

NATIONAL ACTION TO REALIZE THE DREAM MARCH

50th Anniversary of the March on Washington

Remarks from Janet Murguía, President and CEO, NCLR

I cannot convey to you what an honor it is to stand on the steps of this glorious memorial right where many of our greatest leaders stood on one of the most important days in American history. And it is a special privilege to be here with my dear friend Marc Morial.

Millions of Latinos were watching that day in 1963. When we heard Dr. King proclaim “I have a Dream,” we knew he meant us too. Dr. King’s dream was an inclusive one and it is why he remains a beloved icon in my community.

In fact, Dr. King was one of the earliest supporters of another beloved icon, Cesar Chavez. At the height of Cesar’s first fast in 1966, Dr. King sent him a telegram of support which said “our separate struggles are really one – a struggle for freedom, for dignity, and for humanity.”

Marc and I know we are standing here on the shoulders of these giants. But we also are here to remember the hundreds of thousands of people -- whose names we may never know -- who sacrificed so much to be at this very place half a century ago. Those who had to ride buses all day and all night because they were not allowed to stop and rest. Those who gave their time and those who gave their lives.

And we are here to remember who we are marching for today. For those who seek justice, who seek the right to vote, and who seek a way to support their families. And for those whose names we also do not know but who live in the shadows and in fear every day of their lives because they are undocumented. For those young people who know no other country and who are Americans in every possible way but whose status puts the American Dream out of reach. And we march so that everyone knows that true justice must include enacting comprehensive immigration reform.

It is time for our nation to re-commit to lifting up the hopes and dreams of all of us. And we must remember that in unity there is power. Together we can and we will move mountains.

Thank you.