



Feel the Power

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Should Protect All Workers

LIUNA was founded more than a century ago by immigrants struggling for citizenship and to improve their lives. These proud men and women helped build our nation, just as many immigrants do today. But our current immigration policy is failing both citizens and immigrants.

LIUNA supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes an earned path to citizenship for undocumented workers.

- Workers who pay taxes and contribute to their communities and whose only crime is lacking documents deserve a chance to earn U.S. citizenship.
- An earned path to citizenship should be realistic and achievable by those who have the ambition to become U.S. citizens. A lengthy waiting period, onerous penalties and a cumbersome bureaucracy should be avoided or reform will fail.

Reform should include strong and humane enforcement of our borders.

- A common sense approach should focus first on stopping criminals at the border. While border security is crucial, it is not the only step. Nearly half of unauthorized immigrants arrive lawfully, but overstay their visas. Reform should include an employer system to verify an immigrant's work authorization, but the current system should be overhauled to ensure accuracy, to penalize employers who misuse the system, and to provide workers due process.
- The unity of immigrant families should be a key factor in the enactment of an earned path to citizenship for undocumented workers.

Labor standards must be enforced to protect workers' rights so that immigration does not depress wages or working conditions.

- Our current immigration system allows unscrupulous employers to engage in wholesale worker exploitation, using fear of deportation to cheat workers out of wages or cut corners on safety.

LIUNA is opposed to guest worker programs in the construction industry.

- The H-2B visa program is a guest work program which permits U.S. employers to employ foreign workers for non-agricultural "temporary" work when no qualified U.S. workers are available.
- However, the program has been criticized for lax requirements that allow employers to largely bypass the U.S. hiring process, exploit immigrant workers, and deprive U.S. workers of job opportunities.