

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 5, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear House and Senate Leaders,

As the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress begins, the need to enact comprehensive immigration reform has never been more pressing. As part of this discussion, we believe the bill must protect the civil rights and civil liberties of all people as promised in our Constitution. America is a nation of values, founded on the idea that all people are created equal under - the law, no matter what they look like or where they came from. Our immigration laws should reflect our commitment to these American values. They should be grounded in civil and human rights and ensure due process, equal treatment, and fairness.

Current immigration enforcement practices tear families apart and hurt people who know America as their only home. More than one in every five individuals deported are parents of U.S. citizens. Thousands, including those seeking asylum, are unnecessarily detained at great expense to taxpayers even though they pose no threat to public safety. Our laws mandate detention or deportation for many people, denying them access to a hearing before a judge, in a system that does not guarantee legal counsel for those who cannot afford it. Immigration enforcement measures frequently target minority and immigrant communities through impermissible racial, religious and ethnic profiling that instills fear and distrust of law enforcement and makes communities less safe. Our system is not fair. It is unnecessarily punitive.

Today, America is at a crossroads. The question we face is not only how much enforcement we need, but how we will ensure that enforcement is consistent with our nation's values. We renew our commitment to fight for principled immigration reform that does the following:

1. Provides an enforcement process that matches our values. To the greatest extent possible, we should strive for a process that includes a fair hearing before a judge, a bond hearing, federal court review, and access to counsel.
2. Provides for the humane treatment of everyone detained by immigration authorities.
3. Reduces the impact of enforcement on children and families.
4. Clarifies that immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility and that it should be administered uniformly across the country.
5. Explicitly rejects discrimination and racial, religious and ethnic profiling.

6. Ensures that all agencies charged with enforcement operate with accountability and transparency.

In this immigration reform effort, we must not lose sight of the imperative to create an immigration system that is consistent with our nation's values, including the protection of civil and human rights, and our Constitution.

Sincerely,

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Joe Garcia  
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress

John Lewis  
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenaur  
Member of Congress

Tony Cardenas  
Member of Congress

Yvette Clarke  
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress

Hank Johnson  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

Jim Moran  
Member of Congress

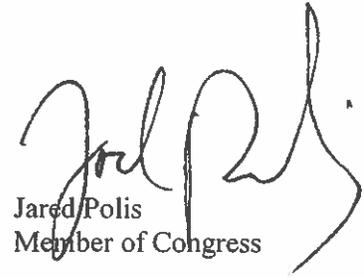


Beto O'Rourke  
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne Jr.  
Member of Congress

Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez  
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky  
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Mark Takano  
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Marc A. Veasey  
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Fredrica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress