

Comprehensive Immigration Reform

LIUNA was founded more than a century ago by proud immigrants who were tired of the abuse and exploitation of unscrupulous employers. They banded together to improve their lives, their families' lives and to make life better for all those who follow in their footsteps.

Our current immigration policy is failing both citizens and immigrants. We continue to fight for immigration reform and won't stop until it gets done. Republicans are retreating from the issue and opting to simply do nothing even though they have acknowledged time and time again that our immigration system is broken. This is not an acceptable path. Getting immigration reform done is not only the right thing to do, it is the necessary thing to do.

Citizenship

LIUNA supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes an earned path to citizenship for the 11 million

undocumented workers in the U.S. Allowing these workers to step out of the shadows will block downward wage pressure that comes with an exploited underclass. Workers who pay taxes and contribute to their communities and whose only crime is lacking documents deserve a chance to be legalized and earn U.S. citizenship.

Enforcement

Reform should include strong and humane enforcement of our borders. A common sense approach should focus first on stopping criminals at the border. While border security is crucial, it is not the only step. Nearly half of unauthorized immigrants arrive lawfully, but overstay their visas. Reform should include a fair employer system to verify an immigrant's work authorization, but the current system should be overhauled to ensure accuracy, penalize employers who misuse the system, and provide workers due process.

The Time is Now

LIUNA continues to work alongside our union brothers and sisters and community partners to ensure that the U.S. House of Representatives gives us a vote on immigration reform. The Senate got it done, and now it is time for the U.S. House of Representatives to get it done.

LIUNA supports H.R. 15, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act which is a bi-partisan immigration reform that has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and currently has more than 198 cosponsors.

All Members of Congress need to urge Speaker Boehner to put H.R. 15 or the Senate passed bill onto the House floor for consideration. It is irresponsible to let a handful of short-sighted Members of Congress stand in the way of this critical issue.

We need Congress to act now. Passing immigration reform legislation is the right thing to do for all workers and for all of America. We recognize that immigration reform is an uphill battle, however we are not willing to give up fighting for this reform until Congress gets it done.

Labor Protections

Labor standards must be enforced to protect workers' rights so that immigration does not depress wages or working conditions. Our current immigration system allows unscrupulous employers to engage in wholesale worker exploitation, driving down wages, using fear of deportation to cheat workers out of wages or cut corners on safety. LIUNA supports the Power Act which **ensures workers' ability to exercise their labor rights and hold employers accountable without fear of retaliation.**

Guest Workers

LIUNA is opposed to guest worker programs in the construction industry. With continued high unemployment in the sector, there is no shortage of workers willing to work in construction careers. Congress should not create another easily exploited underclass of workers. The U.S. has yet to prove it can implement a fair guest worker program. From the Bracero program to current temporary work visas, guest worker programs create a class of workers who are used to drive wage standards down for all workers. An independent commission should be established to assess and manage the future flow of immigrants, based on actual, proven labor market shortages.

Senate Immigration Reform Legislation

Last summer, the **Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 (S. 744)** passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 68 to 32. All of the Democratic Senators were joined by 14 Republicans to pass this bipartisan legislation.

The bill includes a 13 year path to citizenship, strong border and interior enforcement measures, and a limited worker visa program which caps the new flow of construction workers at 15,000 and includes labor surveys and wage protections.

The bill also included critical worker protections including the POWER Act to minimize immigrant worker abuses. The bill was a result of Senators coming together to compromise and get it done. It is time for the U.S. House of Representatives to do the same.