

Press Release
May 12, 2005

BUSINESS GROUP SUPPORTS BIPARTISAN IMMIGRATION REFORM BILL

Hats off to the brave legislators in both the House and Senate for addressing the issues of comprehensive immigration reform through the introduction of The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act. The Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC) hails the introduction of both a bicameral and bipartisan bill and commend Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Representatives Jim Kolbe (R-AZ), Jeff Flake (R-AZ) and Luis Gutierrez (D-IL). They have taken the baton from the White House on immigration reform and produced a bill that addresses head-on the serious issues of immigration reform -- security, safety and lawful immigrant worker programs. This legislation will shore-up momentum and may provide the architecture for the development of a truly secure and orderly immigration system.

"The current dysfunctional immigration system as it applies to workers essential to sustaining and growing America's economy must be changed as a matter of national and economic security." said Laura Reiff, Co-Chair of the coalition.

"This bill addresses issues important to the country and to the President and clearly was drafted with his principles in mind." said John Gay, Co-Chair of the coalition.

Although this is a thoughtful and comprehensive bill, we do have serious concerns with some of its provisions. However, it is through efforts such as this one that progress is made in immigration reform.

EWIC believes that the concepts of providing for a legal vehicle for new workers to enter the country when employers are unable to find U.S. workers, combined with a mechanism to bring existing undocumented workers in the U.S. out of the shadows and grant them some sort of legal status will serve the goals of significantly enhancing U.S. security efforts and recognizing the valuable contributions of immigrant workers.

EWIC looks forward to working with Senators McCain, Kennedy and Representatives Flake, Kolbe and Gutierrez as well as other key leaders in both the Senate and the House that are committed to make our immigration system secure, fair and viable.

EWIC (www.ewic.org) is a broad-based coalition of national businesses and trade associations from across the industry spectrum concerned with the shortage of both semi-skilled and unskilled

("essential worker") labor. EWIC supports policies that facilitate the employment of essential workers by U.S. companies that are unable to find American workers.

For more information, contact EWIC Co-Chairs John Gay at (202) 662-0768 and/or Laura Reiff at (703) 749-1372.