



# NEWS

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**Service Employees International Union**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **THOUSANDS DEMAND IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONDEMN ARIZONA LAW**

*– Congressman Gutierrez, 32BJ Call for End to Raids –*

**Washington, D.C.**— Thousands of workers - including hundreds of 32BJ SEIU members - were joined by Congressman Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) as well as labor, community and immigration leaders at a rally in front of the White House this afternoon calling on Congress and the Obama Administration to reform our broken immigration system. The protestors also condemned Arizona's new immigration law for its criminalization of undocumented immigrants in the border state.

“If Congress doesn't act now, more states could adopt Arizona's draconian law,” said Jaime Contreras, 32BJ Capital Area Director. “We must have fair and balanced reform to ensure immigrants are full participants in our economic recovery. Enforcement-only tactics break up families, disrupt businesses, distract local law enforcement and drain local budgets.”

The rally in Washington was one of dozens of demonstrations for comprehensive immigration reform being held in cities across the country and a response to the passage of Arizona's immigration law.

According to the Department of Labor, workers who were provided citizenship improved their income by 15 per cent during the 1986 legalization process – a change that had a direct impact on stimulating the economy. The Congressional Budget Office also estimates that had the proposed immigration reform passed in 2006, more than 66 billion dollars would have been added to the government coffers.

“Millions of hardworking, taxpaying men and women have suffered too long and deserve a better life,” said Jaime Contreras, 32BJ Capital Area Director.

According to a recent study by UCLA, comprehensive immigration reform would grow the economy by as much as \$1.5 trillion. However, mass deportation would cost over \$240 billion taxpayer dollars, take decades to achieve, and tear apart millions of American families. It would also result in \$2.6 trillion in lost economic activity over ten years and create further instability and job loss in the economy.

With more than 120,000 members in eight states, including 15,000 in the D.C. Metropolitan Area, many of whom are immigrants, 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.

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