

## IMMIGRATION REFORMS IN IOWA

**ISSUE** : **People Who Are Eligible for Either Citizenship or Permanent Residency Are Being Deported & Torn from Their Families.** Right now, Section 715 (A) of the Iowa Code, passed by the Iowa Legislature just a few years ago, has been used to bring felony charges against hundreds of people (all Hispanics?) And to deport them for possession of forged documents.

**SOLUTION:** **Repeal Section 715 (A) of the Iowa Code.** Repeal this punitive, potentially discriminatory, immigrant-hating law. Or, on the alternative, reduce the criminal penalty so as to allow people a chance to apply for immigration benefits which some of them may be eligible. Allow them to stay with their families.

**ISSUE** : **Undocumented People Who Are Eligible to Apply for Permission to Stay Are Not Allowed to Apply by the INS.** Right now, even undocumented people may become eligible to apply for permanent residency. For example, they may become eligible by marriage to U.S. citizens or they may become eligible partly by virtue of their long residence and physical presence here in this country. People who are eligible or who have become eligible for this so-called Cancellation of Removal are often turned away by the INS when they attempt to avail themselves of the opportunity to apply. However, they will be eligible to apply if they are first detained/ arrested by the INS. It creates the almost surrealistic scenario in which people are begging to be arrested by the INS and the INS is turning them away.

**SOLUTION:** **Permit People to Apply Affirmatively (Without Getting Arrested/ Detained) For Cancellation of Removal.** Let eligible people have a way of formally applying for immigration benefits. This is one easy and readily available way of balancing the service with the

**ISSUE** : **Immigration Laws Have Become Too Punitive and Mean-Spirited.** Right now, the laws have become recently very punitive. For example, a person who has been a permanent resident for 20 years can be deported for merely slapping her or his spouse in a domestic dispute.

**SOLUTION:** **Work in Concert to Change These Laws.** For example, work together to permit the easier processing of temporary, seasonal; and other non-agricultural workers; or to expand the definition of agricultural workers.

**ISSUE** : **Immigrants Are Made to Feel Unwelcome in Iowa.** The repeated revival of the "English Only" legislative proposals are affronts to our dignity.

**SOLUTION:** **Fund The Immigrant Welcome Center.** Reverse the negative trend. Welcome the immigrants and make this a reality. And make it meaningful by adequately funding it at least a million dollars per year.

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