

# **US - Which Way Immigration Reform? Toward a Comprehensive Immigration Policy (by Tom Barry, IRC)**

Friday 31 March 2006, posted by [Manuela Garza Ascencio](#)

*IRC - Why has immigration become such a hot social and political issue in the past few years? What is the intersection between immigration policy, domestic economic policy, and foreign policy in these times of rapid economic globalization and the global war on terrorism? And what are the outlines of a comprehensive immigration reform that would resolve the immigration policy crisis, protect immigrant and worker rights, and address legitimate citizen concerns, while at the same time deflating the agenda of the hard-line restrictionists who are setting the terms of the national policy debate? This is the first of two IRC discussion papers written by IRC policy director Tom Barry that aim to contribute to a constructive discussion of these pressing questions. We invite your criticisms and comments.*

There exist wide divides on the policy proposals to address immigration problems, but over the past several years, particularly since Sept. 11th, there is a growing political consensus among Democrats and Republicans that immigration reform should include the following measures:

Greatly increased border security, including more agents and surveillance equipment. Some system of verifiable electronic identification cards to ensure that only citizens and authorized residents can obtain employment.

While there is broad consensus on the need for more effective border security and for a national worker identification system, there is a narrower range of bipartisan consensus on the issues of "earned legalization" and guest-worker programs.

The hard-line restrictionists focus almost exclusively on punitive law enforcement measures and stricter border control. They refute all proposals for legalization, arguing that we can't have an immigration policy based on rewarding those who have broken the law by either entering the country illegally or allowing their temporary visas to expire.

This hard-line, enforcement-first approach to resolving the immigration issue is embodied in the "Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Control Act of 2005, which was shepherded through the House of Representative by Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI). In the Senate, majority leader Bill Frist (R-TN) introduced a reform bill that also takes the hard-line, enforcement-first approach that immigration restrictionists favor.

Since 1985 funding for border enforcement has quintupled and the number of Border Patrol Agents have increased tenfold, but illegal border crossings have dramatically increased-with an estimated 9 million immigrants having successfully albeit illegally immigrated since 1990. Nonetheless, there is widespread agreement, even among some immigrant advocacy groups, that the United States needs more Border Patrol agents and increased electronic surveillance, although bipartisan consensus on border control does not include agreement on the various proposals to wall off large sections or the entire U.S.-Mexico border.

Both proponents and opponents of legalization largely agree that the time has come for a worker identification system tied into a national database. Legalization opponents regard an ID system as a way to separate citizens from unauthorized immigrant workers, while legalization proponents argue that it would elevate immigrant workers from their underground status, reduce employer exploitation, and discourage new illegal immigration.

There is also broad support for a variety of guest-worker programs as part of a comprehensive immigration bill. Outside the policy community, the AFL-CIO and many progressive immigrant advocates oppose the introduction of new guest-worker or temporary worker programs because they contend that they will be used by business to undermine prevailing wage rates, obstruct union organizing, and deny workers their rights.

The comprehensive immigration reform measures outlined by President Bush, Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), Senators John Kyl (R-AZ) and John Cornyn (R-TX), and Senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and John McCain (R-AZ), while all echoing the call for increased border security, also address the central immigration issue of the continuing demand for labor by proposing different types of guest-worker programs. Under the Bush and the Kennedy-McCain bills guest-workers could apply for legal residency and eventually citizenship.

In the Kennedy-McCain bill, the guest-worker program is described as a way to address the need for new labor above and beyond the labor already provided by the existing illegal workforce-which would be eligible for "earned legalization" upon payment of fees, English language skills, and at least six years of work history. While the president also supports earned legalization, immigrants would only be eligible under his plan if they first registered as guest-workers-which constitutes a major disincentive for unauthorized workers who already have jobs and homes.

The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act, sponsored by Senators Kennedy and McCain, has received the backing of many pro-immigration groups, liberals, and moderates. President Bush's proposal has been endorsed by a coalition of corporations called Americans for Border Security and Economic Security, led by former House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) and former Rep. Cal Dooley (D-CA). But the president's proposals and most of those introduced in the Senate have been rejected by restrictionists as unacceptable because they provide legal pathways for immigration.

A clear signal that the Republican Party leadership is moving to embrace the restrictionist resurgence was the introduction in mid-March of a new immigration proposal by Majority Leader Frist. "Our country needs security at our borders in order to slow the flow of illegal immigration and make America safer from foreign criminals and terrorists," said Frist, mimicking the national security language of House restrictionists and such groups as the vigilante Minuteman Project. Weeks before Frist introduced his enforcement bill, a new Republican Party group called the Volunteer Political Action Committee had launched a public relations campaign featuring Frist that reached out to the right-wing blogs and websites with the message: "Help Me Secure the Borders."

Recognizing the rising political clout of the restrictionists, Frist and the Republican Party leadership are no longer dismissing the hard-line restrictionists but rather raising the level of fear-mongering and xenophobia themselves. Describing immigration as a "dangerous national security threat," Frist warns that the "scariest part" of illegal immigration is that "we have absolutely no idea what they'll do tomorrow on U.S. soil." The Frist proposal signaled that the Senate and the House may be able to agree on a new immigration bill that focuses exclusively on security-including increasing the number of Border Patrol agents, expedited deportation of all unauthorized immigrants (including from countries other than Mexico), and extended border fencing. Although policies addressing earned legalization and temporary worker programs are clearly needed for any comprehensive immigration reform, they are increasingly being regarded as too politically costly by both parties.

Immigration policy packaged as a national security imperative and as a nod to the respect for the rule of law will prove an easier political sell-despite falling far short of being comprehensive and solving none of the deep-seated problems associated with immigration as a labor-market issue, a human rights concern, and a source for an expanding underclass in U.S. society.

Other areas where the consensus breaks down include the following divisive issues:

\* The proposal to extend the border wall in the short-term to 700 miles and eventually along the entire U.S.-Mexico border.

\* The continuation or expansion of family reunification measures.

## **Backlash Measures Will Increase Tensions**

As discussion continues in Washington over the various reform bills, several measures under debate will clearly have a negative impact on U.S.-Latin America relations and increase racial tensions within the United States without having any countervailing benefits to U.S. society and economy. As such, the following policy reforms should be rejected:

### **1. Deportation of Illegal Immigrants**

While the U.S. government certainly has the right to deport foreigners residing in the country illegally (either entering without permission or overstaying their visas), such an initiative is neither practical nor ethical. By having tacitly accepted that 12 million “illegal aliens” constitute an integral part of U.S. workforce and society, the U.S. government has signaled that there is room in the United States for “illegal” residents. Rounding up and deporting massive numbers of immigrants is not practical, and would lead to human rights violations and an upsurge in anti-U.S. sentiment within neighboring countries. Not only would such a policy initiative-advocated by the restrictionists in the Republican Party-wreak havoc in U.S. communities, it would also severely debilitate the already fragile economies of sending nations by abruptly ending the flow of remittances and dangerously expanding the sectors of the unemployed and homeless.

### **2. Criminalization of Immigrants**

The proposal that those crossing into the country without visas be regarded as felons would constitute an egregious violation of international human rights norms. Not only would such a measure, actually approved by the U.S. House of Representatives, prove costly to U.S. taxpayers, it would constitute another blow against the U.S. reputation and make U.S. citizens traveling abroad vulnerable to in-kind retribution. What’s more, those advocating that illegal border-crossers be regarded and treated as criminals also would criminalize the act of sheltering or otherwise assisting these millions of unauthorized immigrants. As part of this criminalization of unauthorized immigrants, restrictionists in Congress and at the state and local levels also advocate that local law enforcement officials and other government employees turn over unauthorized immigrants to federal immigration authorities for prosecution and deportation.

### **3. Barricading U.S. Borders**

Formerly high-trafficked sections of the U.S.-Mexican border are already largely impenetrable because of previous decisions to erect imposing walls or fences. These barriers have proved highly effective in reducing illegal crossings at formerly favored immigrant crossing locations. However, they have not succeeded in decreasing immigration flows since would-be immigrants have sought new points of entry. Presumably, barricading the entire U.S.-Mexico border would dramatically decrease illegal immigrant traffic, but at an extremely high cost to U.S. international standing. As the United States has stepped up border control, including walls along parts of the border, many immigrants have decided to make the United States their permanent home because of the increased difficulty of returning for seasonal, temporary, or steady jobs. Further barricading the border would accentuate this trend.

### **4. Denial of Basic Services**

Contrary to the declarations of the anti-immigration forces, immigrants come to the United States to work, not to avail themselves of the country’s quickly shrinking safety net of social services. Measures that would deny immigrants and their children emergency and basic medical services and education are inhumane and would further stratify U.S. society, aggravate the public health crisis, and contribute to delinquency and crime. Such proposed initiatives would violate basic human rights. Contrary to the misinformation disseminated by anti-immigration groups, immigrants who receive basic social services are not getting a free lunch since they are taxpayers-paying their fair share of income, payroll, and sales taxes. But it should also be acknowledged that many communities, especially in the borderlands, are

finding that their budgets are being depleted by the increasing immigrant-related services, and the federal and state governments should step in to ensure that these are adequately compensated.

## **Two Poles of Thinking on Immigration Reform**

There are two opposite poles of thinking about how to deal with needed immigration reform.

For the hard-line restrictionists, any reform to address the immigration crisis must fundamentally be a new commitment to enforce existing laws and to create new measures to penalize unauthorized immigrants and those who support them. It should include provisions that would effectively rid U.S. society of immigrants living and working here illegally, while also attempting to implement strict border control. Even hard-line restrictionists like Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO) suggest that guest-worker and temporary worker programs may be needed to maintain a vibrant U.S. economy, although immigrant workers under such programs would not be eligible for citizenship and would be immediately returned to their country of origin if they lose the jobs for which they were contracted.

The other pole of thinking includes, to varying degrees, measures to legalize the established immigrant population and future immigration flows through guest-worker programs, legalization, and worker identification cards. Some liberal immigration reform groups include provisions for increased border security measures in their proposed reform packages. In marked contrast with the hard-line restrictionists, immigrant advocates and some liberal reform proposals call for more expansive family reunification measures and quicker processing of visas and immigration requests. In the current political climate, it is highly unlikely that Congress would approve the kind of expansive immigration reforms that are backed mostly by immigrant advocates and business groups.

A long-running problem of immigration reform proposals is that they are neither directly tied to foreign policy reform nor to national economic policy. As such, no matter how broad in terms of enforcement, employer sanctions, worker identification, temporary worker programs, or immigrant rights, they fall short of being “comprehensive.” While the lack of connectivity is true of many policies, it is a problem that is especially acute when it involves immigration reform because of the overlap with foreign policy, economic and labor issues, and state-federal relations.

At its core, our immigration policy should be primarily a policy that reflects broadly defined U.S. national interests-economic, security, social, political-and in doing so would benefit from widespread public support. To respond to and respect broad U.S. national interest in providing for the common welfare and security of its citizens, immigration policy should not be held hostage to special interest groups, whether they be business, immigrant advocacy groups, or the increasingly vocal anti-immigrant and anti-immigration forces. Immigration is too important an issue-one that has defined our past and will be a key in defining the future of our nation-to be left to the kind of political opportunism that is now rife in Washington and in state capitols as politicians position themselves to play on the emotions of voters.

## **A New Approach to Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

A truly comprehensive immigration reform would complement reforms in U.S. foreign policy designed to reduce the “push” factors that contribute to immigration flows to the United States, taking into account that its economic policies abroad currently contribute to the large number of “economic refugees” seeking to enter the country to escape poverty. It would also recognize the moral and legal responsibility of the United States to provide refuge for those fleeing wars and repression at home.

A comprehensive immigration reform bill would also be formulated within the context of a domestic policy commitment by government to full employment at livable wages and working conditions. An immigration policy, then, would be designed to supply workers-either permanent or temporary-to meet the labor needs of businesses and individuals, primarily by having policies that make employment available to citizens and other authorized workers, and secondarily fill business demands through the employment of foreign workers (first with ones already living in the country, and secondarily through strictly limited guest-worker and temporary worker programs).

While comprehensive immigration reform should be primarily forward-looking, it must also fairly address the presence millions of immigrant families who have established roots in U.S. society even though they lack proper documentation. Clearly, a massive deportation of illegal immigrants is neither feasible nor ethical. It is simplistic to argue, as the hard-line restrictionists do, that because millions of immigrants are in the country illegally, they should be treated as criminals and denied basic rights and social services.

By making jobs available and giving low priority to workplace enforcement of immigration laws, our society and economy have been complicit in the “illegality” of millions of immigrants. What’s more, the increased emphasis on border security over the past two decades has been a major factor in reversing traditional migration patterns in which Mexican workers regularly traveled back and forth across the border for seasonal and other temporary work.

A new immigration reform package should address the failures and shortcomings of previous immigration reform bills, particularly the 1986 reform package that included enforcement, employer sanctions, legalization, and aid to facilitate immigrant integration into U.S. society. In retrospect, the problems commonly identified with that bill are the following:

Weak employer sanctions that were difficult to enforce and in effect used mainly to intimidate workers. Lack of secure way to ensure that existing or prospective employees were actually citizens or legal residents.

Continuation of broad family reunification guidelines that sparked a vast “chain migration” of members of the extended family of legalized immigrants.

Insufficient government support to assist immigrant integration into U.S. society.

Increased emphasis on border security but failure of new border control funding to stem flow of unauthorized immigrant labor.

Failure to underscore the ethical and humanitarian objectives of U.S. immigration policy by giving priority to refugees fleeing repression.

A comprehensive immigration reform bill that responds to broad national interests while respecting the human rights of immigrants should contain the following main elements:

Creation of an “earned legalization” program for unauthorized immigrants who have established roots in U.S. society and economy that would require payment of fees and attending language and other courses to facilitate full integration into U.S. society and eventual citizenship.

The institution of a non-duplicable electronic worker identification document would be used only for seeking employment by citizen, resident, and newly legalized workers.

New family reunification laws that limit residence visas to the immigrant’s spouse and children, and include mechanisms for return visits.

No guest-worker or temporary worker programs, skilled or unskilled, until such time that the legalization, full-employment, and livable wage programs become fully implemented, and then only under the strictest of conditions and monitoring-to protect both resident and foreign workers.

High penalties for businesses that employ illegal workers after the implementation of a worker ID system. Give priority to refugees fleeing persecution and repression, and turn back measures that make it increasingly difficult for refugees to obtain asylum in the United States.

The above measures would discourage new illegal immigration, and thereby reduce the need for a border control system that focused on immigrant traffic, allowing customs and border officials to focus on smuggling of illegal or regulated drugs.

The issuance of worker identification cards, whether in the form of verifiable Social Security forms or the creation of a special worker identity card would have many benefits, including the reduced need for border controls, fewer immigrant deaths, reduced citizen/resident-immigrant resentment and backlash, increased opportunity for effective labor organizing, and more readily enforceable means to penalize employers.

There would also be risks and costs-including increased government (and potentially business) information gathering on individuals, greatly reduced opportunities for undocumented workers, and the loss of jobs and likely deportation (or voluntary return) of workers and family members who cannot meet the eligibility standards for earned legalization. Yet another cost-a grave one for sending countries and communities-is the likely gradual reduction of immigrant remittances as the numbers of immigrants working in the United States diminishes.

A new comprehensive immigration reform bill would need to effectively block new unauthorized immigrants from finding employment in the economy's formal sector and set prohibitively high penalties for those employing illegal immigrants in the informal sector, such as in construction or household services. The aim of a comprehensive immigration reform bill would be to effectively discourage all unauthorized immigration while working to ensure an adequate supply of labor to all sectors of the economy primarily through a combination of citizens and legal immigrant residents. If, after the worker ID system is implemented and the government institutes policies to encourage full employment (at living wages and decent conditions), the supply of workers is exhausted, then the U.S. government should initiate temporary or guest-worker programs that protect the rights of both native and foreign workers. Such programs should give workers a path to legal residency and citizenship.

### **Full Employment and Livable Wages**

What's needed is a comprehensive immigration reform package that includes legalization of unauthorized immigrants who have established economic and social roots in the United States together with employment measures that would obstruct future unauthorized immigrants from obtaining jobs. This would establish the foundation for new standards to assess what would constitute sustainable immigration flows into the United States, whether through immigrant visas, guest-worker, or temporary worker programs.

However, without an associated government commitment to domestic economic policies whose objectives would include full employment and livable wages, it's likely that many of the concerns the country now faces-growing numbers of unauthorized residents, increased pressure to barricade our borders against job seekers, and ability of restrictionists to tap feelings of resentment, fear, and vulnerability to create anti-immigrant backlash campaigns-would again surface.

Not since the end of World War II, when Congress passed the Employment Act of 1946, has the U.S. government been committed to an economic policy that provides full employment. In the past five decades, U.S. economic policy has become increasingly less concerned about creating the conditions for full employment.

Rather, our economic policy has measured economic progress more by such standards as increased trade, high corporate profits, high productivity, and low inflation-all assumed to be the product of a downward pressure on union organizing, a large surplus workforce (unemployed, women, migrants), deregulation of government oversight of business, government subsidies and tax breaks to business, and decreased wages and benefits. Economic globalization in the past couple of decades has accelerated these worker-unfriendly trends, leading to increased income inequality, unlivable wage rates, decline of unionization, and harsher working conditions.

A commitment to full employment implies a reversal of all these adverse trends. Instead, governments at the national, state, and local levels would recommit themselves to the objectives of full employment, livable wages, and an efficient social safety net for those unable to work. A small beginning of this reversal of priorities is the establishment of livable wage laws by some towns such as Cambridge and Santa Fe. An underlying assumption is that all workers, no matter what the industrial or service sector, would be paid a livable wage to ensure that all families have basic needs covered. Government regulation would ensure that all business sectors employ best practices so that no job would be considered undesirable by citizen/authorized resident workers because of demeaning working conditions or non-livable wages.

Through increased social services, such as universal medical insurance, the government would supplement the income for the working poor and middle classes. A full employment policy would not assume, as our society now does, that both father and mother need to work to ensure that the needs of themselves and children are met. Other elements of a full employment program might include job programs by the government to meet the real needs of communities. Such a package of programs would increase the domestic market by raising wages for those now receiving unlivable wages, while at the same time, if done properly, would increase productivity as a result of a more contented workforce.

Absent a national commitment to providing existing residents with jobs that can support themselves and their families, the immigration reform debate is subject to manipulation-on one side by Corporate America that benefits from a ready supply of cheap labor, and on the other side by right-wing populists who, by scapegoating immigrants, deflect popular attention from the real causes for economic insecurity and the fraying of the country's social fabric.

Despite the history of abuses and exploitation associated with guest-worker and temporary worker programs, such programs should remain a component of immigration policy, but not, as has been proposed, a permanent feature. Limited worker visas are a necessary part of doing international business with foreign firms, many of whom have substantial investment in the United States.

However, company requests for guest-workers or temporary workers-whether skilled or unskilled-should be immediately put on hold to give time to evaluate the impact of the legalization of undocumented residents and the impact of the range of full-employment and livable-wage policies. The U.S. government can begin to revert the downward pressure on wage levels by legislating that employers offer wages and benefits (such as minimum or livable wage laws) necessary to attract the vast numbers of unemployed and underemployed in our own country, and no longer assume they can run their businesses relying on cheap labor working in substandard conditions.

Similarly, the United States should reduce-rather than expand, as has been the trend-the current temporary worker programs for skilled workers, which not only are sidelining resident workers but are also depleting sending countries of their most skilled and educated citizens. As is, the U.S. practice of attracting professional, technical, and health workers, for example, undermines the human resource base of developing nations.

Hammering out a comprehensive immigration reform bill that gains public and bipartisan support will be difficult enough without insisting that it be tied to changes in U.S. economic policy, drug policy, and foreign policy. Over the medium and long terms, however, effective immigration policy will need to work in tandem with other policies that are directly or indirectly related to immigration flows into the United States.

It is unlikely that the U.S. Congress will approve a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the coming year-an election year when incumbents, especially moderates and liberals from both parties, will be reluctant to make themselves targets of restrictionist criticism. More likely in the short term is bipartisan approval at the national and local levels for measures that aim to increase border security, increase the authority of local police and other government officials to aid in the enforcement of immigration laws, and add new punitive measures that further restrict the integration of unauthorized immigrants into U.S. society.

## **Summary**

One of the main problems in organizing support for a fair, comprehensive, and effective immigration reform policy has been the lack of a conceptual framework to help policymakers evaluate the problems and benefits of immigration while at the same time linking immigration policy to both domestic economic and foreign policy. To summarize, a comprehensive overhaul of our immigration system would include these components:

Occurs in the context of a national economic policy that encourages full-employment at livable wages and

with respect for basic rights to organize. Prioritizes the entry of political refugees. Legalizes the presence of the large sector of unauthorized immigrants that have established roots in U.S. society and economy.

Leaves open the possibility for guest-worker programs that do not endanger the jobs of legal U.S. residents and guarantees respect for the rights of these temporary workers. Determines a sustainable level of legal immigration that benefits U.S. society and economy.

Reduces immigration visas for family reunification to ensure that any earned legalization program does not lead to large increases in legal immigration flows.

Deemphasizes border security, and instead places the emphasis of controlling illegal immigration on institution of a worker ID system.

Reforms U.S. foreign policy in ways that promote broad development and job creation in “sending” countries.

Protects the human rights (with special attention to labor rights and conditions) of all U.S. residents-whether legal or not.

### **Global Good Neighbor Ethics and Immigration**

In mid-2005, the IRC identified a similar problem in addressing foreign policy issues. The country needs a new framework for evaluating and shaping foreign policy-one that would ensure that our foreign policy really serves U.S. national interests and truly makes us more secure. We observed that the Good Neighbor policy launched by President Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s could serve as an animating vision for what we call “A Global Good Neighbor Ethic for International Relations.” Although we recognize that the FDR administration did not always abide by its own Good Neighbor principles, we concluded that its social democratic programs at home and emphasis of respect in international relations were a legacy that contrasted sharply with the pre-FDR era and with current policies and could serve as a starting point for a new foreign policy framework for the 21 st century.

We outlined seven principles as the core of a “global good neighbor ethic,” three of which are relevant to the challenge of forging a comprehensive immigration policy.

“Our nation’s foreign policy agenda must be tied to broad national interests. To be effective and win public support, a new foreign policy must work in tandem with domestic policy reforms to improve security, quality of life, and basic rights in our own country.”

Replacing “foreign policy” with immigration would make this principle work as a guideline for comprehensive and effective immigration reform. Responding to the broad national interests in immigration policy would mean addressing the concerns of citizen workers facing an increased supply of cheap, unorganized labor while at the same time recognizing that the U.S. economy has traditionally depended on immigrant workers and that immigrants will likely still be needed to keep the U.S. economy competitive and dynamic. If the U.S. public could be assured that its own needs for good jobs and social services were being met, then it would be more likely to support an immigration policy that legalized immigrants and created more legal channels for immigration.

“The U.S. government should support sustainable development, first at home and then abroad, through its macroeconomic, trade, investment, and aid policies.”

As is, the U.S. government has steadily moved away from a commitment to sustainable development either at home or abroad. Just as FDR committed the U.S. government to providing a “New Deal” for U.S. society through better government regulation of business and banks, support for community development, and innovative and productive job programs, the U.S. government must again commit itself to a domestic economic policy that ensures broad development at home rather than simply tending to the interests of big business. Similarly, the aim of its foreign economic policy has focused largely on furthering the interests of U.S. investors and exporters, with the sad result of increasing economic polarization and poverty in developing countries-the outcome being that the poor seek employment in the United States.

The first obligation of the U.S. government is to ensure that there is equitable development at home, but it also has an ethical obligation (and a self-interest) to terminate macroeconomic, trade, investment, and aid policies that increase the push factors to emigrate. This would include a commitment to use its considerable influence in such financial organizations as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to support policies that alleviate poverty and foster broad development in contrast to the neoliberal policies it has long promoted. Similarly, the U.S. government could foster sustainable development at home and abroad by leading the way toward the formulation of more equitable trade and investment rules both at the World Trade Organization and in bilateral and regional agreements.

“Our first step toward being a good neighbor is to stop being a bad neighbor.”

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. If the U.S. government expects cooperation from other nations-in drug control, global public health, counterterrorism, etc.-then it should first seek cooperative solutions to common problems. Yes, the United States needs to control its borders and needs to establish the official requisites for residency and work. But as the U.S. society, both at the national and local levels, moves to establish new immigration policies, it should remember that immigrants have helped create this country, and are continuing to do so. The agenda of the hard-line restrictionists-barricading our borders, making immigrants felons, and calling for mass deportations of hard-working members of our communities-is a bad neighbor policy that will aggravate tensions at home and in international relations, especially with Mexico . The first step in shaping a good neighbor immigration policy is stopping this vindictive bad neighbor agenda.

---

<http://americas.irc-online.org/am/3161>