

**UPDATE #2 FOR NCLR AFFILIATES,
LATINO ADVOCATES
ON THE IMMIGRATION COMPROMISE
April 7, 2006**

Colleagues:

In an effort to keep you informed of the quickly changing dynamics in the Senate, here's an update and a set of suggestions to prepare for Monday's rallies and questions from the community. Here's what we know:

- As you know, yesterday, a bipartisan group of senators reached an agreement on a compromise proposal in an effort to move immigration reform forward in the Senate (see yesterday's update for a description of the contents of the compromise).
- NCLR and many of its coalition partners spent the day encouraging the Senate to move forward on comprehensive immigration reform. In particular, we urged the senators who had agreed on the content of the bill to reach an agreement on the process for its consideration. This is very important because even a good Senate bill still needs to be reconciled with the House bill; favorable terms for this negotiation are essential to the outcome.
- In addition, we continued to raise concerns about the negative provisions of the Senate and House bills which, among other things, would engage local law enforcement officials in immigration enforcement activities.
- The Senate rejected Senator Frist's enforcement-only bill, which is similar to the bill which passed the House of Representatives last December.
- It appears that the Senate leadership on both sides of the aisle has failed to reach an agreement for consideration of the Senate compromise, so the Senate will go on recess this evening without having passed an immigration reform proposal. It is unclear whether the Senate will return to the immigration issue when it returns in two weeks.
- In the meantime, communities throughout the country are preparing for major peaceful rallies on Monday, April 10. For information about events in your area, please see www.april10.org, or www.cirnow.org.

We have prepared some general talking points that we hope you find useful. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

TALKING POINTS ON SENATE IMMIGRATION DEBATE

- It is important progress that a bipartisan group of senators reached an agreement on a comprehensive solution to immigration reform. It is clear that, if the agreement can get to the Senate floor, it would pass with a strong majority of the Senate. That agreement

would put millions of undocumented workers who are contributing every day to this country's economic strength and vitality on a path to permanent status.

- But the Senate failed to reach an agreement to allow this compromise to come to the floor. At the end of the day, the leadership on both sides of the aisle could not agree to a process which would protect the compromise from being undone by negative amendments, or would protect the compromise all the way through the process of negotiating with the House.
- It is also important that the Senate resoundingly rejected the enforcement-only approach reflected in Senator Frist's bill. The Senate is squarely on the side of comprehensive reform, rather than the harsh House approach.
- This process is far from over. Our community continues to be concerned about the Sensenbrenner bill. We will continue to insist on a resolution to the immigration reform debate which will bring undocumented immigrants out of the shadows and treat immigrants with fairness and justice.
- Latinos are interested in seeing leadership exercised by both parties, because real solutions will require bipartisan collaboration. Similarly, we will be watching members of either party who decide to sacrifice public policy solutions, so urgently needed by our country on this issue, for political calculation. We need leadership and action.
- The key message for the community is that it is important keep informed and stay in contact with trusted community organizations. Above all, the Latino community should continue its extraordinary activism on this issue. Every time we rally peacefully, carrying American flags and demonstrating the intensity of the desire for comprehensive immigration reform, we make progress in the legislative debate. We need to keep marching, keep contacting our legislators, and keep making progress. The April 10 events are a wonderful opportunity to ensure that our voices are heard in opposition to punitive measures and in support of comprehensive immigration reform.
- We ask students to exercise leadership in their schools in a way that builds support for this issue and long-term empowerment of the community. We do *not* encourage continued walkouts. Instead, organize speak-outs and voter registration drives at your schools, join after-school vigils and organized activities, and link hands with trusted community-based organizations. For more information, go to www.lideres.nclr.org