

STAND UP FOR THE RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANT WORKERS

WHEREAS, Immigration reform is a component of a shared prosperity agenda that focuses on improving productivity and quality; limiting wage competition; strengthening labor standards, especially the freedom of workers to form unions and bargain collectively; and providing social safety nets and high-quality lifelong education and training for workers and their families; and

WHEREAS, To achieve this goal, immigration reform must fully protect all workers, and reduce the exploitation of immigrant workers; and

WHEREAS, The most effective way to do that is for all workers – immigrant and native-born – to have full and complete access to the protection of labor, health and safety and other laws. Comprehensive immigration reform must complement a strong, well-resourced and effective labor standards enforcement initiative that prioritizes workers' rights and workplace protections. This approach will ensure that immigration does not depress wages and working conditions or encourage marginal low-wage industries that depend heavily on substandard wages, benefits and working conditions.

WHEREAS, New Mexico voters and policymakers have supported the rights of immigrant workers and polls show New Mexicans favor immigration reform with a legalization program. The state provides drivers licenses and access to public college in-state tuition rates to immigrants regardless of immigration status. And immigrant rights organizations have fought successfully to protect the rights and working conditions of all low-wage workers in New Mexico.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL:

1. Urges each member of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation to support comprehensive immigration reform legislation that
 - a. Includes a legalization program, allowing immigrants living in the U.S. in the year 2009 to remain here without penalty;
 - b. Protects worker rights for both current and future immigrants to the U.S.;
 - c. Prioritizes family unification;
 - d. Protects the civil liberties of all workers in the U.S.;
 - e. Provides for improvement, not expansion, of temporary worker programs, limited to temporary or seasonal, not permanent, jobs.
2. Calls for an immediate moratorium on all ICE raids, arrests, deportations, harassment, seizures and other abuses of undocumented workers;
3. Encourages CLC affiliate unions to work with local immigrant rights coalitions, churches and community groups to assist undocumented workers, repeal employer sanctions, ensure passage of a general legalization program and win fair treatment for all immigrants;
4. Denounces anti-immigrant laws and initiatives, including any that would deny housing or public services to immigrants and those that would allow local police to enforce federal immigration laws;

5. Encourages CLC affiliate unions to assist their immigrant members in attaining documented status and citizenship if they so desire; and
6. Calls upon the New Mexico AFL-CIO and CLCs to continue to develop an analysis of the real causes of worker migration to the U.S. and elsewhere, and to provide education and materials for union members in New Mexico so we can better understand this issue and effectively build unity.