

The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2011 (S. 1258)

Background:

Recognizing that the U.S. immigration system is broken, President Obama visited El Paso, TX on May 10, 2011 and gave a speech calling on Congress to advance an immigration reform bill. The lack of Congressional action on this issue has been felt nationwide as states like Arizona, Utah, Georgia, Indiana, Alabama, and South Carolina have passed punitive immigration legislation, creating a complex patchwork of immigration laws.

To date, many bills in the 112th Congress (2011-2012) being advanced in the House of Representatives focus on enforcement-only approaches that ignore the basic underlying problems with the U.S. immigration system. The Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) Act of 2011 represents this Congress's first attempt at a broad immigration overhaul and offers the legislature an opportunity to create an immigration system for the 21st century.

The CIR Act of 2011 would:

- Provide a legalization program for non-criminal undocumented immigrants living in the United States since June 1, 2011. Eligible migrants would obtain temporary legal status that includes work authorization and permission to travel abroad and would later be permitted to apply for Lawful Permanent Residency (green card).
- Incorporate the DREAM Act, which creates a path to legal status for undocumented migrants who were brought to the United States status as children as long as they meet age and other criteria and enroll in college or the U.S. military.
- Protect family unity and expedite reunification for spouses and minor children.
- Reform to the immigration detention system to ensure that detention is used only when necessary and basic standards of care.
- Provide safeguards for refugees and asylum seekers in the United States.
- Incorporate the AgJOBS bill, which provides a path to permanent residency for eligible farm workers.

LIRS Position:

LIRS strongly supports the CIR Act of 2011 as an important step toward achieving the much needed reform of our broken immigration system.

Take Action:

Urge the President and your members of Congress to protect vulnerable migrants by supporting the CIR Act of 2011 at the LIRS Action Center: <http://www.lirs.org/action>.