Grow the Economy by Moving Forward with Immigration

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Washington, DC – America's outdated immigration laws are slowing, if not exacerbating, our economic recovery from the Great Recession of 2007. For robust growth in the future, the picture does not brighten. Citing the difficulty of finding efficient and qualified labor, companies offering high tech jobs are moving to Canada and agricultural production is on its way to Mexico. From one end of the education ladder to the other, anti-immigrant attitudes are damaging our national well being. A good example learned the hard way, is Alabama's recent immigrant law that quickly damaged the state economy and threatened to ruin swaths of its agricultural industry.

This week in Houston a nationwide coalition of organizations launched a campaign to transition 300,000 Central American residents of the U.S. and on Temporary Protected Status [TPS] into Permanent Residency. Long term planning often yields good long term results. The initiative is a small step forward in sensible immigration policy reform to remove the shackles from America's ability to grow its economy.

A look at the larger picture nationally illuminates the point. Over 60% of the undocumented immigrants have resided and worked in our country for over 10 years. Of these, the vast majority have children that are U.S. citizens. With 5 per cent of America's labor force composed of immigrants and much higher percentages engaged in the hospitality, agricultural, construction and landscaping segments, our economy cannot grow without these jobs being done. When these jobs are filled 'the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker' also make more money. Everyone benefits. Our current government policy stymies growth and actively divides families. This initiative is a worthy step forward to restore America's economic growth and, at the same time, nurture a society built on family, equality and opportunity.

The initiative is a joint effort of the following organizations:

The Share Foundation (Berkley, CA), Causa Oregon (Salem, OR), CARECEN-DC, CRECEN-Houston, CARECEN-LA, Centro Romero (Chicago, IL), Sunflower Community Action (Wichita, KS), East Bay Sanctuary Covenant (Berkley, CA), CEUS (Union City, NJ), Centro Hispano Cuzcatlan (Jamaica, NY), America para Todos (Houston, TX), Voluntarios por El Salvador (Houston, TX), Comite Amigos en Acción (Houston, TX), Comites de Oriundos Salvadoreños (Houston, TX), Centro Cívico Salvadoreño (Dallas, TX), Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights(ICIRR), North Carolina Latin American Coalition (Charlotte, NC), SALEF (Los Angeles, CA), and Immigrant Rights Program (Newark, NJ).

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For more information on the initiative in English and Spanish visit:
http://www.capitalwirepr.com/pr_description.php?id=836a6004-66ed-47c7-36b4-4f2aa0fb9c15