

Voice of the Poor

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Action Alert: THANK YOU to all Vincentians who called, wrote, FAXed or e-mailed members of the Arizona congressional delegation requesting that they OPPOSE cuts to Food Stamps and Medicaid as part of the FY'06 Budget Reconciliation Bill.

Three Proposals on the Table for Immigration Reform

1. **McCain/Kennedy; Kolbe/Flake - S. 1033 and H. 2330 – *The Secure American and Orderly Immigration Act of 2005*** provides a pathway to lawful status (green card) after six years for undocumented currently working in the U.S. Applicants for H-5B visa must present proof of employment, undergo a criminal and security background check and pay a \$1,000 fine. Spouse and unmarried children may also apply for lawful status. The temporary worker program (H-5A visa – maximum of 6 years) requires a payment of \$500, medical exam and evidence of employment. U.S. employers are required to recruit U.S. workers for 30 days prior to hiring H-5A visa workers.
2. **Kyl/Cornyn bill – S. 1438 – *The Comprehensive Enforcement and Immigration Reform Act of 2005*** does NOT provide a path to permanent residency. Creates Deferred Mandatory Departure (DMD) status for undocumented who can continue working in the U.S. for up to 5 years if they can prove presence and employment in the U.S. for one year, pay \$1,000 fine, pass a medical exam and undergo a criminal and security background check. Spouse and children can remain if \$500 fee paid but are not allowed to work. Fines and ineligibility for returning to U.S. imposed if individual does not leave after 5 years. Temporary worker (W nonimmigrant visa) must have a job offer through the Alien Employment Management Program, pay \$500 fee, undergo a medical exam and background check and personal interview. If admitted to the U.S. the W worker can stay for 2 years. Spouse and child can be admitted for up to 30 days on a tourist visa (\$100 fee) but cannot work. Employers for both DMD and W categories must attest posted job in electronic registry for 30 days and offered job to qualified U.S. citizens.
3. **Administration Proposal** – Proposed by Homeland Secretary Chertoff and Labor Secretary Chao to Senate Judiciary Committee (10/18/05): Foreign workers (including the estimated 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S.) would apply to work for a maximum of 6 years, be matched with an employer and provided with a biometric ID card to track whereabouts. Undocumented already in the country would have to pay a fine before application and go to the back of the line after legal migrants. No pathway to permanent legal status provided.

The U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops Campaign Justice for Immigrants has endorsed the McCain bill emphasizing the need for a pathway to legal status along with family reunification for workers integrated in the U.S. economy. *The U.S.C.C.B. is asking Catholics to contact their members of Congress and express support for the McCain bill*