



The Anti-Displacement Project

Casa Obrera Worker Center

130 Union Street • Springfield, MA 01105

• (413) 739-7233 • fax (413) 746-3012 •

info@a-dp.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ali Noorani, MIRA, 617-835-1402

Caroline Murray, Anti-Displacement Project, 413-219-1108

Western Massachusetts Immigrant Workers to Deliver 3,000 Postcards to Senator Kennedy Calling for Opposition to Guest Worker Programs

Boston, MA – Today (approximately 2:30 PM, JFK Federal Building), leaders from the Anti-Displacement Project traveled from Springfield to Boston to deliver over 3,000 postcards to Senator Kennedy calling for his firm opposition to guest worker provisions that do not protect workers and provide for a path to citizenship.

Leaders with the Anti-Displacement Project worked with community and labor allies to gather signatures over the past two months.

“Our members and allies – immigrant or native born – stand in clear opposition to any worker program that guts labor protections and does not provide a path to citizenship,” said Caroline Murray, Executive Director of the Anti-Displacement Project. “Each one of these postcards is a statement of support for immigration reform that protects workers and families. Any proposal that falls short is not acceptable.”

In Washington DC, Senators from both sides of the aisle will be negotiating compromise legislation to be taken to the floor as early as tomorrow. Troubling aspects of this compromise are rumors of a temporary worker program with no path to citizenship, elimination of due process, and the elimination of the family immigration system.

“Back room negotiations may very well leave our country with a ‘rich man’s’ immigration system where low-skilled workers are not treated as human beings, and families are permanently separated,” said Ali Noorani, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition. “Imagine how different America would look if our immigration system was to ignore family reunification, or the contributions of all workers, regardless of skill level? Imagine how many

generations of Americans just would not exist if the Irish laborer or the Italian tailor was not allowed to start a family?"

Noorani concluded, "One step forward and three steps back is not progress. The Republicans are forcing a devil's bargain which may very well ruin America for generations to come."

The text of the postcard says: "Supporters of immigration reform are American born and immigrant; union and non-union workers; faith and business leaders; low income and middle income; Black, White, and Latino. We join together in recognition of our shared fate to call for an immigration system that will be accountable and efficient, that respects the rights of all, makes America more secure, reunites families, and that will allow the American Dream to be a reality for us all. Any Comprehensive Immigration Reform must include the following:

1. **Enforce equal rights on the job**, ensure the rights of all workers to join a union, change jobs, and gain a path to permanent residence.
2. Maintain worker protections and **increase enforcement of wage and hour laws** in order to stop unscrupulous employers from abusing workers.
3. **Oppose a Guest Worker** program that will drive down wages by creating separate tiers of workers.
4. Uphold American Democracy by **restoring the Civil Rights** of all people, including immigrants.
5. Provide a **path to citizenship** for all members of our communities.
6. Call for an **immediate moratorium on inhumane raids and deportations** until Comprehensive Immigration Reform has passed.

###

About ADP:

The Anti-Displacement Project / ADP is a membership based community organization in Western Massachusetts that is well known for its work to improve the lives of low-income people. ADP has transformed 1,450 units of slum housing to tenant owned permanently affordable coops, has created worker owned businesses, and has led a number of successful national campaigns including saving funding for the Section 8 program. The ADP Worker Center / Casa Obrera represents low wage and immigrant workers in fighting for enforcement of wage and hour and health and safety laws. They recently won \$130,000 in restitution for workers who were victims of wage and hour violations on a Springfield Construction site.

About MIRA:

MIRA works to advocate for the rights and opportunities of immigrants and refugees. In partnership with its members, MIRA advances this mission through education, training, leadership development, organizing, policy analysis and advocacy.