States Congress
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemalan and Honduras an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans as were accorded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Riordan
Mayor



NALEO Educational Fund empowering Latinos to participate fully in the American political process

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**Hon. Lucille Roybal-Allard
Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus**

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Boardmember, Dade County School Board**

**Hon. Raymond G. Sanchez
Speaker, New Mexico
House of Representatives**

**Hon. Gaudil Vasquez
Southern California Edison Company**

**Hon. Mary Rose Wilcox
County Supervisor, Maricopa County**

**Executive Director
Arturo Vargas**

April 21, 2000

**The Honorable Diane Feinstein
United States Congress
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510-0504**

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, I urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, (the Central American and Haitian Act) to H-1B legislation.

The Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), provides Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their unlawful status to a lawful one given that they have resided in the United States since December 1, 1995. However, this legislation does not extend this same opportunity to Salvadoran, Guatemalans, Hondurans or Haitians. Therefore, I hope you will consider the provisions, H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 that include the majority of Central Americans who have resided and have legally worked in the United States.

For those whose lives are already deeply rooted in California and other states, these provisions can secure equitable treatment under U.S. immigration laws. Your support will help to ensure that Central Americans receive recognition of the tremendous contributions they have already made to American society and its economy.

The NALEO Educational Fund is the leading organization that empowers Latino to participate fully in the American political process, from citizenship to public service. The NALEO Educational Fund is a national non-profit, civic research and action organization whose constituency includes the more than 5,400 Latino elected and appointed officials.

In conclusion, Central Americans still recovering from war, natural disasters and economic instability exist in legal limbo while U.S. immigration laws selectively offer protections for similar groups. Therefore, it is necessary to assure that our democracy serves all groups by supporting the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act.

Sincerely,


**Arturo Vargas
Executive Director**

WWW.NALEO.ORG

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Los Angeles, CA 90040

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Fax (323) 720-9519

□ 311 Massachusetts Avenue, NE

Washington, D.C. 20002

(202) 546-2536

Fax (202) 546-4121

□ 4920 Irvington Blvd., #B

Houston, TX 77009

(713) 697-6400

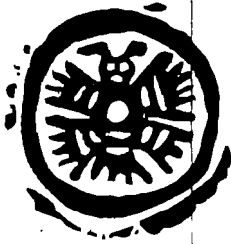
Fax (713) 694-2229

□ 853 Broadway, Suite 1920

New York, NY 10003

(212) 777-8335

Fax (212) 777-8611



MALDEF

MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE
AND EDUCATIONAL FUND

1717 K Street NW, Suite 311 • Washington, DC 20036 • (202) 293-2828 • (202) 293-2849 FAX

April 25, 2000

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) supports the bipartisan legislation introduced by Representative Christopher Smith (R-NJ) and Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), (H.R.2722), which will provide equal treatment for Central American and Haitian immigrants.

The passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRAIRA) would have applied, retroactively, strict regulations to a form of relief from deportation (Suspension of Deportation) to many individuals who have been living and working in the United States for many years. In order to prevent the unfair retroactive application of the new law to persons who came to the U.S. fleeing civil wars, civil unrest, and communism, Congress passed the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) in 1997. Those who were helped by NACARA include nationals from Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and certain Eastern European countries. However, the provisions of NACARA do not treat similarly situated individuals the same.

Under NACARA, Nicaraguans and Cubans are permitted to adjust their status to that of Permanent Residents. Salvadorans and Guatemalans and certain nationals of the former Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact countries, on the other hand, still have to meet very difficult to satisfy rules that only permit them to qualify for Suspension of Deportation (now called Cancellation of Removal). In addition, NACARA does not extend any relief to Hondurans or Haitians who fled similar civil unrest in their home countries.

NACARA, while a step in the right direction, treats people in similar situations differently, and denies certain forms of relief to whole communities, most of whom are Latino. The legislation introduced by Representatives Smith and Gutierrez would correct that by giving qualifying Salvadoran, Guatemalan, Honduran, and Haitian immigrants the opportunity to become permanent residents.

Most of the nationals that would be affected by this legislation have lived in uncertainty about their status for many years. They have set down roots in their communities, living and working here with the permission of the U.S. government. Many have U.S. citizen children. MALDEF strongly supports bringing this uncertainty and differential treatment to an end and calls for an enactment of H.R. 2722.



MALDEF

**MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE
AND EDUCATIONAL FUND**

1717 K Street NW, Suite 311 • Washington, DC 20036 • (202) 293-2828 • (202) 293-2849 FAX

**MALDEF SUPPORTS H.R. 2722, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND HAITIAN
ADJUSTMENT ACT**

H.R. 2722, introduced by Representatives Smith (R-NJ) and Gutierrez (D-IL) would give Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians the same treatment as Nicaraguans and Cubans; allowing these nationals to apply for permanent resident status.

- Currently, under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) only Nicaraguans and Cubans are able to apply for permanent resident status. There is no relief for Hondurans or Haitians who have fled their countries for reasons similar to those of the Nicaraguans and Cubans. Salvadorans and Guatemalans face strict rules that only allow them to apply for Suspension of Deportation (now called Cancellation of Removal).
- H.R. 2722 amends NACARA to allow qualified Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians to apply for permanent resident status.
- H.R. 2722 sets an application deadline of April 1, 2003 (also extending the deadline for Cubans and Nicaraguans to that date).
- The requirement of NACARA which mandates that a dependent of a Cuban or Nicaraguan or Haitian must also be Cuban, Nicaraguan, or Haitian would be eliminated under H.R. 2722. (This requirement does not exist for the Salvadorans and Guatemalans covered by NACARA).
- The Attorney General is given the authority to waive certain grounds of inadmissibility based on health and misrepresentation under H.R. 2722.
- H.R. 2722 provides for the limited reopening of certain orders of deportation, exclusion, or removal by certain Haitian, Cuban, or Nicaraguan immigrants.

March 6, 2000

The Honorable Dennis Hastert
Speaker
US House of Representatives
H237 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert:

The undersigned organizations, representing a broad array of American Jewish groups, strongly support the bipartisan *Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act*, introduced by Representative Christopher Smith and cosponsored by 99 other House members. The bill extends to qualified persons from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti the same opportunity to apply for permanent residence as was granted to Cubans and Nicaraguans through the *Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act* in 1997.

The Jewish community, which both has benefited and been victimized by historical US immigration laws, continues to believe that a generous and responsible immigration policy protects family unity, strengthens the economy, and enriches our multiethnic culture.

Enacting this legislation into law will stabilize the emerging democracies of Central America, especially at a time when there is considerable instability in South America. A loss of the billions of dollars in remittances would be devastating for Central American economies still recovering from civil wars, and most recently, Hurricane Mitch.

Additionally, this act will provide similarly-situated war refugees equitable treatment under US laws. It will eliminate the legal limbo encountered by individuals who have resided in the United States for a long time, some for over 15 years. All of these individuals share similar tragic histories of civil conflict in their home countries. Currently, their lives – and in many cases their children's lives, too – are deeply rooted in the United States.

Moreover, the *Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act* will bring a long history of discriminatory treatment of individuals to a close. Many of the individuals who will be covered by this legislation came to the United States and encountered an asylum system that treated similar groups differently. While helping certain vulnerable immigrants, the *Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act* perpetuated this discriminatory treatment.

Accordingly, we urge your support of the *Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act* and request that you make its passage a legislative priority for this year.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Congress
Anti-Defamation League
B'nai B'rith International
Hedessah, The Women's Zionist Organization
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
National Council of Jewish Women
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
United Jewish Communities
Women of Reform Judaism, The Federation of Temple Sisterhoods



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER
9911 W. PICO BLVD., SUITE 1602
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90035
(310) 282-8080
(310) 282-8668 FAX

Richard S. Volpert
President

July 10, 2000

Rabbi Gary Greenebaum
Western Regional Director

Susan Godlib
Director
Resource Development

Senator Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
Washington DC, 20510

Vice Presidents
Kenneth S. Bernstein
Brian Cohen
Charles Franklin
Barry V. Freeman
Paul Goodwin
Judi Kauffman
Jeffrey Kichaven
Marsha Kwalwasser
Joel R. Mogy
David P. Rousso*
Barry A. Sanders*
William Sater
Michael Umansky
Cathy Unger
Peter M. Weil

Dear Senator Feinstein,

We write to render our support for *The Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act (H.R. 2722/S.1592)*, which seeks to extend to qualified war refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti the same opportunity to adjust to permanent resident status offered to Cubans and Nicaraguans by the 1997 Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). We feel it is of great importance to extend protections to these refugees who have suffered under similar political and economic conditions.

Treasurer
Bertram Massing

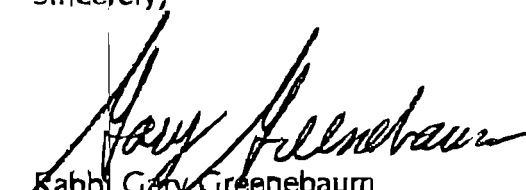
The American Jewish Committee has been in the forefront of organizations seeking to foster human relations worldwide since it was founded in 1906. We stand ready to assist you in your future endeavors in this regard.

Secretary
Leonard Weinberg

Sincerely,

Los Angeles Members
National Board of Governors

Henry Bamberger
Ruth Block
Marcia Burnam
Elliot Caplow
Howard I. Friedman*
Bertram Given
Arthur N. Greenberg*
Audrey Skirball Kentis
Bertram Massing
Joel R. Mogy
Bruce M. Ramer*
Lawrence Ramer
David P. Rousso*
Barry A. Sanders*
Cathy M. Siegel*
Sanford C. Sigoloff
Donald Simon
Michael Umansky
Leonard Weinberg
Ira E. Yellin*


Rabbi Gary Greenebaum
Western Regional Director

cc: CARACEN, Los Angeles

*Past President



July 28, 2000

Dear Senator:

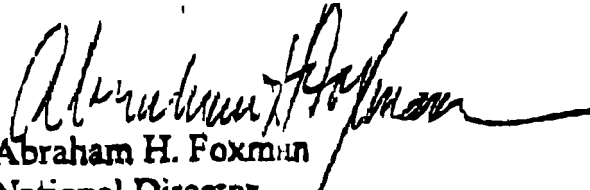
We are writing to urge your support for the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act," which would help Central American, Haitian and other immigrants currently in the US who have been caught in a state of bureaucratic limbo.

This bill would correct a longstanding injustice by allowing qualified refugees who fled turmoil in countries such as El Salvador and Haiti the same opportunity to adjust to permanent resident status offered to Cubans and Nicaraguans by the 1997 Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA).

Another key provision would restore Section 245(i) of the Immigration Act, allowing immigrants who qualify for permanent residency to remain in the US with their families while they complete the final stages of the immigration process. Otherwise, these immigrants who work here to support their families must leave the country until their petition is approved.

We hope you will support this measure and ensure that our immigration policy reflects this nation's values of fairness.

Sincerely,


Abraham H. Foxman
National Director

cc: Jess N. Hordes, Washington Director

NO. 2 GENERAL GOVERNMENT
 CHAIR, LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
 CHAIR, JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRISON CONSTRUCTION & OPERATIONS
 CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL & VOCATIONAL STANDARDS
 CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE AMERICAS



California State Senate

Senate Majority Leader

SENATOR RICHARD G. POLANCO
 TWENTY-SECOND SENATORIAL DISTRICT

MEMBER:
 BUDGET AND FISCAL REVIEW
 BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE
 ELECTIONS AND REAPPORTIONMENT
 FINANCE INVESTMENT AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE
 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 LOCAL GOVERNMENT
 PUBLIC SAFETY
 TRANSPORTATION

April 19, 2000

Senator Diane Feinstein
 United States Congress
 331 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to express my support and to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H1-B legislation, of which you are a co-sponsor along with U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham, Congressman David Dreier, and Congressman Zoe Lofgren.

The "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" (H. R. 2722 and S.1592), are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

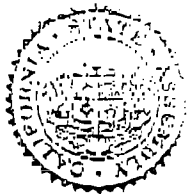
If enacted, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" (H.R. 2722 and S. 1592) extends to qualified persons from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti the same opportunity to apply for permanent residence as was granted to Cubans and Nicaraguans through the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) in 1997.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade.

I am joining California legislators in asking you to play a leadership role in ensuring that Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians are given equal treatment by our immigration laws. It is important to provide Central Americans and Haitians the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

I respectfully request that you support our Central American and Haitian communities in California and throughout the United States, they deserve a fair and humane opportunity to make the American dream a reality.

Richard G. Polanco
 California State Senate
 Chair, Latino Legislative Caucus



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
SPEAKER of the ASSEMBLY

April 11, 2000

Representative David Dreier
U.S. House of Representatives
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Dreier:

I am writing to express my support for the inclusion of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NARCARA) to H-1B legislation being co-sponsored by you and U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham and U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein.

The inclusion of NARCARA in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 will provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti who have been in the United States continuously since December 1, 1995, an opportunity to apply for adjustment of their immigration status from unlawful to lawful. The majority of these people have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade and deserve an opportunity to adjust their legal status in this country.

The inclusion of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 to H-1B legislation is an important step to ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NARCARA and that they receive the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ant R L", written over a horizontal line.

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
Speaker of the Assembly

AV/acn

cc. President Clinton
Congressmember Lucille Roybal-Allard
Congressmember Maxine Waters

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Assembly California Legislature



HERB J. WESSON, Jr.
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT

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- Utilities and Commerce

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- California Wine
- Compton Unified School District
- Entertainment and the Arts
- Exposition Park
- Indian Gaming
- Native American Repatriation

May 16, 2000

Dear Senator, Congressmember:

I am writing to express my support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians as were acceded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

If enacted, H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 extends to qualified persons from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti the same opportunity to apply for permanent residence as was granted to Cubans and Nicaraguans through NACARA in 1997.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti deserve the same humane and fair opportunities as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

HERB J. WESSON, JR.
Member of the Assembly

HJW:slw



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(916) 327-2439 FAX

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(408) 286-0329
(510) 413-5963 FAX

E-MAIL:
SENATOR.FIGUEROA@SEN.CA.GOV
WEBSITE:
WWW.SEN.CA.GOV/FIGUEROA

California State Senate

SENATOR
LIZ FIGUEROA

TENTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS
CHAIR

COMMITTEES:

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
INSURANCE
TRANSPORTATION



April 24, 2000

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Congress
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to express my support and to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA. This issue is of particular importance to me as I am one of the few elected officials in the entire country from El Salvador.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians as were accorded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

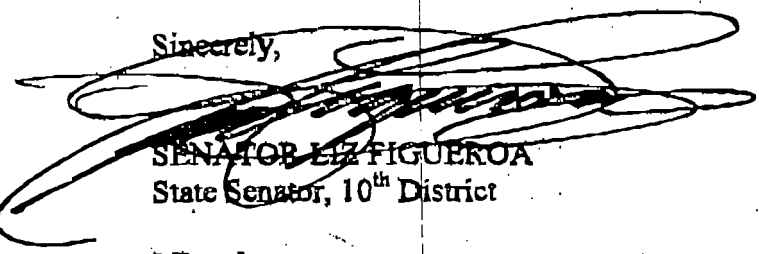
If enacted, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" (H.R. 2722 and S. 1592) extends to qualified persons from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti the same opportunity to apply for permanent residence as was granted to Cubans and Nicaraguans.

COUNTIES OF ALAMEDA AND SANTA CLARA

through the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) in 1997.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti deserve the same humane and fair opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,



SENATOR LIZ FIGUEROA
State Senator, 10th District

LF:mab

California State Senate

SENATOR

HILDA L. SOLIS

TWENTY-FOURTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

REPRESENTING THE COMMUNITIES OF ALHAMBRA, AZUSA, BALDWIN PARK, BARKETT, BRINDEGAR, CITY TERRACE, EAST LOS ANGELES, EL MONTE, EL SEPTIMO, HACIENDA HEIGHTS, INDUSTRY, IRVINGDALE, LA PUENTE, MONTEREY PARK, ROSEMEAD, SAN GABRIEL, SOUTH GATE, VALHALLA, AND PORTIONS OF NORTH WHITTIER, SOUTH EL MONTE, TEMPLE CITY, WEST COVINA AND GLENDALE



SENATE COMMITTEES

CHAIR

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA TRADE AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, AND LABOR

MEMBER

BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW

ENERGY, UTILITIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

FINANCE, INVESTMENT, AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

NATURAL RESOURCES

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

SELECT COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE PREPARATION

April 6, 2000

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Congress
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0504

Dianne

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation, of which you are a co-sponsor. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguan and Cuban Nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians as were accorded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; furthermore, the majority are residents of California.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

Hilda L. Solis

HILDA L. SOLIS
Senator, 24th District

cc: Congressman David Dreier

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942049
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0057
(916) 319-2057

DISTRICT OFFICE
15625 STAFFORD STREET, SUITE 200
CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91744
(828) 861-8402

Assembly California Legislature



MARTIN GALLEGOS, D.C.
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT
CHAIR, ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE

COMMITTEES:

BANKING AND FINANCE
BUDGET
INSURANCE
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #1 ON
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
JOINT COMMITTEE ON
MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

SELECT COMMITTEES:

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CHAIR
ALAMEDA CORRIDOR EAST
MEDICAL FRAUD
MENTAL HEALTH
SAN GABRIEL VALLEY
GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION

April 25, 2000

Representative David Dreier
U.S. House of Representatives
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Dreier:

I am writing this letter to express my support and to urge your support for the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation, of which you are a co-sponsor. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that would amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti who have been in the United States continuously since December 1, 1995, an opportunity to apply for adjustment of their immigration status from unlawful to lawful under NACARA.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade; the majority here in California.

I am joining California legislators in asking you to play a leadership role to ensure that Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians are given the same opportunity under NACARA as other groups to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

Martin Gallegos
MARTIN GALLEGOS, D.C.
Assemblymember, 57th District

MG:gd

Committees

Audit
Instruction/Curriculum/Student Achievement - Chair
Lifelong Learning
Student Health and Human Services - Chair



DAVID TOKOFSKY
MEMBER OF THE BOARD
5TH DISTRICT

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
CITY OF LOS ANGELES**

July 20, 2000

Senator Trent Lott
487 Russell Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Lott:

I am writing this letter to urge your support of the attachment of the provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592, the "Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act" to the H-1B legislation. H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 are both bipartisan supported bills that amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of immigration status under NACARA.

As you are aware, NACARA was created to provide Nicaraguans and Cuban nationals in the United States the opportunity to adjust their immigration status from unlawful to lawful if they were in the country continuously as of December 1, 1995. NACARA also contained some provisions relating to suspension of deportation for other Central Americans. However, this law did not provide the same opportunity to adjust immigration status for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Haitians as were acceded to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The vast majority of Central Americans who will benefit from the provisions contained in H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 have resided and legally worked in the United States for more than a decade. They pay payroll taxes, social security taxes, medical and sales tax, promoting economic vitality in major U.S. cities.

In closing, by including the important provisions of H.R. 2722 and S. 1592 in H-1B legislation you will help ensure that Central Americans are given equal treatment under NACARA. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti deserve the same opportunity as others to apply for permanent residency.

Sincerely,

David Tokofsky

c: Central American Resource Center

**Office of the President**

3211 Fourth Street NE Washington, DC 20017-1194 (202) 541-3100 Fax: (202) 541-3166

Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza, D.D.

Bishop of Galveston-Houston

President

October 28, 1999

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write on behalf of the U.S. Catholic Bishops to ask your assistance for special immigrant populations who are deserving of the opportunity to become lawful permanent residents of the United States. These groups have lived in the United States for years and have established strong ties within their local communities, but for various reasons have been denied the opportunity to remain in our country on a permanent basis.

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) allowed for the legalization of close to 1 million undocumented immigrants. Approximately 350,000 of those eligible were denied their opportunity to legalize because, according to the interpretation of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), they had briefly traveled abroad in violation of the continuous residency requirement of the statute. This situation has led to the filing of several law suits in the federal courts. As a result, these individuals have remained in an indefinite legal status for over 12 years, with no current hope for permanent residency and facing the prospect that they could soon lose their work authorization and be deported back to their countries of origin.

It is the view of the U.S. Catholic Bishops that this population should have their cases resolved expeditiously. The class has lived in the United States at least since 1982, and many have begun families, started businesses, and otherwise contributed to the economic and social fabric of our great nation. We ask you to work with Congress over the next several weeks to fashion a remedy which brings justice to these people and their uncertain situations.

I also would express our support for your Administration's recent initiative promoting legislation which assists Central American and Haitian populations who fled civil strife in their countries and have rebuilt their lives in the United States. As you know, the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), which you signed in November 1997, permitted Nicaraguans and Cubans who fled persecution in their countries during the 1980s and have been present in the United States since December 1, 1995, an opportunity to adjust to lawful permanent resident status. However, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians-- similarly-situated groups who also left their homelands for similar reasons during the same

Page 2

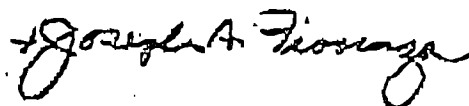
The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton

period--either did not receive equal treatment under the NACARA or were excluded from the legislation altogether. At the time you signed the NACARA, you rightly expressed concern with regard to the disparate treatment given to these groups.

At your behest, legislation has been introduced in Congress (H.R. 2722, S. 1592) which would address the unequal solutions provided similarly-situated Central Americans and Haitians. As the Congress approaches adjournment for the year, we ask that you continue to push for passage of this legislation, which will afford these groups the chance to become permanent residents of the United States and plan their futures with confidence.

Thank you for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Most Reverend Joseph P. Fiorenza
Bishop of Galveston-Houston
President



514 C Street N.E.
Washington, DC 20002
Tel. (202) 546-2536
Fax (202) 546-4121

RE: Support H.R. 2722, the Central American and Caribbean Adjustment Act

October 26, 1999

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

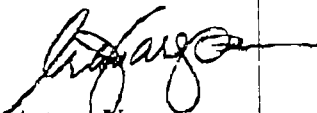
Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLEA), we write to urge your support of HR 2722, the *Central American and Caribbean Adjustment Act* introduced by Congressman Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) and Congressman Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ). HR-2722 seeks to remedy the unfair and disparate treatment that resulted with the passage of NACARA which granted permanent residency to Cubans and Nicaraguans. The NHLEA is a non-partisan coalition of 30 national Hispanic organizations and distinguished Hispanic leaders from across the nation. Votes associated with this issue may be included in the NHLEA Scorecard for the 106th Congress.

Central American immigrants are vibrant members of American society and the Latino community; they work hard, pay taxes and are active participants in the economic and cultural enrichment of their communities. It is our opinion that an amendment to NACARA is urgently needed to end the long and terrible uncertainty facing Salvadoran, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitian families who have lived in immigration limbo over a decade. We stand with our fellow Central Americans in their demand for equality and parity under the law. Your support for HR2722 would send a strong message to Congress that it is time to amend the law.

As you may know, thousands of Central American immigrants are U.S. citizens and many more are eligible to apply for naturalization. Once present delays are solved many will complete the process and start to vote. They must feel that U.S. laws and institutions treat people equally despite perceived partisan preferences in Congress. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,


Arturo Vargas
NHLEA Chair

cc: Congressman Luis Gutierrez (D-IL)
Congressman Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ)
Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)
Senator Richard J. Durbin (D-IL)
Oscar Chacon, President, Salvadoran American National Network

code
72 104 3500

EMPLOYMENT

Democrats Unite Behind Clinton On C-J-S Immigration Provision Senate and House Democratic leaders Tuesday affirmed their intention to stand with President Clinton, should he exercise his plan to veto the FY2001 Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations bill because of its lack of provisions to normalize the status of a number of Hispanic, Caribbean and Liberian nationals. At a news conference, Senate Minority Leader Daschle and House Minority Leader Gephardt said they had sent Clinton a joint letter to that effect signed by 43 Senate Democrats and 152 House Democrats. "This is as unified as you'll ever see the Democratic caucus. We could not be more emphatic that this is going to happen," Daschle said. "To my knowledge, this is the only instance where [the president is] proposing to veto a bill because of what is not included. It shows the unique nature of this legislation and the strength of our feelings on it." The Senate earlier Tuesday agreed overwhelmingly to clear a procedural hurdle on its way to considering H-1B visa increase legislation--which Democrats and the White House originally had sought to use as the vehicle for the immigration proposal. Daschle said Democrats stood ready to press for that option, but conceded other means would have to be explored, mostly because of the popularity of the H-1B bill on both sides of the aisle. The next steps for the Senate are a cloture vote on the H-1B bill itself and a vote on final passage. Lott said additional action on the H-1B measure could come in the next few days or early next week. "We can do this easy, or we can do it hard," Lott said, referring to Democratic insistence on the other immigration matters. Gephardt, who joined Daschle at Tuesday's news conference, urged House Republican leaders to bring H-1B visa legislation sponsored by House Rules Chairman Dreier, among others, immediately to the floor. House leaders have shied away from broaching that legislation, partly because of concerns Democrats would demagogue the immigration issue--a decision Gephardt characterized as "a false choice." Dreier retorted: "I look forward to seeing if Democrats can drop their partisan attacks in the Senate and truly pass a bipartisan bill. If they can, I'm confident we'll be able to move in the House." Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., chairwoman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, said the goal of bringing "fairness and justice to immigrants ... culminates" in the pending immigration legislation. Roybal-Allard, who complained that backers of that proposal could not get an open debate in the House, said the feud underscores the "difference" between the parties. "Republicans talk about supporting Latinos, while Democrats back their rhetoric of support with positive and firm action," she said. Lott told reporters Tuesday his main objections to the immigration legislation at this point were "procedural" rather than substantive, and he thought the measure "could be wrapped in such a way that I could be for it." Senate Judiciary Chairman Hatch, who argued on the floor Tuesday against the proposal, laughed when asked whether he thought the immigration legislation ultimately would be included in the budget. "Are you kidding? That would be totally irresponsible."

OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

Reforming Tort Reform

In late 1999 and early 2000, tort reformers seemed on a roll. After years of promoting multifaceted--and unwieldy--bills that seemed to go nowhere, business groups had decided to separate their legal reform priorities into a series of simpler, narrower bills that would not force backers to engage in as much horse trading. Using this strategy, tort reformers racked up several

victories in the House, even though the GOP--traditionally the party of tort reform--possessed only a slender majority. All told, four bills passed the House, with one--legislation limiting companies' liability for year 2000 computer problems--actually becoming law. As late as this summer, lobbyists expected that the Senate would send at least some of the bills to President Clinton's desk. But as the 106th Congress draws to a close, it is not tort reformers who seem to have momentum on their side. It is their arch enemies: trial lawyers and consumer advocates. For one thing, the successful House bills--which would have lightened legal burdens on smaller companies, machine tool makers and targets of class action suits, among others--got stuck behind more pressing legislation in the Senate. As the year went on, a series of legal reform appointments piled up. The tort reformers' biggest success--presidential approval of the Y2K bill--effectively fizzled when few Y2K problems materialized around the globe. Later, senators from both parties joined in torpedoing another liability reform bill, one that would have changed how asbestos-related injury claims are handled. Setting the Y2K bill aside, even the three other successful House bills had winning margins that began to look hollow. Trial lawyers pointed out that the margins of support had declined substantially from what they were during the "Contract with America" year of 1995. Perhaps more ominously for tort reformers, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America--the trial bar's leading advocate--notched some victories while playing offense. Earlier this year, Congress and the president modified the Death on the High Seas Act to allow survivors to collect non-economic damages for deaths caused by commercial aviation disasters at sea. And the Patients' Bill of Rights legislation--which allows wronged patients to sue their HMOs--won dozens of GOP supporters, not to mention much positive attention for candidates on the campaign trail. Even the flow of current events over the summer gave trial attorneys a boost. Problems with Firestone tires demonstrated how lawsuits can force the nation to pay attention to potentially dangerous everyday products. Even pop culture chipped in with the hit movie Erin Brockovich, which portrayed trial lawyers in a flattering light. "Right now, America is in a populist mode," said Linda Lipsen, ATLA's senior director for public affairs. "There had been a mythology that a lot of people were suing for frivolous cases, but the reality is different." She expressed confidence that the public mood would outlast even a change of party in the White House. Rep. W.J. (Billy) Tauzin, R-La., "was a tort reformer in the past, but when the Firestone issue hit, he was talking about his Explorer and how he was not able to get his tires recalled," Lipsen said. "All of a sudden, the issue hits home, because the people who drive sport utility vehicles are soccer moms and members of Congress." Tort reform advocates are not ready to throw in the towel. "The House has done as much as any recent Congress--and possibly more--to move forward legal reform," which bodes well for next year, said Mark Behrens, a partner at the law firm Crowell & Moring who specializes in legal reform issues. Sherman Joyce, president of the American Tort Reform Association, said that he was impressed by the progress of the class action reform proposal, which was introduced for the first time late in the 105th Congress. After being passed by the House, the proposal won the backing of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "I don't think we look at [the past few months] as a setback at all, just as the beginning of something that is inevitable," said Nelson Litterst, the director of federal public policy for the National Federation of Independent Business. "We've got an issue that not only a majority of members of the House support but which polls well, too--frivolous lawsuits against little guy." Behrens acknowledges that the prospects for legal reform will be "heavily dependent" on the outcome of the 2000 elections. Indeed, despite her side's apparent momentum, Lipsen of ATLA urges her colleagues not to become overconfident. "When you have every

Fortune 500 company fighting for reform, that always means trouble for consumers," she said.
"We should never take anything for granted."

Kay - hold BK & PORN
By Kandy fly w/ PORN
Hospital in Jacksonville.