



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN COMMUNITIES
ALIANZA NACIONAL DE COMUNIDADES LATINO AMERICANAS Y CARIBEÑAS

A Transnational Vision, Rooted in Latin American and Caribbean Migrant Communities
Una Visión Transnacional, con Raíces en la Comunidad Migrante Latinoamericana y Caribeña

PRESS STATEMENT

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Latino Immigrant Communities Urge President Obama and the U.S. Congress to Act Promptly to Change Inhumane and Broken Immigration Policy Now in Effect

Chicago, IL – Speaking during his trip to Mexico, President Obama stated yesterday that immigration policy reform would have to wait until 2010 while other legislative priorities such as health care reform are addressed this year. Leaders of the National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC), an umbrella organization comprising over 100 Latino and Caribbean immigrant-led organizations have issued the following statement in reaction to President Obama’s remarks:

“President Obama’s words have disappointed and discouraged millions of Mexican and other Latino and Caribbean immigrant families who reside the United States of America” stated Oscar Chacon, NALACC’s Executive Director. “As the largest segment of the immigrant community in the U.S., immigrants from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and the rest of Latin America, have been most egregiously affected by current U.S. immigration policy which systematically violates the human and civil rights of immigrants, particularly those who are in detention and deportation proceedings” added Mr. Chacon.

“While we understand that there are indeed pressing public policy issues which are also of deep concern to the Latino immigrant community, the current immigration policy framework is in equal urgent need of reform because it is not only obsolete and inhumane, but it is also a gross waste of valuable tax payers dollars,” stated Gloria Saucedo, Director of Hermandad Mexicana and member of NALACC’s Executive Committee. “Immigrants are an essential part of U.S. society and the human toll of continuing to live under the obsolete, inhumane and wasteful immigration policy framework now in effect is of great concern to immigrant communities who, driven by hope and the promise of change, overwhelmingly voted last November for then Senator Obama,” added Ms. Saucedo.

“While a delay in enacting immigration reform is far from ideal, there are immediate actions that the Obama Administration can take to ameliorate the human suffering caused by the misguided focus on failed enforcement measures. We consider it urgent for the Obama Administration to put an end to the ‘enforcement-only’ mentality that has been in effect since at least 1996, a mentality that has only resulted in the wrenching apart of families, and the jailing of immigrant families and even children in detention centers that have been exposed as substandard and inhuman. NALACC reiterates our call to President Obama to issue an immediate stop to raids and deportations and to bring an end to the

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cooperative agreements between the Immigration Custom and Enforcement agency and local police departments,” added Mr. Chacon.

“A delay in enacting immigration reform must be turned into an opportunity to bring about real, innovative and visionary change in U.S. immigration policy that is in sync with the 21st century and in line with U.S. foundational democratic principles of justice and equality” declared Angela Sanbrano, NALACC’s Board President. “Immigration policy has focused for far too long on building border walls, raiding work sites and private homes, charging exorbitant fees that only feed an endless bureaucratic red tape that delays the processing time of citizenship and family-based petitions, and placing way too many Latino immigrants in jail whose only ‘crime’ is to work hard and pay taxes in the U.S. The fundamental precepts of U.S. immigration policy must be transformed if we are ever to have a law that can be truly, efficiently and humanely enforced,” concluded Ms. Sanbrano.

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NALACC is a network of immigrant-led organizations working to improve the quality of life in their communities, in the United States, as well as in their countries of origin. Visit us on the web at www.nalacc.org