

IMMIGRATION REFORM WATCH

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AMERICA'S REAL DREAM TEAM

An excerpt from NY TIMES 3/20/2010 Op-Ed by Thomas L. Friedman

I went to a big Washington dinner last week. You know the kind: Large hall; black ties; long dresses. But this was no ordinary dinner. There were 40 guests of honor. So here's my Sunday news quiz: I'll give you the names of most of the honorees, and you tell me what dinner I was at. Ready?

Linda Zhou, Alice Wei Zhao, Lori Ying, Angela Yu-Yun Yeung, Lynnelle Lin Ye, Kevin Young Xu, Benjamin Chang Sun, Jane Yoonhae Suh, Katheryn Cheng Shi, Sunanda Sharma, Sarine Gayaneh Shahmirian, Arjun Ranganath Puranik, Raman Venkat Nelakant, Akhil Mathew, Paul Masih Das, David Chienyun Liu, Elisa Bisi Lin, Yifan Li, Lanair Amaad Lett, Ruoyi Jiang, Otana Agape Jakpor, Peter Danming Hu, Yale Wang Fan, Yuval Yaacov Calev, Levent Alpoqe, John Vincenzo Capodilupo and Namrata Anand.

No, sorry, it was not a dinner of the China-India Friendship League. Give up?

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TIME TO MAKE GOOD ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

Reuters' Tim Gaynor reported Hispanics, frustrated that President Barack Obama has yet to fulfill a pledge to revamp the immigration system, are warning him to deliver this year or face the consequences in congressional elections in November.

Tens of thousands of Latinos plan to rally in Washington on Sunday 3/21/2010, cautioning that their support for Obama and his fellow Democrats, who face a struggle to hold their majorities in both houses of Congress, hinges on the issue. But the event may be overshadowed by a vote that day in the House of Representatives on healthcare overhaul legislation that would be Obama's signature achievement so far.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM RALLY DRAWS TENS OF THOUSANDS TO WASHINGTON

By Clement Tan and Michael Muskal of The Los Angeles Times 3/20/2010

Tens of thousands of people began assembling in Washington on Sunday to march for immigration reform, a politically charged issue that has been pushed to a back burner by the intense focus on healthcare.

In a tactic that reflects the current economy, March organizers have tried to cast the immigration debate as part of economic recovery. "What's important today is that jobs and immigration go hand in hand," Marc Morial of the National Urban League said on Sunday in a television interview.

"When you've got millions of undocumented workers working off books, that affects the economy for everyone."

Organizers are hoping to draw tens of thousands of people to the National Mall then march to RFK Stadium. Organizers say they have attracted hundreds of

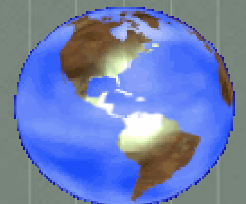
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TIME TO MAKE GOOD ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

Obama, having promised Immigration Reform allowing millions of undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship during the first year of his presidency, benefited from a huge turnout of Hispanics in 2008. But that has been slowed by Obama's yearlong push for healthcare reform. "We are still interested in seeing the Democrats succeed, and see Mr. Obama succeed," said Jorge-Mario Cabrera, of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, which is sending delegates to the march. "However, we also are telling Congress and the president that this particular promise is so essential to our community's well-being, to our families' well-being, to our nation's well-being, that if it's not kept, we will remember in the November elections," he said.



While more than two-thirds of Hispanics in 2008's big turnout voted for Obama, analysts say inaction on immigration combined with the typically lower turnout in nonpresidential years could slash backing for Democrats. Obama backs offering citizenship to illegal immigrants in good standing, while cracking down on employers who hire undocumented workers as well as tightening the border with Mexico. On Thursday 3/18/2010, he embraced a "promising, bipartisan framework" offered by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham and Democratic Senator Charles Schumer. Obama said the plan, which features a new high-tech identification card for U.S. citizens and legal immigrants who want a job, "can and should be the basis for moving us forward." The plan also calls for bolstering border security, a new process for admitting temporary workers and a "tough but fair path" to legalization for those already in the country. Latino activists praised the framework, but analysts are skeptical there will be enough time or political



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O.K. All these kids are American high school students. They were the majority of the 40 finalists in the 2010 Intel Science Talent Search, which, through a national contest, identifies and honors the top math and science high school students in America, based on their solutions to scientific problems. The awards dinner was Tuesday, and, as you can see from the above list, most finalists hailed from immigrant families, largely from Asia.

Indeed, if you need any more convincing about the virtues of immigration, just come to the Intel science finals. I am a pro-immigration fanatic. I think keeping a constant flow of *legal* immigrants into our country — whether they wear blue collars or lab coats — is the key to keeping us ahead of China. Because when you mix all of these energetic, high-aspiring people with a democratic system and free markets, magic happens. If we hope to keep that magic, we need immigration reform that guarantees that we will always attract and retain, in an orderly fashion, the world's first-round aspirational and intellectual draft choices.

This isn't complicated. In today's wired world, the most important economic competition is no longer between countries or companies. The most important economic competition is actually between *you* and your own imagination. Because what your kids imagine, they can now act on farther, faster, cheaper than ever before — as individuals. Today, just about everything is becoming a commodity, except imagination, except the ability to spark new ideas.

If I just have the spark of an idea now, I can get a designer in Taiwan to design it. I can get a factory in China to produce a prototype. I can get a factory in Vietnam to mass manufacture it. . . . And I can do all this at incredibly low prices. The one thing that is not a commodity and never will be is that spark of an idea. And this Intel dinner was all about our best sparklers.

OBAMA'S MORAL FAILURE ON IMMIGRATION

Excerpt from Joshua Hoyt is the executive director of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

I'm a community organizer. Last week, I did something I never thought would be possible. I met with the president of the United States in the West Wing of the White House. President Barack Obama met for 75 minutes with 14 leaders from across the country to discuss immigration reform — and the destruction of some 1,100 immigrant families a day through deportations carried out by his administration. The meeting was tense, blunt and passionate. And there was a racial irony to our discussion. Our labor, faith and immigrant rights leaders included seven Latinos, three Asians and four whites.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM RALLY DRAWS TENS OF THOUSANDS TO WASHINGTON

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groups from almost every state for what they call a "March for America."

There are more than 11 million illegal immigrants in the country, and efforts to fix the current immigration system have failed in recent years. Liberals have sought a path for citizenship for undocumented workers, while conservatives have been just as adamant in opposing what they have called plans for amnesty. Both sides support efforts to secure the border with Mexico, but they differ on what tactics to use.

A new proposal has been pushed by Sens. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Lindsey Graham, (R-S.C.). There is no bill yet, but the White House has endorsed the initial framework.

The plan would require biometric Social Security cards to ensure that illegal workers cannot get jobs; added border security; a temporary-worker plan and some path to legalization.

The immigration reform issue has been politically difficult for the White House.

In a statement, President Obama praised Schumer and Graham, saying he was pleased to see their "promising, bipartisan framework, which can and should be the basis for moving forward. It thoughtfully addresses the need to shore up our borders and demands accountability from both workers who are here illegally and employers who game the system."

2 SENATORS OFFER IMMIGRATION OVERHAUL

Excerpted from an article March 18, 2010 by Julia Preston

Two senators, a Democrat and a Republican, unveiled the outlines on Thursday of a proposal to overhaul the [immigration](#) system, which would require illegal immigrants to admit they broke the law before they could gain legal status and require all workers in the United States to carry a biometric identity card to prove that they are eligible to work. [President Obama](#) immediately responded with a statement saying it "should be the basis for moving forward," and he pledged "to do everything in my power to forge a bipartisan consensus this year" around the bill.

Those moves followed like clockwork plans that White House officials had laid out in recent days to the leaders of immigrant advocacy groups that have summoned many thousands of supporters to a march on Sunday in Washington. The White House is

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We were meeting Continued from Page 2 with our country's first African-American president, the son of an immigrant father. His senior advisers at the meeting included three African-Americans (one the child of immigrants), a Latina, a Chinese-American woman and a white woman. There were years of intertwined friend-ships and relationships at the table, including my own with the president that began when he was a Chicag community organizer in 1986. Yet, despite all of these ties, we were there to tell him about his moral failure on immigration, and his looming political catastrophe.

Immigrant families are destroyed every day through deportations, Deepak Bhargava of the Center for Community Change, a Washington, D.C. nonprofit advocacy group, told Obama. Latinos are angry and feel betrayed that the Obama White House has increased deportations and hasn't advanced reform, which could result in a nightmare for Democrats in the fall elections.

The president was just as blunt. He said that he and 45 to 47 Democratic senators support immigration reform. The problem, he said, is the lack of Republican support. Obama said his administration is shifting the focus of deportation onto undocumented immigrants who have committed crimes. If Americans come to believe the government is serious about immigration enforcement, he said, they will support reform measures that allow undocumented immigrants to gain legal status here.

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REMEMBER THE SOLVE ACT?

The SOLVE Act would have been a much needed comprehensive overhaul of our immigration laws that would have been in line with the needs of American families, businesses, and national security. The SOLVE Act would have required Undocumented people with a demonstrated commitment to the U.S. as evidenced by working hard, paying taxes, and contributing to their communities, should be given the opportunity to obtain permanent residence and get on the citizenship path. Many have made the U.S. their home, are paying taxes, raising families (typically including U.S. citizen and lawful permanent resident spouses and children), and contributing to their communities and the industries in which they work.

WHAT WILL CIR 2010 LOOK LIKE?

The outline of the Schumer-Lindsay plan calls for:

- ✦ A big increase in immigration agents patrolling workplaces,
- ✦ Workers to present a tamper-proof [Social Security](#) card when they apply for jobs.
- ✦ Biometric identity information would be stored on the card not in any government database,
- ✦ Will make it easier for highly skilled and educated immigrants to come to the United States, get green cards if they receive advanced degrees in science and technology from American universities.
- ✦ It proposes a limited program for temporary lower-skilled guest workers, tightly keyed to changes in the American labor market,
- ✦ To gain legal status, illegal immigrants would have to admit their legal violation, pay fines and back taxes and perform community service.

Stay tuned.....

Solve Act from Page 3

Some of the other bills that had already had bipartisan support were the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits and Security (AgJobs) Act (S. 1645/H.R. 3142) and the DREAM/Student Adjustment Act (S. 1545/H.R.1684). Our hope is that both of these bipartisan measures' components will be incorporated into any new CIR in order to tackle much needed reforms.



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Obama's wrong. Immigration is hunting down teens, workers, mothers, not just criminals. According to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement reports, President George W. Bush's second term began with 246,000 deportations a year. Under Obama, the number is closer to 400,000. The administration's lack of leadership on immigration reform and its increased deportations of non-criminals has created a toxic relationship with Latino immigrants.

A law that allows the destruction of 400,000 families a year is immoral. Obama needs to make an honest push for immigration reform and stop his administration's reign of terror against non-criminal undocumented immigrants.

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struggling to keep prospects for the immigration overhaul alive through a difficult political passage. Marchers will demand that Mr. Obama make good on his repeated promises to push forward with an overhaul, which would grant legal status to an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the country.

Mr. Schumer said the blueprint included more and tougher enforcement at the border and in workplaces, a shift intended to overcome opposition that overwhelmed an overhaul proposal in 2007. It minimizes access for future blue-collar foreign workers and favors visas for highly educated immigrants. "It's based on the theory that Americans are equally strong on support for legal immigration and opposition to illegal immigration," Mr. Schumer said in an interview. "Previous bills did not get that balance right, and they failed."

To advance the legislation, Mr. Schumer and Mr. Graham have said they need help from Mr. Obama to round up at least one more Republican sponsor, a prospect that seems unlikely while bitterness over the health care battle prevails on Capitol Hill.

Still, immigrant advocates and some Democratic lawmakers were heartened Thursday when Representative Luis V. Gutierrez, a Democrat from Illinois in charge of immigration issues for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, said he had decided to support the Democrats' health care legislation after assurances from Mr. Obama that the White House would continue to press for the immigration overhaul.

"I have high expectations that his part of the agreement will get done," Mr. Gutierrez said.

Solve Act continued from above

- ✦ **New "break-the-mold" worker program:** Such a program would provide legal visas, family unity, full labor rights, labor mobility and a path to permanent residence and citizenship over time, and would diminish significantly future illegal immigration by creating for the first time a workable, legal avenue to enter the U.S. and return to their home countries
- ✦ **Family backlog reduction:** Our system has not been updated in more than a decade, and an increasing number of immediate family members are separated for as long as twenty years. The SOLVE Act was to reduce the family visa preference backlog.
- ✦ **Enhanced national security measures:** Among other provisions, The SOLVE Act would have required machine-readable, tamper-resistant visas and documents with biometric identifiers, criminal and national security background checks before work permits and travel documents are issued.