

Florida Immigrant Coalition

E-News!

August 1, 2004

Volume 3, Number 33

"People working together for fair treatment of Florida's Immigrants"

E-News! is an electronic bulletin for Coalition members and others concerned with issues affecting Florida's immigrants. The Coalition is a program of Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center (FIAC). Feel free to redistribute.

E-NEWS! CONTENTS:

News

Future Events

New Resources/Recent Publications

About the Coalition

NEWS

PRESIDENT BLOCKS PENDING IMMIGRATION REFORMS

Since making a national appeal for immigration reform on January 7, 2004, President Bush has done little to move immigration reform forward. In fact, in early July, the White House contacted Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist and asked him to ensure that the AgJOBS bill would not be voted on as an amendment to the class action reform legislation. AgJOBS, a bipartisan bill sponsored by Republican Senator Larry Craig of Idaho, proposes to allow earned legalization of about 500,000 farmworkers and would reform the current guest-worker program so that most future farmworkers would be guest-workers. The President has also failed to support the widely supported bipartisan DREAM Act that would allow many immigrant students to go to college and become fully participating members of their communities. Over the last month many national newspapers have detailed the President's failure to enact immigration reform including the Wall Street Journal, Miami Herald, Palm Beach Post, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post and others. For related articles and information see:

www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/politics/9331837.htm

www.immigrationforum.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=622

www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/opinion/9172545.htm

www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/0726mon2-26.html

FAIR IMMIGRATION REFORM MOVEMENT LAUNCHED

On Tuesday, July 20, a coalition of grassroots immigrant-rights organizations from across the United States launched Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) in Washington DC. At a press conference launching FIRM, a new report entitled "The Pro Immigrant Voting Block: 30 Million Strong," was released. The Florida Immigrant Coalition is a member of FIRM. For more information about FIRM and its new report see:

www.fairimmigration.org/

www.fairimmigration.org/docs/english/Final%20Report.pdf

www.quepasa.com/content/?c=105&id=269725

MIAMI HAS MORE IMMIGRANTS PER CAPITA THAN ANY CITY IN THE WORLD

The UN Human Development Report 2004, released on July 15, found that the City of Miami has the highest percentage of immigrants of any city in the world. Miami at 60% is ranked first, followed by Toronto, 44%, and Los Angeles, 41%. The same report called for recognition of cultural freedoms as basic human rights. See the report and related

articles: <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/local/9170112.htm

<http://washingtontimes.com/upi-breaking/20040716-105620-4585r.htm>

MANATEE COUNTY IMMIGRATION DETAINEES UNDERTAKE HUNGER STRIKE

160 of 208 immigration detainees participated in a July hunger strike because they were being served "expired" and "rotten" food. Some detainees stayed on week of July 14 hunger strike longer than others. Mike Rozos, Field Office Director with the US Immigration Customs and Enforcement department, visited the facility and vowed to oversee improved conditions. For more information see:

www.bradenton.com/mld/bradenton/9156968.htm

www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20040715/NEWS/407150359/1060

FLORIDA IMMIGRANTS QUESTION REPRESENTATIVE DEUTSCH'S IMMIGRATION PLAN

During a meeting with the Palm Beach Post's Editorial Board in early July, Congressman Deutsch suggested that Florida's estimated 300,000 undocumented farmworkers should be sent back home "by boat or plane." In response, Miami community organizations and unions organized a community meeting with him on July 21. During the meeting Deutsch repeatedly said undocumented immigrants should not be here but also said he was not accurately quoted by the Post. When repeatedly asked his opinion about immigrant access to driver's licenses, Deutsch said he was unaware and uneducated about the issue. Deutsch, who is running for Senate, became a cosponsor of the AgJOBS bill shortly after the Palm Beach Post article was printed.

www.palmbeachpost.com/news/content/auto/epaper/editions/today/news_04ee31fdf44580c20056.html

www.palmbeachpost.com/opinion/content/auto/epaper/editions/sunday/opinion_04fe1465f445707400cb.html

www.palmbeachpost.com/news/content/auto/epaper/editions/today/news_14105057d43271e800e4.html

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY OFFICIALLY ACCEPTS ARGENTINE CONSULAR IDENTIFICATION

On July 13, the Miami-Dade County Commission unanimously voted to accept Argentine Consular Identification for county services. In 2003, the Commission had voted to allow use of the Mexican Consular I.D. Due to immigrant driver's license restrictions enacted in 1999 and 2002, immigrant communities are increasingly unable to access business and public services that require identification. Consular identifications provide a partial solution to issues relating to lack of identification. To see the county resolution and related articles go to:

www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/govaction/matter.asp?matter=041696&file=true&yearFolder=Y2004

www.orlandosentinel.com/elsentinel/comunidad/orl-spanelflorida24072404jul24.0.587730.story

www.consuladoargentinoenmiami.com/open_novedad11-02a.htm

FUTURE EVENTS

AUGUST 19-20, CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIVERSITY TRAINING, CORAL GABLES

Training topics will include cultural sensitivity and racism in the workplace and cultural competency accreditation requirements. Training will take place at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables. For more information call 703-549-1390.

SEPTEMBER 21-23, FLORIDA TITLE 1 MIGRANT SUPPORTIVE SERVICE FORUM, TAMPA

Statewide conference hosted by the Florida Department of Education Migrant Education Project for agencies working on migrant education issues. For more information call 800-949-1916 or see: www.firn.edu/doe/title1/conf.htm

OCTOBER 21-23, 17TH ANNUAL MIGRANT STREAM FORUM, ST. PETERSBURG

The annual conference gathers migrant health professionals working along the East Coast for networking opportunities and training aimed at enhancing cultural competence and improving health care delivery to migrant residents. For more information call 919-469-5701 or see: www.ncphca.org/migrant_stream_forum2004.htm

NEW RESOURCES/ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS BRIEFS

MORE IMMIGRANTS BECOME CITIZENS IN ELECTION YEAR

A Miami Herald report revealed that a recent increase in citizenship applications is directly related to interest in the 2004 Presidential election:

www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/9292942.htm

NEW AMERICAN FREEDOM SUMMER REGISTERS VOTERS IN FLORIDA AND ARIZONA

See an Arizona Republic article about the New American Freedom Summer project that is registering thousands of immigrant voters in Arizona and Florida:

www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0801freedom.html

REPUBLICANS PRE-MARK GOP AT JACKSONVILLE CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

A Republican Party table set-up to register voters at a Jacksonville citizenship ceremony pre-marked registrations Republican. The incident is currently being investigated and could result in 3rd degree felony charges. For more information see:

www.npr.org/features.feature.php?wfid=3616703

www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/state/9220188.htm

TAMPA BAY POLICE OPPOSE IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT DUTIES

See a St. Petersburg Times article detailing local police opposition to the CLEAR Act and other efforts to deputize police officers as immigration agents:

www.sptimes.com/2004/07/19/Hillsborough/Immigration_duty_a_bu.shtml

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES OPPOSES CLEAR ACT

See a recent editorial from the St. Petersburg Times opposing the CLEAR Act:

www.sptimes.com/2004/08/06/Opinion/Piling_it_on_the_poli.shtml

NEW NATURALIZATION EXAMS

See a fact sheet from the National Asian Pacific America Legal Consortium on the recent redesign of the Naturalization Exam: <http://65.36.162.215/files/redesign.pdf>

IMMIGRATION RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE 9-11 COMMISSION REPORT

See a backgrounder from the American Immigration Lawyers Association on immigration-related recommendations in the 9-11 commission report:

www.aila.org/fileViewer.aspx?docID=13657

IMMIGRATION BACKLOGS: THE ENDLESS WAIT

See a new American Immigration Law Foundation Report on constant and growing immigration processing backlogs: www.aifl.org/ipc/endlesswaitprint.asp

MINIMUM WAGE INITIATIVE PLACED ON FLORIDA BALLOT

A campaign to raise the state minimum wage through a constitutional amendment has succeeded in collecting enough signatures to place it on the ballot. The amendment would raise the minimum wage in Florida to \$6.15 per hour with automatic future increases for inflation. This initiative would benefit many low-income immigrant workers in Florida. For more information see:

www.floridiansforall.org

www.sptimes.com/2004/07/31/Columns/Democrats_hang_hats_o.shtml

www.palmbeachpost.com/news/content/auto/epaper/editions/today/news_14b0a0b174b0522b0063.html

RIGHTS WORKING GROUPS FORMED

A national coalition of organizations recently formed the Rights Working Group to combat the deterioration of civil and human rights for immigrants after 9/11. For more information see:

www.rightsworkinggroup.org/

LATINO IMMIGRANTS HAVE SUFFERED SINCE 9/11

See an extensive report from the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda on how Latino immigration priorities and immigration policies in general have suffered since 9/11:

www.maldef.org/pdf/NHLA_report.pdf

FACTS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS

Updated fact sheet about immigrant characteristics and impact from National Immigration Law Center including the economy, family, language background, and population share: www.nilc.org/immspbs/research/pbimmfacts_0704.pdf

MIGRANT FARMWORKERS: AMERICA'S NEW PLANTATION WORKERS

See a new report from Food First entitled "Migrant Farmworkers: America's New Plantation Workers": www.foodfirst.org/pubs/backgrdrs/2004/sp04v10n2.html

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY REPORT ON IMMIGRANT CONTRIBUTIONS, 2000-2004

See a new report from Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies on immigrant contributions to the workforce from 2000 to 2004:

www.nupr.neu.edu/7-04/immigrant_04.pdf

IMMIGRANT TRAFFICING AND SLAVERY ALIVE IN FLORIDA

See a recent related report from the Orlando Sentinel:

www.bradenton.com/mld/bradenton/news/nation/9335726.htm

VENEZUELAN POLICY RESTRICTS UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT VOTING PARTICIPATION

In July, the Venezuelan government announced it would no longer accept votes from citizens living outside of Venezuela unless they are legal immigrants in their country of residence. According to a July 29, 2004 South Florida Sun-Sentinel article, this policy could disqualify 70% of Florida's estimated 200,000 Venezuelans from voting. See article:

www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/broward/sfl-cvencvotejul29.0.2789734.story?coll=sfla-news-broward

PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

See a new community education fact sheet from National Immigration Law Center on protecting yourself against immigration enforcement:

English: www.nilc.org/ce/nilc/protect_self_home&work_0704.pdf

Spanish: www.nilc.org/ce/nilc/protect_self_imm_enfrcmt_CA_sp.pdf

ABOUT THE COALITION

The Florida Immigrant Coalition is a network of groups and individuals working together for fair treatment of Florida's immigrants. The Coalition meets its mission through advocacy, community empowerment, public education, technical assistance and referral. The Coalition includes members of urban, rural, religious, legal, and community-based organizations. The Coalition is a program of Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center.

ABOUT FIAC

Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center (FIAC) is a non-profit organization advocating for the human rights of all immigrants in Florida. FIAC offers direct legal representation in immigration and public benefits law, community education and impact advocacy. For information about intake procedure, contact the FIAC operator at 305-573-1106.

E-NEWS! CAN HELP YOU

If you have information you would like included in E-News! or would like to be added or removed from the mailing list, please contact David Skovholt, Coordinator of the Florida Immigrant Coalition at the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center at dskovholt@fiacfla.org or 305-573-1106 x1160.