



April 26, 2007

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned national Latino organizations write to express our extreme concern with the Administration's recent posture toward family-based immigration. While we appreciate your efforts to advance the debate on immigration reform, recent reports have signaled that the Administration is prepared to make deep cuts to the family immigration system and prohibit U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents from reuniting with their family members. Family reunification is a fundamental cornerstone of our nation's legal immigration system. The current push to comprehensively reform that system must not mean abandoning its very foundation, but rather strengthening its structure so that the American economy and American families can thrive.

As you have acknowledged, the benefits of strong, healthy families are invaluable. Hispanic Americans share the broader American value that strong families are the foundation of a strong society; our family values are reflected in an immigration system that provides Americans with the ability to reunite with their closest family members. Moreover, family-based immigration plays a very important role in our economy and our communities. The people that arrive as part of the family-based system contribute to the economy by filling gaps in the job market, caring for their family's children or elderly, pooling resources to buy businesses and homes and for providing financial security during difficult times. By reuniting families the U.S. immigration system reinforces our nation's best family values, while simultaneously serving the country's social and economic well being.

We wholeheartedly oppose any proposals that would prohibit future legal immigrants from bringing their immediate family members to the United States, prohibit legalized

immigrants within the United States from sponsoring their family members when they are eligible to do so, eliminate any of the current preference categories, or reduce the number of immigrant visas available for close relatives of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents. We also oppose any efforts to deny visas to any of the millions of people who have followed the rules, applied for visas, and are currently languishing in long waiting lines.

We also oppose any new “green card” scheme that devalues family ties while claiming to prioritize the “national interest” by favoring immigrants with a particular level of education, skill sets, or other merit-based criteria. Uniting American families must remain a top priority along with meeting our nation’s economic needs.

We were dismayed to see language undercutting the family reunification provisions of our immigration law that have served the country so well in the Administration’s immigration proposals. In many of your public statements, you have expressed your commitment to recognizing the importance of families to our country. The Latino community urges you to fulfill that commitment by supporting and strengthening family values through our nation’s immigration policy.

Sincerely,

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational
Fund
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)