



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

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Latino Immigrant Leaders Commend Rep. Luis Gutierrez for Leading the Way in Crafting Humane and Sensible Immigration Legislation

Chicago, IL. In response to U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez's expected announcement of his principles for progressive immigration reform, leaders of the National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC), a network of over 100 Latino and Caribbean immigrant-led organizations throughout the U.S., issued the following statement:

"We thank Congressman Gutierrez for his leadership in tackling the critical issue of reforming our broken, immoral and wasteful immigration system, and for his openness to hearing directly from those affected by our current immigration system," stated Angela Sanbrano, NALACC's Board President.

"We strongly believe that at the heart of the failed and misguided immigration policies of today is a view of immigrant communities as 'illegals' and as 'criminal aliens,' racist abstractions that belie the real contributions of immigrants to U.S. society," indicated Oscar Chacon, NALACC's Executive Director. "We have communicated to Congressman Gutierrez the importance of acknowledging the humanity and contributions of our community as foundational premises for immigration reform," added Mr. Chacon.

"We add our voices to a chorus of allies that are calling for a reasonable path to legal permanent residency for undocumented, yet hard-working and tax-paying immigrants. Having been failed by a broken system, they should not have to bear an onerous burden to normalize their immigration status," stated Gloria Saucedo of Hermandad Mexicana, a NALACC organizational member. "We also join our allies in calling for the repeal of the most egregious aspects of our current immigration system, which waste billions of tax-payers' money, but also violate basic civil and human rights," added Ms. Saucedo.

Among some of the specific changes in the current law called for by NALACC leaders is the repeal of the cooperative agreements between Immigration and Customs Enforcement and local police departments known as 287(g), which have terrorized immigrant communities, destabilized local economies, and eroded trust in community policing. Another is the restoration of the rights of immigrants to due process and legal counsel.

"As immigrants who know from personal experience the reasons that forced us to make painful choices to leave what we most love for a chance at a dignified life, we stress the importance of understanding immigration policy in the broader context of U.S. foreign and international trade policy," added Mr. Chacon. "Rather than wasting untold billions

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.

of dollars in building walls and militarizing the border with Mexico, such funding would be better invested in comprehensive, alternative and sustainable local community development initiatives in our countries of origin. Truly stemming migration flows will be achieved when migration is no longer the only viable option for a dignified life," concluded Mr. Chacon.

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