



SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 13-003

BY SENATOR(S) Aguilar, Cadman, Baumgardner, Carroll, Crowder, Giron, Guzman, Heath, Hill, Hodge, Hudak, Jahn, Johnston, Jones, Kefalas, Kerr, King, Newell, Nicholson, Roberts, Scheffel, Schwartz, Steadman, Tochtrop, Todd, Ulibarri, Morse;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Salazar, Sonnenberg, Buck, Buckner, Conti, Coram, Court, DelGrosso, Dore, Duran, Exum, Fields, Fischer, Foote, Garcia, Gardner, Gerou, Ginal, Hamner, Hullinghorst, Joshi, Kagan, Kraft-Tharp, Labuda, Landgraf, Lebsock, Lee, Levy, May, McCann, McLachlan, McNulty, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Moreno, Navarro, Pabon, Peniston, Primavera, Priola, Rankin, Ryden, Schafer, Scott, Singer, Stephens, Szabo, Tyler, Vigil, Waller, Williams, Wilson, Wright, Young, Ferrandino.

CONCERNING COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM
AND URGING ACTION BY THE 113TH CONGRESS.

WHEREAS, Unlike most nations, America has a long and rich heritage of generous immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, Many employers are faced with an insufficient number of visas for workers to support the needs of the United States economy, with arbitrary visa caps creating backlogs, frequent exploitation by employers through wage and workplace violations, and inadequate government infrastructure to efficiently administer our numerous guest worker programs; and

WHEREAS, Colorado's identity is defined by its promise of equal opportunity, esteem for diversity and commitment to innovation; and

WHEREAS, Coloradans have prospered because of the contributions of hardworking immigrants who aspire to citizenship; and

WHEREAS, We believe in the human dignity of all Colorado residents, regardless of immigration status, and recognize the importance

of immigrants' many contributions to the social and economic fabric of the state of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, Becoming a citizen of the United States means taking a solemn oath to uphold our nation's Constitution and to forsake allegiance to other nations; and

WHEREAS, Citizenship is the legal embodiment and symbol of full membership and participation in society that should be encouraged for all who can meet the lawful standards for citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Keeping families together not only is the correct and moral thing to do but is also good for the economy because families provide a base of support that increases worker productivity and spurs entrepreneurship; and

WHEREAS, It is universally recognized that adequate border security is a fundamental prerequisite for successful and lasting immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, America's current immigration system is widely recognized as dysfunctional because it harms our economy and does not reflect Colorado's values; and

WHEREAS, A well-designed and efficiently enforced immigration system is a federal responsibility, and a comprehensive approach to solve our broken immigration system would strengthen Colorado's and the nation's economy and would free aspiring citizens to make an even greater contribution to our communities; and

WHEREAS, The federal government's inability to enact immigration reform has created severe economic, cultural, and political strains in communities across Colorado and has led to a patchwork of state laws that inadequately address immigration-related problems; and

WHEREAS, Immigration reform must occur in a comprehensive, thoughtful manner that builds the strength and unity of working people, keeps families together wherever possible, and guarantees the same rights, obligations, and basic fairness for all lawful workers, no matter where they come from; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must provide a fair, equitable, and realistic mechanism for aspiring citizens who have grown up in this country to become citizens and be able to fully contribute to our joint future; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must update the legal immigration system so that the future flow of legal guest workers more realistically matches our nation's labor needs and is structured to protect the employment, wages, and working conditions of U.S. and lawful immigrant workers; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must strengthen the small business workforce and customer base, reward initiative with the American promise of opportunity, promote productivity, reduce red tape, and strengthen the American economy; and

WHEREAS, Any new guest worker visa program must provide for strict compliance with United States labor standards and wage and hour standards, portability of visas so that workers can change jobs under prescribed circumstances, and the ability for workers to petition for permanent residency; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must aim to reduce the unreasonable wait times and overly complex rules that keep families unreasonably separated from their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Colorado citizens support a comprehensive immigration reform that keeps families together wherever possible, upholds our values as a state and nation, promotes small business and economic growth, and provides long-term, practicable and enforceable solutions to our broken immigration system; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That we urge the 113th Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform as outlined in this Joint Memorial.

Be It Further Resolved, That a copy of this Joint Memorial shall be delivered to the U.S. Speaker of the House, President of the U.S. Senate, members of Colorado's Congressional delegation, members of Colorado's General Assembly, and the Governor of Colorado.

John P. Morse
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

Mark Ferrandino
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Cindi Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE

Marilyn Eddins
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES