



# Groundswell Meets Groundwork

## Recommendations for Building on Immigrant Mobilizations

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# Preface

**W**e are living in a remarkable and historical moment in this country's struggle for immigrant rights—one that is filled with great potential as well as great challenges.

In spring 2006, millions of immigrants and their allies have participated in hundreds of marches across the United States. The scale and power of these demonstrations surprised even long-time immigrant supporters. They increased immigrants' visibility and highlighted their potential power. The marches also influenced Congressional debate on reforming U.S. immigration policies, from an almost exclusive focus on enforcement to one that—for all its flaws—includes creating new opportunities for immigrants to legalize their status and reunify family members.

Yet, despite these gains, immigrant communities face considerable challenges in converting their recent mobilizations into beneficial policy changes and political empowerment. Any legislation that emerges from Congress is likely to include many harmful measures. Efforts to enhance immigrants' electoral power and their influence on national policymaking are unlikely to succeed without innovative strategies and increased and sustained funding to promote naturalization, voter engagement, leadership development, and advocacy among newcomers.

Recognizing that the current environment offers important opportunities for funders to support and help empower immigrants, the Four Freedoms Fund commissioned a field analysis to better understand recent developments and provide funding recommendations. Some of the key questions that this report addresses include:

- ❖ What events and factors helped create the groundswell that led millions of immigrants to participate in marches across the country?
- ❖ What are the opportunities and challenges for immigrant communities in the current environment? Specifically, how can foundations support efforts to build upon recent developments and increase newcomer civic participation?
- ❖ What areas of needs are prioritized by national and regional immigrant organizations?
- ❖ If Congress were to adopt an immigration bill, what would be its likely effects and how could funders help immigrants benefit, as well as respond to harmful provisions?
- ❖ How should funders respond to the growing anti-immigrant backlash at the state and local levels?

Our researchers interviewed a broad cross-section of immigrant leaders, advocates, and policymakers and have produced this report summarizing their findings. The report briefly describes the circumstances that produced the large immigrant marches and offers concrete funding recommendations for supporting immigrant communities under different scenarios.

A key theme that runs throughout this report is the need for funders to provide increased support at this pivotal moment, while coordinating their efforts to maximize impact and avoid duplication. Coordination of funding will be especially important if Congress were to pass a large-scale immigration reform bill since it would likely affect—both positively and negatively—tens of millions of immigrants.

The Four Freedoms Fund and Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees are publishing this report to provide timely analysis and preliminary recommendations. Recent developments have created a unique funding opportunity for philanthropy, and we hope this report will stimulate discussion among funders on how best to support and strengthen the emerging immigrant rights movement during this critical time. We welcome your comments and reactions to the findings and recommendations of this report. Our organizations look forward to serving as an information resource and to providing technical assistance to national and regional funders. The Four Freedoms Fund, in particular, is also available to help coordinate grantmaking if there is interest in forming collaborative efforts to address immigration issues.

We hope you will consider acting upon some of the recommendations in this report. Increased support—if provided in a timely, informed and strategic manner—can help create not only stronger immigrant communities but ultimately a better future for this country.

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# Executive Summary

**I**n the spring of 2006, millions of immigrants and their allies participated in hundreds of marches across the United States. The scale and power of these demonstrations have increased immigrants' visibility and highlighted their potential power. While the long-term implications remain to be seen, the passion that was unleashed in these unprecedented demonstrations promises to be a potent force in shaping this country's future.

Drawing upon information gathered through media articles and interviews with over 60 immigrant leaders, advocates and policymakers, this report analyzes the recent events' implications for funders.

**Section I** provides a brief overview of the demonstrations, examining the events and factors that helped create and nurture the groundswell that led millions of immigrants to participate in marches and other civic actions.

The major catalyst for recent events was the U.S. House of Representatives' passage of HR 4437 in December 2005. The harsh criminalization provisions and enforcement-only approach to immigration reform raised the stakes not only for immigrants and advocates, but also for faith-based organizations, social service agencies, employers, and other groups that work closely with immigrants and recognize their contributions to U.S. communities. Ethnic media outlets, led by several nationally syndicated Spanish-language radio personalities, played a pivotal role in publicizing events and the messages to be conveyed, building a momentum that drew immigrant families and their allies to the public demonstrations in record-breaking numbers.



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While the marches surprised many due to the apparently spontaneous participation by so many who had not demonstrated before, they were facilitated by the groundwork laid by advocates, community groups, national coalitions and other organizations that have long worked together on issues affecting immigrants. Broad coalitions that had been convened to support comprehensive immigration reform played important roles in mobilizing support for the demonstrations as well as coordinating and shaping public messages. In many regions, religious groups (particularly various Catholic Church archdioceses), economic justice and community organizing groups, and labor unions provided critical support. Hometown associations and other ethnic-based organizations were also instrumental in reaching out to communities that typically have had limited participation in the political arena.

Advocates at the national and state levels confirm that recent demonstra-

tions have had a positive impact on the policymaking environment, though numerous challenges continue to impede affirmative policy change. As public officials have become more aware that immigrants are a growing part of the electorate, the national immigration reform debate has shifted from an almost exclusive focus on enforcement measures to an increasing realization that any comprehensive legislation must also allow undocumented immigrants and future guest workers a path towards citizenship.

Responding to recent mobilizations, many immigrant organizations are working to improve coordination between grassroots groups and national advocates, as well as offer civic engagement activities that will empower immigrants and strengthen the broader social justice movement. Through strategic investment in these groups, foundations can strengthen and advance the movement for immigrant rights.

**Section II** elaborates on the challenges and obstacles for immigrant communities in achieving short-term policy goals and long-term empowerment. Some of the key challenges that should concern funders include:

❖ **Possibility that any immigration reform adopted this year will include harmful provisions**, leading to increased detention and deportation of immigrants; militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border; and denial of due process for growing numbers of immigrants.

❖ **Limited capacity among immigrant-serving groups** to provide public education, advice, and services to eligible individuals if large-scale legalization programs were enacted.

❖ **Limited resources within regional immigrant rights coalitions**—organizations that have played major roles in supporting the recent mass mobilizations—to sustain the engagement of individuals and groups new to the movement and to build a broader base.

❖ **Large and growing numbers of anti-immigrant proposals at the state and local levels** that are creating an increasingly hostile environment for newcomers.

❖ **Tensions between immigrants and other disadvantaged communities**, especially African-Americans.

**Section III** provides recommendations to help address these challenges and to build upon the momentum generated by recent events regardless of whether Congress adopts immigration-related legislative reform:

❖ **Support regional immigrant rights organizations to provide leadership and coordination for the emerging movement.** These groups need increased capacity to: (1) communicate with their constituencies; (2) engage in leadership development, community organizing, and other programs to incorporate newcomers and their groups into the immigrant rights movement; (3) enhance media and communications

skills; and (4) strengthen fundraising. Funders should also continue to support ethnic-based organizations that complement the roles of coalitions.

❖ **Strengthen collaborations between local and national immigrant groups.**

Increased collaboration can build upon the groundwork underlying recent mobilizations, strengthen the voice of immigrants in federal policymaking through increased grassroots input and support, and coordinate the development of shared public messages and themes as well as advocacy strategies. Funding national coalitions that develop shared principles among diverse immigrant communities and help facilitate communications across local and national organizations is critical to the movement's future success.

❖ **Support efforts to build broader public support of immigrant issues.**

Targeted public education campaigns, particularly using print and electronic media, can increase public understanding of the experiences of newcomers and their contributions to society, as well as inform debates on policy issues that affect the well-being of immigrant families.

❖ **Increase funding for civic participation.** Converting recent large mobilizations into electoral and political power is a critical next step for the movement. Funders can support a range of activities in strategic geographic regions, including (1) naturalization efforts that expand the immigrant electorate; (2) voter registration, education, and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) activities; and (3) community organizing and leadership development that can expand the base and increase immigrants' influence in policymaking.

❖ **Support the ethnic media's capacity to cover immigration issues.**

Ethnic media outlets play a pivotal role in informing newcomer communities and engaging them in civic life.

❖ **Increase the communications capacity of immigrant rights organizations**, including (1) message development that can be used on a broad range of issues in different regions of the country; (2) coordination of communications strategies among national and regional advocates beyond the federal legislative context; (3) factual or background information related to ongoing events; and (4) organizational capacity to work with media.

❖ **Fund research on the impact of harmful enforcement systems, develop alternative enforcement policies, and incorporate public opinion research into future advocacy campaigns.** These activities are important to informing advocacy strategies that either address or help change harmful immigration enforcement systems.

❖ **Support efforts to counter anti-immigrant proposals at state and local levels.** Such funding can include grants to national groups to provide technical assistance and grants to local organizations which mobilize immigrants to oppose these measures.

❖ **Support efforts to improve wages and working conditions for low-wage workers.** The enactment of any new legalization program, by itself, will not necessarily improve working conditions for many immigrants and could actually lead to increased exploitation by unscrupulous employers. Improving the wages and working conditions of low-wage earners is a key element to helping immigrants become economically self-sufficient and integrate into U.S. communities.

❖ **Support efforts to build stronger relationships between immigrants and African-Americans.** These efforts could engage organizations at both national and regional levels to build stronger relationships between the two communities and to engage in collaborative advocacy to achieve shared goals.

**“The demonstrations were so peaceful and strong because they were about families. As people realized that families might be separated, everyone wanted to participate. Children and youth joined in and were marching alongside their parents.”**

**Jessie Diaz**

*League of United Latin American Citizens, Dallas Council*

**Section IV** describes funding recommendations for addressing any comprehensive immigration reform measures adopted by Congress:

- ❖ **Support large and coordinated campaigns to educate and assist immigrants in the implementation of any new, comprehensive immigration laws.** Activities should include the development of public education materials, trainings, outreach, and legal and other direct services needed to support implementation. Coordination among both funders and immigrant-serving organizations is a crucial consideration, given the enormous scale of the potential legalization program.
- ❖ **Fund public education efforts on other provisions of any new law,** such as enforcement issues, new guest worker programs, and the expansion of family unification opportunities.

- ❖ **Support administrative and regulatory advocacy.** This is especially important to ensure proper implementation, given the complexity of any law that is likely to pass Congress and the culture of the current Department of Homeland Security.

- ❖ **Support litigation to protect immigrants’ rights.** This is especially important if Congress were to pass legislation that restricts due process or infringes upon other constitutional protections.

- ❖ **Support planning for longer-term implementation of legalization programs and integration of newcomers.** Foundations can work with stakeholders to address English acquisition needs and develop programs that will maximize the skills and contributions that these new immigrants can provide to their communities.

- ❖ **Continue to fund ongoing advocacy to improve U.S. immigration laws and policies.** Such activities include efforts to publicize and address the shortcomings of any reform measures passed. They also include community organizing, public education, and civic participation efforts.

**Section V** describes funding recommendations if the federal government were to adopt only new enforcement policies but no legalization or family-based immigration measures:

- ❖ **Support civic engagement to build support for comprehensive immigration reform.** This would capitalize on the heightened public awareness of immigration issues. Depending on the scope of the new enforcement provisions, advocates may need to mobilize a strong public response to focus the

public debate on reversing these measures in future immigration legislation. They also need to continue advocating for comprehensive legislation that helps immigrants legalize, reunites families, and meets the social and economic needs of American communities.

- ❖ **Support public education efforts.** Materials, manuals, trainings, and media strategies will be needed to inform immigrants of the details of any new enforcement programs and how they would affect their communities.

- ❖ **Support administrative/regulatory advocacy and litigation.** These strategies will be needed to limit the harmful impact of enforcement policies.

- ❖ **Support monitoring of implementation and increase service providers’ capacity to assist immigrants harmed by new policies.** Proposed enforcement policies will require immigrant advocates and service providers to devote more resources to monitor implementation by immigration enforcement agencies, address potential abuses or unlawful practices, and provide legal assistance to growing numbers of immigrants facing detention and deportation.

- ❖ **Expand the field’s communications capacity.** Publicizing the harmful effects of new enforcement policies and helping to develop more effective messages in support of immigrant rights will be important to minimizing the likely negative impacts.

# I. Introduction: HR 4437 Sparks a Groundswell



The dramatic series of rallies that spread across the United States in the spring of 2006 have brought a new dimension to the debate over comprehensive immigration reform. These events mark the entrance into the public eye of a large and vocal immigrant community claiming a right to be seen and heard as part of the national dialogue over its fate. The mobilizations were remarkable not only for their scale but also for their unity and dignity. Although organizers were often rushing to keep up with popular momentum, and despite some differences in strategy and approach, these events were held together by a sense of common purpose.

The themes and messages that spread through word of mouth, ethnic media, and advocates' outreach and organizing efforts had deep resonance for the larger immigrant community and helped fuel the momentum. The masses of white t-shirts, the heartfelt, multi-lingual slogans—from "I am a worker, not a criminal" to "today we march, tomorrow we vote"—spoke to a deep reservoir of sentiment and potential capacity for action. While the long-term implications remain to be seen, the passion that was unleashed in these unprecedented demonstrations promises to be a potent force in shaping this country's future.

Drawing upon information gathered through media articles and interviews with over 60 immigrant leaders, advocates and policymakers, this report analyzes the implications of recent events for funders. It briefly highlights the factors behind the recent groundswells in selected locations, analyzes their impact on federal and state policymaking on immigrant-related issues, and provides grant-making recommendations to build upon

the momentum of the mobilizations. This report's description of immigrant mobilizations is not a comprehensive analysis of the many marches that occurred in the spring of 2006. Instead, it is intended to provide the reader with background information needed to better understand the recommendations discussed below. These recommendations focus on strengthening the immigrant rights movement's infrastructure, increasing civic engagement, developing effective strategies to counter harmful enforcement systems, and improving relationships between immigrants and other disadvantaged communities. In addition, they also address possible legislative changes, including comprehensive reforms, that Congress may adopt over the next year.

The major catalyst for recent events was the U.S. House of Representatives' passage of HR 4437 in December 2005.<sup>1</sup> The bill's harsh provisions and enforcement-only approach to immigration reform touched a nerve and raised the stakes for a range of constituencies. Both the undocumented and immigrants with official status felt directly targeted by the legislation and the accompanying tide of anti-immigrant sentiment, prompting widespread indignation and a desire to rise up and claim their dignity. Many businesses, churches, social service agencies, and individuals, realizing their own potential liability under HR 4437's provisions criminalizing assistance to the undocumented, felt compelled to increase their participation in the debate over immigration reform.

In this environment, awareness of the perceived injustice of HR 4437 spread throughout immigrant communities. Ethnic media outlets—in print, on the radio and television, and online—were instrumental in informing immigrant



Herman Martinez, Board member of the Florida Immigrant Coalition

communities of the issues at stake. Community-based and immigrant rights groups conducted public education campaigns about the implications of the bill. Public awareness of the draconian implications also grew when Los Angeles' Cardinal Roger Mahony made a March 1st Ash Wednesday call for defiance of HR 4437 should it become law, stating that he would be willing to risk jail for his position.

Although local demonstrations began shortly after the passage of HR 4437, the idea for mass mobilizations had its seed as local and national groups began to gather and strategize a response in early 2006. In one significant example, over 500 Latino activists and academics from across the country met at the University of California, Riverside on February 11th to consider a response to HR 4437. The event was convened by the National Alliance for Human Rights, an organization of Latino activists and

1. The text and summary of HR 4437, primarily authored by Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. While media attention has focused on the bill's attempt to criminalize undocumented immigrants and those who help these individuals, the bill contains a number of other harmful provisions, including those that would dramatically increase passport and document fraud penalties, expand mandatory detention to apply to more categories of immigrants, create new grounds of inadmissibility and deportability, and authorize state and local police agencies to enforce immigration laws.

academics founded by Armando Navarro, a U.C. Riverside ethnic studies professor with roots in the Chicano movement. Consensus was reached that mass action should be taken, and attendees from both Chicago and Los Angeles returned to their home cities and started working with coalitions that became the basis of the seminal mobilizations in those cities.

These efforts bore fruit in March as people drew together in a mass movement that steadily gained momentum. On March 7th, a crowd of 20,000 to 40,000 (as estimated by officials and organizers, respectively) gathered in a Washington, D.C. event organized by the National Capital Immigration Coalition, among other groups. On March 10th, the rallying cry in Chicago was “El Gigante Despierta” (“The Giant Wakes”) as an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 marched through the streets in a record-breaking demonstration that put the rest of the country on notice. Spontaneous student walkouts started across the nation, facilitated by MySpace.com and text-messaging.

Organizers of subsequent events across the country noted that each successful mobilization increased popular interest in the issue, and they often found themselves scrambling to respond in a very short timeframe. For example, emboldened by the turnout in Washington and Chicago, Los Angeles geared up for its own “Gran Marcha” on March 25th. Activists who had settled on the idea of a mass demonstration at the February 11th conference in Riverside, including Jesse Diaz and Javier Rodriguez, met with immigrant rights and community groups that were actively supporting comprehensive immigration reform and began organizing as the “March 25th Coalition.” In addition to the efforts of activists and organizers, a crucial factor was the buy-in of Spanish language DJs — most notably two nationally syndicated radio personalities, Renán Almendárez Coello (“el Cucuy”) and Eduardo Sotelo (“el Piolin,” who entered the U.S. in the trunk of a car in 1986, and who is now Los Angeles’ highest-rated morning

radio show host). After organizers convinced the DJs that this was an important moment, they helped spread information about immigration reform, shared their own immigration histories and publicized the event, leading to a March 25th turnout estimated at 500,000 to one million.

April saw efforts to continue the momentum. Between 350,000 and 500,000 marched in Dallas’ “Mega Marcha” on April 9th, the largest civil rights march in the city’s history. A coordinated “National Day of Action” was organized on April 10th. That day, organizers estimate that over 300,000 rallied in New York and hundreds of thousands more participated in 170+ events across the country. These mobilizations were remarkable not only for their scale, but also their reach. South Carolina, with a relatively new immigrant population, drew unexpectedly large crowds; Schuyler, Nebraska, a town of 5,300, saw 3,000 people rallying for immigrant rights. These April rallies were also more ethnically diverse than the March rallies, as organizers reached out beyond the Latino communities. While the April 19th federal immigration raids at IFCO Pallet Management Systems plants generated fear within immigrant communities, further rallies on May 1st were also well attended around the nation, despite occasional strategic differences over whether to call for a boycott.<sup>2</sup>

### **Why were the mobilizations so successful?**

***The people were ready.*** The unprecedented scale of the mobilizations took supporters, adversaries, and the mainstream public by surprise. A unique confluence of factors helped to create a movement that is still unfolding. To a large extent, the mobilizations were so well attended and spread so quickly across the country because the themes resonated deeply among immigrant communities, regardless of whether or not they were undocumented. There was a sense that the rallies were an organic and authentic expression of a long-suffering desire for respect. In a representative comment,

one interviewee mentioned that it was not so much that the Giant had been sleeping as it was that he had been so busy working; now it was time for the Giant to stand and speak. Participants and bystanders were swept up in the dramatic, peaceful, and celebratory tone of these demonstrations. Immigrant families were claiming their right to exist and be recognized. When asked about the factors underlying the tremendous turnout, Father Richard Estrada of La Placita Church in Los Angeles, an early meeting place of the March 25th planners, stated simply that “it was in the people’s will already.”

***Ethnic media played a pivotal role.*** Ethnic media closely followed the progress of immigration reform legislation and helped keep immigrant communities informed of the potential ramifications. As the mobilizations developed, Spanish-language media and several key DJs, in particular, were instrumental in raising awareness about the events. They publicized the rallies and, among other things, advised listeners to wear white shirts, downplay the Mexican flag in favor of the American flag, and present a dignified image to the rest of America. In Chicago, Rafael Pulido of WOJO-FM (nicknamed “El Pistolero”) used his show to reach a large cross section of the Spanish-speaking community.<sup>3</sup> In Los Angeles, groups such as the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) that had preexisting relationships with ethnic media helped engage them as

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2. These differences included concerns about whether a boycott would create a backlash against the movement generally, as well as possible retaliation by employers against individual workers. In Los Angeles, for example, organizations and individuals in favor of a May 1st boycott continued under the “March 25th Coalition” umbrella, including activists such as Javier Rodriguez, Jesse Diaz, and Nativo Lopez; they pushed for “A Day Without an Immigrant”, a phrase that was taken up by the mainstream media, and organized a midday rally on May 1st. Established immigrant rights groups, most community-based organizations, the Archdiocese, SEIU 1877, Unite/HERE, and the LA County Federation of Labor formed the “We Are America” coalition to organize a late afternoon march and rally timed to provide individuals an opportunity to participate with less of a chance of jeopardizing their jobs. Many participants in the midday rally continued on to the second rally.

3. Fornek, Scott. 2006. “Chicago ‘Giant’ put rest of country on notice,” *Chicago Sun Times*, April 2.



active participants. Two of the major Los Angeles-based radio personalities—Eddie Sotelo and Renán Almendárez Coello—challenged other radio personalities to join them in gathering support for the mobilizations. Because both Sotelo and Coello broadcast nationally, their messages regarding the March 25th march and subsequent events were also heard by Spanish-speaking immigrants across the country.<sup>4</sup>

**Groundwork greased the wheels.**

While the organic nature of these events cannot be overstated, in many localities they were facilitated by the groundwork laid by advocates, community groups, and other organizations that have long worked together on issues affecting immigrants. In particular, regional and local organizations that had previously convened broad coalitions to support comprehensive immigration reform played important roles in mobilizing support for and shaping public messages generated by the demonstrations.

National coalitions and networks that link many of these regional groups were also a critical part of the groundwork, helping to turn what started as local rallies into nationally coordinated

**“Many organizations and coalitions contributed to the historic mobilizations that transpired this past spring. As an organized network with a presence in 37 states, CCIR and its New American Opportunity Campaign played a crucial role, working with groups nationwide to organize and coordinate unified action on April 10th and beyond. Success was evident not only in turnout, but also in the white t-shirts, American flags, and ‘We Are America’ signs that unified the demonstrations and message.”**

**Frank Sharry**  
*National Immigration Forum*

events. Over the past few years, the emergence of the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CCIR), the Center for Community Change’s Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), Rights Working Group (RWG), the Catholic Church’s Justice for Immigrants Campaign, and ethnic-based national networks have

helped build important local-national collaborations. These coalitions have articulated shared principles, goals, and strategies and have brought together diverse allies ranging from community-based organizations to national unions. In doing so, they have amplified immigrants’ voices in national policy-making by connecting grassroots advocacy and civic participation to the ongoing debate on reforming federal immigration policies.

CCIR, FIRM and RWG, in particular, have not only provided leadership for these collaborations, but with funding from the Atlantic Philanthropies, Ford Foundation, Open Society Institute, and other foundations, have re-granted support to regional organizations to increase their capacity to participate in national policy debates. The results of these collaborations were evident in recent mobilizations, as the regional groups took the lead in organizing local events in support of comprehensive immigration reform, and the national coalitions worked with their members to coordinate events and public messages, as well as provide assistance to smaller groups across the country.

The participating groups’ relationships with immigrant communities and ethnic media, their familiarity with issues surrounding immigration reform, experience in collaborating with diverse communities, as well as their grassroots legitimacy, were all significant factors in the mobilization and planning of recent events. Without much advance warning or preparation, representatives from regional and national organizations were able to speak to both the mainstream press and to their grassroots constituents about the core issues of immigration reform in a way that resonated with large numbers of people.

4. The significance of ethnic media is increasing: Univision, for example, is the fifth-largest network in the United States, and its primetime viewership among 18-34 year olds has ranked as high as second overall, behind only Fox. Likewise, a 2005 survey by Bendixen and Associates and New America Media found that 51 million Americans, 24 percent of U.S. adults, are either primary or secondary consumers of ethnic media. See “The State of the News Media” available at [www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2006/narrative\\_ethnic\\_alternative\\_audience.asp?cat=4&media=10](http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2006/narrative_ethnic_alternative_audience.asp?cat=4&media=10).



These same evolving networks have since become the basis for further work to turn the mass mobilizations into political power.<sup>5</sup>

In Los Angeles, for example, groups which had been working together in the Southern California Comprehensive Immigration Reform Workgroup, such as CHIRLA, the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC), Service Employees International Union (SEIU) locals, the Korean Resource Center, the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), and the Archdiocese Office of Justice and Peace took the lead in coordinating the movement, especially after the initial March 25th demonstration. In New York City, groups with a long history of providing immigrant rights advocacy, including unions, became the backbone for pulling together the April 10th mobilization and shaping the positive public messages conveyed at the rally. In less than two weeks, these groups and other allies successfully organized the largest rally held during the National Day of Action.

Likewise, in Nebraska, an existing network of organizations participating in the Immigrant Rights Network of Iowa and Nebraska provided critical support for helping local immigrant groups to organize large-scale marches in several different cities.<sup>6</sup> In South Carolina, where the immigrant population and related organizations were still relatively new, groups such as Acercamiento Hispano (“Hispanic Outreach”) and the Coalition for New South Carolinians were able to draw upon relationships they had built up with community groups, service agencies and churches to facilitate organizing for the April 10th mobilizations. In Dallas, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) took the lead in forming a coalition with the faith community (through the Dallas Area Interfaith Sponsoring Committee) to bring out more than half a million participants.

***The coalition broadens.*** In addition to organizations that have typically focused on immigration issues, the recent mobilizations have seen the increasing involvement of other stakeholders. In certain communities, faith institutions and leaders played major roles in organizing turnout and support

for the mobilizations. The Catholic Church, in particular, provided critical support in a number of communities. The most visible example was in Los Angeles, where Cardinal Mahony’s personal investment in the issue has been a major factor in publicizing the harmful impact of HR 4437, but the Church also played significant roles in mobilizing support in Chicago, Houston, Washington, D.C. and other metropolitan areas.

Labor unions, especially in Los Angeles (SEIU Local 1877, UNITE/HERE, and the LA County Federation of Labor), and New York (SEIU Local 32BJ and SEIU Local 1199), also became increasingly involved in working directly with immigrant groups. Unions, with resources far greater than grassroots community organizations, were instrumental in providing key logistical and financial support, as well as bringing out the rank and file. In New York, for example, Change to Win representatives flew in from Washington, D.C. to facilitate permit negotiations on an expedited basis. These unions brought their organizing and mobilizing experience. Their involvement may also have been a factor in encouraging mainstream politicians to attend the rallies. At the national level, SEIU has played a central role in developing a new national coalition, the We Are America Alliance, to follow up on the mobilizations with the goal of naturalizing and registering more than a million voters from immigrant communities before the November 2006 elections.

Hometown associations and other ethnic-specific organizations were also instrumental in bringing out crowds. These include groups such as Casa Michoacan in Chicago, which hosted early organizing meetings for the March 10th mobilization, Hermandad Mexicana chapters and other groups in Los

5. See description below of the formation of the We Are America Alliance.

6. These organizations include Nebraska Appleseed, Omaha Together One Community, the Chicano Awareness Center in Omaha, Hispanic Community Center of Lincoln, and the Office of Latin and Latin American Studies at the University of Nebraska – Omaha.

Angeles, and groups such as Casa Guanajuato in Dallas. These associations have typically focused more on service provision, cultural and social activities, but as a result of the recent mobilizations, they have emerged as a key player in the immigrant rights movement and in the larger political arena. Finally, low-income community organizing groups, including faith-based organizations and worker centers, also helped mobilize support for recent rallies. A number of these groups have become deeply involved in organizing immigrant communities in specific regions and are emerging as important institutions for newcomers.

### **Impact of the Marches on Policymakers**

“Today we march, tomorrow we vote,” the slogan repeated throughout the demonstrations, has framed the mobilizations as part of a political movement that will hold elected officials and political parties accountable to immigrant communities. For years, political pundits have discounted the large and growing immigrant population,<sup>7</sup> citing low naturalization rates among Mexican and Central American newcomers and poor voter turnout among naturalized citizens. But the recent marches call these assumptions into question. Even mainstream political observers recognize that the current context could motivate many more individuals to naturalize and vote. As described in an analysis by *The Washington Post*, the marches have “mobilized a nascent political movement, one that over time will grow in size and strength as younger Latinos begin to register and vote in larger and larger numbers... [T]here is little disagreement that in the longer term, a party seen as hostile to immigrants, legal or illegal, could pay a stiff price.”<sup>8</sup> Interviews with immigrant leaders and advocates in Washington, D.C. and at the state level confirm that the recent demonstrations have had a large and positive impact on their policy advocacy efforts. At the national level, discussions on immigration reform have gone from an almost exclusive focus on

enforcement measures to a growing realization by many mainstream legislators that any comprehensive legislation must also allow undocumented immigrants and future guest workers a path towards permanent residency and citizenship. In late May, the U.S. Senate passed by almost a two-third margin the Hagel-Martinez bill, S. 2611, containing provisions that were largely unthinkable only a short time ago. S. 2611 includes the DREAM Act,<sup>9</sup> a modified version of AgJOBS,<sup>10</sup> and a three-tiered legalization program<sup>11</sup> that is expected to benefit a significant portion of the undocumented population. While the legislation contains many worrisome enforcement provisions and restrictions to legalization, its passage illustrates the powerful political forces that have been unleashed in the five months since the House passed HR 4437.

Similarly, at the state level, advocates report that a number of anti-immigrant legislative proposals were modified or withdrawn shortly after the April 10th National Day of Action. Even immigrant leaders who fear that local demonstrations could cause backlash in their communities believe that the long-term benefits of raising the visibility of immigrants and engaging large numbers of newcomers far outweigh any possible short-term harms.

### **Capturing the energy of the mass mobilizations**

One of the most remarkable aspects of the mobilizations was their sense of common resolve and purpose, particularly given the geographic and ethnic diversity of the participants, which included both native-born Americans and immigrants. This unifying message was due not only to the tireless and coordinated work of a broad range of stakeholders, but also because the cause, and the message, resonated so deeply with immigrant communities. The mass mobilizations, in retrospect, seem both surprising and inevitable, and have left in their wake a sense of power and possibility.

Milo Mumgaard, executive director of Nebraska Appleseed, reflects widespread sentiment when he notes that “everything we’ve done since April 10th has been to try and figure out how to take advantage of this energy.” Many immigrant organizations already are building on the recent mobilizations through better coordination between grassroots groups and national advocates, as well as engaging in civic activities that will empower immigrants and strengthen the broader social justice movement.

An important development coming out of the mobilization has been the formation of a national coalition, the We Are America Alliance, to coordinate actions in support of immigration reform and to translate the high level of immigrant interest in these issues into civic and electoral power. At the time of this

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7. The potential voting population of immigrant communities is substantial. As of 2004, there were 12.4 million naturalized citizens eligible to vote. Passel, Jeffery S. 2005. *Unauthorized Migrants: Numbers and Characteristics*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center. Another approximately 10.7 million immigrants were eligible but had yet to apply for citizenship. Fix, Michael, Jeffrey Passel, and Kenneth Sucher. 2003. *Immigrant Families and Workers: Trends in Naturalization*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.

In addition, an estimated four million U.S.-born children of immigrants between the ages of 18–24 are also eligible voters. Hoyt, Joshua and Fred Tsao. 2006. *Today We March, Tomorrow We Vote: The Untapped Power of Over 14 Million Potential New Immigrant Voters in 2008*. Chicago: Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

8. Balz, Dan. 2006. “In Speech, a Balancing Act of Policy and Politics,” *The Washington Post*, May 16.

9. The DREAM Act would help undocumented youths who have grown up in the United States and graduated from high school. It would permit many to apply for temporary legal status and eventually permanent status if they go to college or serve in the U.S. military. For more information, see the National Immigrant Law Center web site at [www.nilc.org/immigrationpolicy/DREAM/index.htm](http://www.nilc.org/immigrationpolicy/DREAM/index.htm).

10. The Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefit and Security Act would allow certain undocumented farmworkers and H-2A guestworkers to obtain temporary immigration status, with the possibility of becoming permanent residents if they prospectively work a specified amount of time in the agricultural industry, pay a fine, and establish that they have paid income taxes. For more information, see the Farmworkers Justice Fund web site at [www.fwjjustice.org](http://www.fwjjustice.org).

11. S. 2611 includes a three-tiered legalization program that would be available to many undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States for (1) five or more years and (2) between two to five years, but these individuals would have to first leave the country and receive a temporary work visa. Those here less than two years would have to leave. See Title VI of S. 2611. Detailed analysis of this extremely complex program and its various requirements is available from the American Immigration Lawyers Associations’ web site at [www.aila.org](http://www.aila.org).

writing, the coalition is still in the early stages of formation, but it proposes to become a very broad grassroots-based collaboration. Its membership includes regional immigrant rights organizations, unions (including SEIU and UNITE HERE), the New American Opportunity Campaign,<sup>12</sup> the Center for Community Change, large Catholic Church archdioceses, large ethnic-based organizations, farm workers' groups, and many other immigrant organizations. Renán Almendárez Coello and Eduardo Sotelo, the two DJs who played such an important role in mobilizing the initial demonstrations, are also part of the coalition and have pledged to continue to use their radio shows to support immigration reform and immigrant rights. The Alliance's announced goal to naturalize and register over one million individuals before the November 2006 elections clearly is intended to maintain pressure on Congress to enact responsive immigration reform.

In addition, the current national focus on immigration following the mobilizations presents a crucial opportunity to educate the broader public about immigrant issues. Interviewees note the importance of seizing the moment to inform, and change, public perceptions of immigrants and immigration reform. The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC), for example, is embarking on a campaign intended to dispel misinformation through education forums and publications that will address controversial questions about immigrants, such as their effect on the economy and their contributions to a vibrant America. As Chung-Wha Hong of the NYIC noted, the goal is to help the mainstream public shift their thinking of the issue from "how to treat immigrants and what rights to give them, to defining the issue as how to reform immigration so that we build a stronger future for everybody."

**"[B]y going through this historic moment, I truly felt like I became a full member of this society. My participation in this rally was a declaration that I, as an immigrant, am ready to fully pursue responsibility while exercising my rights. Immigrants may emerge not only as a new political force, but as new guardians of justice in this society."**

**S.J. Jung**

*Young Korean American Service and Education Center*

Advocates have also tried to capitalize on the current interest in immigration issues by educating the public about harmful policies and proposals that separate immigrant family members and increase detention and deportation without increasing border security or deterring undocumented migration. Over 300 immigrant family members, for example, converged on Washington D.C. on April 24, 2006 to mark the anniversary of the 1996 laws that have resulted in over a million deportations, primarily of lawful permanent residents who have been convicted of crimes. Advocates have also publicized the harmful provisions within S. 2611 that would further expand the 1996 laws and increase deportation of newcomers for even minor infractions of immigration laws (see discussion below).

Immigrant leaders and advocates agree that translating the energy of the mobilizations into ongoing community-building and policy work will be challenging given their limited resources and as different goals and strategies emerge within the movement. Organizers also note the difficulty of maintaining focus while accommodating the desires and needs of a very diverse and growing group of stakeholders. "Making history is hard," said Chung-Wha Hong, "but every problem has the potential to strengthen us." Addressing these challenges holds the promise of increasing the capacity and effectiveness of immigrant organizations, as well as providing the training ground for leadership development.

Grassroots immigrant-led groups, in particular, may provide touchstones to help maintain a clarity of vision and purpose as the movement goes forward. S.J. Jung of the Young Korean American Service and Education Center offers the following thought: "By participating in this campaign, by going through this historic moment, I truly felt like I became a full member of this society. My participation in this rally was a declaration that I, as an immigrant, am ready to fully pursue responsibility while exercising my rights. Immigrants may emerge not only as a new political force, but as new guardians of justice in this society."

The remainder of this report examines the challenges and opportunities faced by immigrants in light of recent developments and the various ways in which funders can help them achieve their goals.

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<sup>12</sup> The New American Opportunity Campaign is itself a national coalition formed to support comprehensive immigration reform and includes hundreds of local and regional organizations across the country. For more information, see its website at [www.cirnnow.org](http://www.cirnnow.org).

## II. Challenges Facing the Immigrant Rights Movement

While the recent large-scale demonstrations have had a transformative effect, immigrant communities continue to face many challenges in achieving policy goals and long-term empowerment. Foundations that wish to build upon the recent events must take into account both political and structural barriers that immigrants must overcome in the current environment. Some of the key challenges include:

❖ **Uncertainty on whether positive immigration reform can be achieved in the short-term, and the likelihood that any legislation adopted in 2006 will include harmful and restrictive measures.** The impact of recent marches have not fundamentally changed Congress' desire to pass punitive enforcement measures that will separate immigrant families, infringe on civil liberties, and harm communities along the U.S.-Mexico border. For instance, the Hagel-Martinez Senate bill, among other things, greatly expands immigration-related offenses that constitute "aggravated felonies," thereby creating new grounds for detention and deportation. It encourages cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement officials; requires the building of new walls along the U.S.-Mexico border; increases penalties, including the risk of deportation, for minor infractions, such as failing to file a change of address form; creates a new employer verification system; and limits judicial review of deportation orders.<sup>13</sup> Many D.C. advocates interviewed for this report also believe that even if a comprehensive immigration bill fails in

this legislative session, Congress is likely to enact some of the enforcement provisions in separate legislation prior to the November election.

❖ **Differences in federal legislative strategies among immigrant advocates.** All of the interviewed advocates universally oppose the harmful enforcement and restrictive provisions contained in the Senate bill

(some of which are described in the previous paragraph). However, there are differences between advocates on how to best address these proposals. A majority of the interviewees, including many who have deep reservations about the proposed legislation, believe that the most effective strategy leading up to the passage of S. 2611 was to work with sympathetic legislators to produce the best possible bill; they view this



Members of South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT) at the April 10, 2006 immigrant rights rally in Washington, D.C., where SAALT Executive Director, Deepa Iyer, addressed the participants.

13. A short, useful summary of these enforcement provisions is provided in Goldstein, Amy. 2006. "Critics Say Bill Diminishes Due Process for Immigrants." *The Washington Post*, May 26. More extended summaries of these provisions are available at [www.aila.org](http://www.aila.org), [www.immigration.forum.org](http://www.immigration.forum.org) and [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org).

option as one of the only ways to prevent the enactment of damaging legislation as well as to further the possibility that comprehensive reform could be adopted over the long-run.

These advocates believe that the Senate legislation provided an alternative to the harsh bill adopted by the House and could potentially tie up a Conference Committee that would have to reconcile vastly different proposals. A number of advocates also believe that S. 2611, despite its flaws, represents an important political achievement. The Senate's bi-partisan passage of a bill to legalize millions of immigrants provides a base on which to advance future legislative goals, even if Congress fails to act this year.

**"Making history is hard, but every problem has the potential to strengthen us."**

**Chung-Wha Hong**  
*New York Immigration Coalition*

However, other advocates, especially those who work with populations most affected by the harmful provisions, actively opposed the bill, believing that on balance the legislation could harm immigrant communities. These differences in strategy could be amplified in the field if a confusing law is adopted that provides benefits to certain immigrant communities while harming others. But one promising sign that such differences are unlikely to undermine the movement's long-term work is that most advocates have continued to work together, especially on civic engagement efforts, despite their disagreements on the Senate bill.

❖ **Limited capacity among immigrant-serving groups to provide public education, advice and services to eligible individuals if large-scale legalization programs are enacted.** The scale of the proposed legalization programs in the Senate compromise bill far exceeds any past efforts to help undocumented immigrants adjust to

## ANTI-IMMIGRANT POLICIES ARE GAINING STRENGTH AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

While no group systematically tracks municipal immigration-related developments, interviewees and media accounts suggest that an increasing number of local governments are pursuing anti-immigrant policies. These local efforts have focused primarily in three areas:

❖ **Increased local enforcement of federal immigration laws.** More local governments appear to be cooperating with the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement agency or assigning their own police forces to engage in immigration enforcement activities, including several highly visible examples along the U.S.-Mexico border.<sup>14</sup>

❖ **Increased attempts to use restrictive housing laws to target immigrants.** Local anti-immigrant activists increasingly have attempted to use housing occupancy standards or other housing rules (e.g., laws that prohibit overcrowding or illegal in-law units) to drive immigrants away from their cities. Local officials cite health and safety concerns as their justification

for cracking down on immigrant housing, but their intention, says David Harris of the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston, "is to limit housing opportunities for newcomers."<sup>15</sup> Some of the more extreme proposals, such as prohibiting extended family members from living in the same household, have been successfully challenged by legal advocates.<sup>16</sup> But several municipalities, such as Hazleton, Pennsylvania, have enacted laws requiring private landlords to verify their tenants' immigration status.

❖ **Crackdowns on day laborers.** Local proposals targeting day laborers have risen significantly over the past year.<sup>17</sup> These include prohibiting governments from contributing funds to support day laborer activities, requiring day laborer centers to verify immigration status, and barring job solicitation in public areas. Observers report that anti-immigrant forces have targeted day laborers because they believe that there is little public support for these vulnerable workers.

legal status. Its complexity, especially if the three-tiered program is enacted, will create a great deal of confusion, and many immigrants will need assistance and legal advice. Legislative enforcement provisions, in particular, will increase risks for undocumented immigrants seeking adjustment. Individuals who step out of the shadows hoping to adjust their status could be deported because of minor infractions.

❖ **The resources and capacity of regional immigrant coalitions are stretched thin by their efforts to provide leadership for and information to a growing movement.** The recent mobilizations have required regional immigrant organizations to assume an entirely different level of work. As discussed above, many of these organizations have played an important role in mobilizing immigrants to participate in

public demonstrations and follow-up activities in support of comprehensive immigration reform. But most acknowledge that they have limited capacity to interact with the growing numbers of individuals and groups that have become interested in immigration issues. Regional advocates view the recent mobilizations as a unique oppor-

14. Pomfret, John and Sonya Geis. 2006. "One Sheriff Sees Implementation Answer as Simple." *The Washington Post*, May 20; Dell'Orto, Giovanna. 2006. "Local Police Face Immigration Dilemma." *The Associated Press*, May 4.

15. Abraham, Yvonne. 2006. "Towns Taking Own Action On Immigrants: Opposition, and Support, Surfaces." *Boston Globe*, May 21. (citing cases in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Georgia).

16. McCrummen, Stephanie. 2006. "Virginia City Suspends 'Family' Rule." *The Washington Post*, Jan 5.

17. See also Center for New Community. 2006. *The Road Ahead: 2006 and Beyond: Summarizing a National Strategy Discussion on Anti-Immigrant Activities and the Challenges to Human Rights*. Chicago, IL: Center for New Community (reporting that Minutemen and other nativists are increasingly directing their actions against day laborers).

tunity to expand their base, help develop new immigrant leaders, and educate the general public about immigrant issues. But many have limited capacity to fully take advantage of the current situation.

❖ **Growth of anti-immigrant proposals at state and local levels.** Over 460 immigration-related bills have been introduced in 43 states in 2006, with most barring undocumented immigrants from receiving certain public benefits, in-state tuition and financial aid, and identification documents and driver's licenses. Others would also require that voters provide specific documents demonstrating U.S. citizenship, encourage local or state agencies to enforce immigration laws, and impose penalties on employers who are suspected of hiring undocumented workers.<sup>18</sup> Only a handful of anti-immigrant bills are expected to be enacted at the state level. But as described in the accompanying box, a growing number of local governments also appear to be pursuing such harmful policies, and their proliferation is creating a hostile and harmful environment for many newcomers.<sup>19</sup>



Fort Wayne, IN rally on March 4, 2006

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❖ **Perceived competition between immigrants and African-American and other disadvantaged communities.**

The visibility of the recent demonstrations has also raised the stakes in improving relationships between immigrants and other disadvantaged communities. While this is a longstanding challenge, perceived competition over jobs, economic resources, housing, and even political power has grown as more immigrants have moved to new gateways. A number of the interviewees express concern that some of the messages articulated by immigrants in recent demonstrations (e.g., the narrative of hard-working individuals taking jobs that no Americans want, "immigrants have built this country," etc.) could alienate African-Americans in particular. These advocates believe that without concerted efforts to build bridges between these communities, poor relations could seriously undermine efforts to achieve mutually beneficial social justice goals.

**"One of the primary challenges and opportunities for the emerging immigrant rights movement is to become truly multiracial—in its leadership, constituency, goals, and actions. There is a real possibility of building an inclusive alliance to address not only immigration policy but the broader underlying social and racial justice barriers that could lead to a deeper commitment to human rights and a more equitable and fair society."**

**Karen Narasaki**  
*Asian American Justice Center*

18. Interview with Ann Morse, National Conference of State Legislatures, May 11, 2006.

19. See Gonzalez, Karina. 2006. "Law Spurs Fear Among Hispanics." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, May 24.

# III. Funding Recommendations for Building on Recent Developments



In light of the opportunities and challenges facing immigrants at this pivotal moment, individuals interviewed for this report were asked to make recommendations to funders about the most effective ways to provide strategic support to the movement. Despite the diverse background of the interviewees, there were broad areas of agreement about how to build on the recent developments, regardless of whether Congress adopts any new immigration legislation. Below are their key recommendations:

## 1. Support regional immigrant rights organizations to provide leadership and coordination for the emerging movement.

The recent events highlight the importance of maintaining strong regional organizations that can integrate new players into the movement and link these local groups or leaders with state or national campaigns to help inform those efforts. Yet, many of these groups need resources to support their expanded role and to increase their capacity to interact with the growing numbers of individuals who are engaged in immigration issues. Specific priorities include:

### ❖ *Constituency Communication.*

Regional immigrant coalitions need to build their capacity to communicate with and to mobilize an expanded base of stakeholders who participated in the

recent demonstrations. Foundation grants can support web sites that provide timely information and help them take action, upgrade database systems to meet new communication needs, and provide sufficient staffing to interact and maintain contact with growing constituencies.

### ❖ *Leadership Development, Organizing and Coordination.*

The need for such activities has grown significantly given the growing numbers of immigrant groups and leaders interested in participating in policy advocacy, voter engagement activities, or media work. Organizing these individuals and helping them engage in constructive and coordinated activities are difficult but important challenges to undertake. Advocates believe that the recent marches provide an extraordinary opportunity to build or expand their community base among immigrants and native-born residents but need increased resources to seize this opening (see Recommendation #5 for program examples).

### ❖ *Media Training, Capacity for Mainstream Media Communications, and Message Development.*

Since the demonstrations, the regional coalitions have had to dramatically increase their interaction with mainstream media, fielding questions from national and local media outlets. In addition to addressing capacity constraints, foundation grants can support message development, coordination of media advocacy among regional advocates, as well as training needs. These issues are discussed in a media communication section under Recommendation #7, below.

### ❖ *Fundraising.*

The combination of expanded program needs, high work demands on executive directors, and the lack of development staff in smaller organizations have made it difficult to raise the funds needed to maintain an

enhanced level of activities. Core support to expand development capacity can help leverage additional funding during these critical times.

## 2. Ensure that funding strategies include ethnic-based groups that can strengthen the immigrant rights movement.

Regional immigrant coalitions are effective only when they represent broad cross sections of local immigrant communities. Because many immigrants initially organize by ethnicity, nationality, or religion, ethnic-based organi-

*“Foundations can play a critical role in strengthening the immigrant rights movement, both by providing long-term sustained support and by increasing that investment during pivotal times. The immigrant rights infrastructure might not have existed but for long-term support from the Ford Foundation and the major infusion of funding from the Open Society Institute in the late 1990s, strategically timed to respond to devastating welfare reform policies aimed at legal immigrants. Most recently, Atlantic Philanthropies made substantial investments in anticipation of a major legislative debate, which has been instrumental in establishing and strengthening the field's ability to connect local and national advocacy on immigration policy reform issues. All of these investments have contributed to the networks that have served as the backbone of the recent mobilizations.”*

Cecilia Muñoz  
National Council of La Raza



Fort Wayne, IN rally on March 4, 2006

**TABLE 1. Potential Voters: Naturalized and Eligible Immigrant Population By State (2003)**

State	Eligible to Naturalize (000s)	Naturalized (000s)	Percent Naturalized of Eligible	Soon-to-be Eligible (000s)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,911</b>	<b>11,146</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>2,661</b>
<b>Major Destinations</b>	<b>5,914</b>	<b>7,663</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>1,758</b>
California	2,695	3,018	53%	717
New York	1,133	1,673	60%	282
Texas	766	727	49%	263
Florida	607	1,181	66%	219
New Jersey	373	592	61%	134
Illinois	340	473	58%	142
<b>New Growth States</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>1,474</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>419</b>
Arizona	183	223	55%	36
Washington	114	207	65%	82
North Carolina	69	71	50%	36
Georgia	69	139	67%	31
Nevada	69	123	64%	18
Oregon	63	79	56%	35
Colorado	61	87	59%	51
Minnesota	47	88	65%	7
Utah	39	40	51%	12
Oklahoma	31	33	52%	8
Arkansas	30	20	40%	3
Tennessee	28	58	67%	17
Iowa	28	32	53%	19
South Carolina	27	48	64%	8
Idaho	25	17	41%	5
Kansas	24	46	65%	15
Indiana	19	59	76%	5
Nebraska	18	25	58%	5
Kentucky	13	24	65%	13
Alabama	12	25	67%	7
Mississippi	6	10	60%	5
Delaware	4	18	80%	2
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>2,009</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>484</b>
Massachusetts	179	278	61%	89
Pennsylvania	115	225	66%	65
Michigan	115	269	70%	53
Maryland	98	220	69%	51
Virginia	84	203	71%	65
Ohio	83	140	63%	44
Connecticut	63	173	73%	18
Wisconsin	45	77	63%	20
New Mexico	40	39	49%	10
Hawaii	39	99	72%	14
Rhode Island	35	48	57%	9
Missouri	26	63	71%	8
Louisiana	23	48	68%	18
New Hampshire	17	30	64%	2
District of Columbia	14	21	60%	5
Maine	14	17	55%	2
Alaska	9	25	73%	4
Vermont	5	10	68%	1
West Virginia	3	9	73%	<1
Montana	3	5	68%	1
South Dakota	2	5	69%	2
North Dakota	2	2	48%	3
Wyoming	1	5	79%	1

Reprinted from: Fix, Michael, Jeffrey Passel, and Kenneth Sucher. 2003. *Immigrant Families and Workers: Trends in Naturalization*. Washington D.C.: Urban Institute.

zations often play important roles in educating community members, increasing their civic participation, and helping them work in coalition with other communities. Support for ethnic-based groups that can perform these important functions is critical to strengthening the movement.

### 3. Strengthen collaborations between local and national immigrant groups.

One characteristic of the emerging immigrant rights movement is the growing collaboration between local, immigrant-based organizations and national policy groups. As illustrated by recent events, national coalitions can play an especially important role in sharing information and coordinating activities to maximize the influence and power of grassroots efforts to reform federal policies. With the emergence of a broad range of immigrant groups, with widely varying strategies and goals, these coalitions can identify common ground upon which large numbers of groups agree. Over the long run, these coalitions can also strengthen infrastructure to nurture the development of the emerging movement. For instance, over the past several years, several key coalitions—including CCIR, FIRM and RWG—have provided opportunities for regional and national advocates to collaborate, build trust, improve their working relationships, and develop shared principles and policy goals. As the national debate over U.S. immigration policy continues to heat up, these and other coalitions that facilitate broad collaboration among immigrant rights groups will continue to play important roles in strengthening the voices of immigrants in federal policymaking—and in winning important policy changes.

### 4. Support efforts to build broader public support of immigrant issues.

The current public focus on immigration issues presents an important opportunity to address anti-immigrant sentiment, correct misinformation,



June 2005 March against REAL ID in Arcadia, Florida.

emphasize the net positive contributions of immigrants, and help humanize these individuals. Broad public education campaigns can reframe the debate from one dominated by fear and anger to an emphasis on how fair and just immigration reform can help build a better future for all Americans. Support for planning and execution of such campaigns are incorporated in a number of recommendations below, including developing civic participation activities and supporting media communication resources. These activities can help immigrants communicate and amplify their voices so that the public has a better and more accurate understanding of immigrant issues; they can also blunt attempts by nativists to scapegoat immigrants and undermine efforts to enact anti-immigrant policies.

### 5. Increase funding for civic participation.

Interviewees unanimously agree that the movement's critical next step is to convert the large mobilizations into electoral and political power. To this end, funders should increase support for (1) naturalization efforts that expand the immigrant electorate, (2) voter registration, education and get-out-the-vote activities, and (3) community organizing and leadership development that can increase immigrants' voice in policymaking. While increasing immigrant civic

engagement generally is an important goal, many interviewees recommend that any national funding effort prioritize geographic areas where (a) increased immigrant engagement is likely to have a significant political or electoral impact at the state or national level, and (b) existing groups or coalitions have the capacity to implement large-scale campaigns.

For instance, prioritized regions could include states with large citizenship-eligible populations. Demographers estimate that over 40 percent of immigrants who are eligible for U.S. citizenship, approximately 10.7 million individuals, have yet to naturalize.<sup>20</sup> Table I provides a breakdown of the eligible citizenship populations by states. The states with the largest eligible populations are California and New York, where an estimated 4.7 million eligible immigrants have yet to naturalize. However, the table also shows that

20. As described in Table I, the Urban Institute estimates that as of 2003, almost eight million immigrants were eligible to naturalize, and 2.7 million would soon become eligible. Fix, Michael, Jeffrey Passel, and Kenneth Sucher. 2003. *Immigrant Families and Workers: Trends in Naturalization*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute. Limited English proficiency, low levels of formal education, low household income, and unfamiliarity with the application process are barriers to naturalization for many eligible immigrants. For promising practices to address these barriers, see Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees. 2006. *Investing in Our Communities: Strategies for Immigrant Integration*. Sebastopol, CA: Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees.

## INCREASING ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

Over the past five years, more and more immigrant organizations have implemented voter engagement campaigns to increase their community's electoral influence. These campaigns range from traditional voter outreach efforts to those that are designed to train and engage large numbers of immigrant organizations over an extended period of time.<sup>23</sup> Below are brief descriptions of three widely recognized programs that helped numerous naturalized immigrants become first-time voters during the last presidential election:

**The People for American Way's "Mi Familia Vota"** registered 72,000 new Latino voters in Florida during the 2004 elections and mobilized almost 90 percent of them to cast a ballot. Mi Familia Vota is expanding its work in Florida and has launched campaigns for the 2006 elections in Arizona and Pennsylvania. [www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?](http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?)

**Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights** partnered with smaller immigrant organizations in the Chicago area during the 2004 presidential election to increase registration and voter turnout. The campaign registered 27,000 new voters, distributed voter education materials in eight different languages, and brought an additional 62,500 voters to the polls in targeted precincts over the previous election. [www.icirr.org/nadp.htm](http://www.icirr.org/nadp.htm)

**Mobilize Immigrant Vote (MIV)**'s movement-building campaign brought together 112 immigrant community organizations in California to participate in voter registration and Get Out the Vote (GOTV) activities during the 2004 elections. MIV's approach is not only to increase voter participation but to link electoral work to ongoing community organizing. It uses this work to raise the visibility of these communities. Its 2004 campaign registered 20,000 new voters. [www.immigrantvoice.org/miv2004](http://www.immigrantvoice.org/miv2004)

large numbers of the eligible citizenship population live in political "swing" states where any significant increase in their electoral participation could influence election outcomes. These states include Florida (with an estimated 607,000 immigrants who are eligible to become citizens), Arizona (183,000), Pennsylvania (115,000), Washington (114,000), Ohio (83,000), Georgia (69,000), North Carolina (69,000), Nevada (69,000), and Colorado (61,000).

Many of these swing states are also testing grounds for immigration issues. They have been targeted by restrictionist groups that have proposed, and in a few instances enacted, anti-immigrant legislation or ballot measures. For instance, Arizona, which saw the passage of Proposition 200 in 2004,<sup>21</sup> is facing another anti-immigrant ballot measure in the November 2006 election. Similarly, anti-immigrant ballot initiatives have been proposed in Colorado and Washington State. Immigrant advocates in these states have devel-

oped civic engagement campaigns in anticipation of such ballot measures. Targeted efforts to increase naturalization followed by voter engagement activities in these and other key states could significantly increase immigrants' visibility and empowerment at both the regional and national levels.<sup>22</sup>

Beyond focusing on naturalization and voter engagement, the interviewees also urge funders to support community organizing and leadership development programs aimed at strengthening the grassroots and increasing immigrants' influence in policymaking. A number of national and regional organizations are developing or expanding projects that help immigrants build skills to engage their communities, the media, and policymakers on important issues. For example, the Rights Working Group recently launched its Liberty & Justice for All campaign, a joint effort of local and national groups to expand the base of the public committed to speaking out against post-September 11th

policies that erode human rights for immigrants and U.S. citizens. The campaign addresses a wide range of issues—detention, due process, secret surveillance, and racial and religious profiling. Led and supported by regional immigrant organizations throughout the country, the campaign seeks to connect to non-immigrant as well as immigrant groups and build a movement to change such harmful practices.<sup>24</sup>

The Center for Community Change has also proposed an ambitious project to launch "citizenship schools" across the country in coordination with regional immigrant coalitions. These schools would help newcomers learn about the U.S. political system, the issues underlying the immigration reform debate, and develop skills to engage in advocacy. These "schools" provide a way for regional immigrant groups to organize newcomers who have been inspired by recent events, expand their membership, and develop leadership to participate in or help with future mobilizations.

In addition, interviewees urge funders to prioritize support for several populations that are often overlooked in this area:

❖ **Children of Immigrants.** Youth played an important role in recent mobilizations, organizing walkouts and protests that often preceded larger demonstrations (e.g., Dallas, Nebraska

21. Arizona voters passed Proposition 200 in 2004, which requires state officials to verify the immigration status of individuals seeking certain state public benefits and to report discovered immigration violations to federal agencies.

22. Many interviewees express concerns that the federal government is imposing new barriers to citizenship, including higher application fees, online applications, and the development of a new naturalization test that is expected to require greater English skills and knowledge of U.S. history. In addition to funding naturalization campaigns, foundations can also support advocacy by immigrant rights groups to monitor the redesign of the citizenship test and to ensure that the naturalization process is accessible to all eligible immigrants.<sup>23</sup> For promising practices and funding strategies, see *New Americans Vote! Advancing Social Change and Strengthening U.S. Democracy. 2006*. Washington, D.C.: Funders Committee for Civic Participation and Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees

24. More information about the Justice for All campaign is available at [www.rightsworkinggroup.org](http://www.rightsworkinggroup.org).

and Southern California). Many interviewees believe that children of immigrants are an especially strategic constituency because of their high energy, ability to bridge immigrant and mainstream culture, and to convey sympathetic images of immigrant communities to the public and policymakers. These interviewees urge better integration of youth activities within the broader immigrant rights movement, including electoral and other civic activities.

❖ **Women.** Despite the fact that women play significant economic and family support roles in immigrant communities, their specific concerns and issues are frequently overlooked in policy debates, and they must overcome stereotypes, isolation, and other barriers to civic participation. However, a growing number of successful leadership development and civic engagement programs have amplified women's voices on immigrant issues—especially in the areas of domestic violence, human trafficking, women's health and political asylum. Drawing upon these promising practices, funders can help expand opportunities for leadership development for immigrant women. These efforts will ensure that immigrant women's concerns are addressed and will help to advance policies that strengthen immigrant families and promote gender equity.

**“There’s not one strategy that works—strategies have to be informed by local dynamics. It’s important to understand the complexity of different regions and landscapes, and try to find multiple layers of leadership and approaches. We’ve got to go beyond the traditional immigrant rights groups and include churches, businesses, service providers, ethnic media, labor and other community groups.”**

**Gouri Sadhwani**  
*New York Civic Participation Project*

## **6. Support ethnic media’s capacity to cover immigration issues.**

Ethnic media played an extraordinarily important role in the recent mobilizations, and funders should continue to support projects that provide these outlets with up-to-date information about immigration issues. Important areas include:

- ❖ Regular media briefings (by telephone and in-person) involving both national and regional advocates;
- ❖ Coverage of other ethnic or racial communities’ perspectives on immigration issues; and
- ❖ Innovative participatory activities, such as the inclusion of the Spanish radio personalities in the We Are America Alliance’s citizenship and voter engagement projects.

Many interviewees also indicate that increasing coverage of immigration issues in non-Spanish, ethnic media is important to developing a more multiracial movement.

## **7. Increase the communication capacity of immigrant rights organizations.**

Immigrant advocates, especially at the regional level, expressed a need for more media communications assistance in several contexts: engaging the public in the ongoing federal immigration policy debates, responding to anti-immigrant proposals at the state and local levels, developing positive messages about the contributions of newcomers, protecting immigrants who are the target of harmful enforcement policies (see Recommendation #8), and providing public education if Congress were to adopt new immigration laws.

While regional advocates generally praised ongoing efforts by the National Immigration Forum and other D.C. advocates to provide assistance with media messaging on immigration reform

issues, they believe that the assistance needs to be extended to other issues and audiences at the regional level. Among the key gaps identified by interviewees include:

- ❖ *Public opinion research to identify effective messages that can be used in different regions of the country and for various audiences.* Funding for such research and message development would augment the communications work being done by national advocates and enhance their relevance and impact in local communities.
- ❖ *Message development and coordination across regions as new events or crises occur.* The growing interconnectivity of the immigrant rights movement—combined with the high level of media interest—requires greater coordination of communication strategies among national and regional advocates. In addition to coordination, foundations can support analysis or recommendations to the field on how to respond to anti-immigrant messages or actions, particularly at the local level.
- ❖ *Up-to-date demographic or factual information that can be used in policy debates at the regional level.* Regional advocates indicate that their effectiveness in explaining federal proposals or national issues to the media often depends on their ability to provide local or regional analysis. Having access to regional demographic and other factual information is especially important.
- ❖ *Resources to hire media staff or provide training to improve staff members’ media skills.* These resources would allow immigrant groups to respond effectively to increased media requests and attention.

## 8. Support efforts to address harmful enforcement practices and increase due process protections for immigrants.

Because public concerns about high immigration levels and national security are unlikely to fade anytime soon, a number of interviewees believe the movement needs to develop more focused advocacy and communications strategies to address harmful immigration enforcement practices.

Advocates note that current “enforcement” systems, which would be expanded under the Senate and House bills, actually do very little to control undocumented migration. Expanding the definition of “aggravated felonies” or allowing indefinite detention of immigrants, for instance, has almost no impact on stopping undocumented entries. Yet these measures can violate legal norms, divide families, and make social and economic integration nearly impossible for growing segments of immigrant communities.

Similarly, research suggests that militarizing the U.S.-Mexico border, by increasing Border Patrol agents and National Guard units, are unlikely to reduce migration but will lead to increased migrant deaths as individuals are forced to travel through dangerous and difficult border crossings<sup>25</sup>. “We need to develop better enforcement alternatives,” says Don Kerwin, executive director of Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. “The challenge is to identify measures that enhance border control but respect human rights.” Regardless of the outcome of the current Congressional debate to reform U.S. immigration laws, funders can help address these challenges by supporting:

- ❖ *Research to document the impact of recently enacted or proposed enforcement measures, including:* (1) deportations based on minor criminal convictions or immigration law infractions; (2) expanded use of expedited removal (in which an immigrant is deported without a hearing);<sup>26</sup> (3) proposed

document fraud provisions on asylum applications;<sup>27</sup> (4) increased detention for immigrants facing deportation; (5) immigration barriers for individuals with HIV; (6) proof of citizenship or legal immigration status for certain government services; and (7) militarization of the border. This type of research should examine the economic, health, and community impact on immigrants, their citizen family members, and other U.S. residents.

- ❖ *Convenings to discuss and develop alternative enforcement practices.*

Funders can help facilitate discussions among advocates, policymakers, scholars, and former government officials to develop alternative enforcement policies or frameworks that address border control but without sacrificing migrants’ rights. Doing so would put advocates in a better position to argue that (1) the current system—requiring mandatory detention and deportation for even minor infractions—is inconsistent with fundamental U.S. values; and (2) there are better and more economically efficient ways to achieve border and national security goals without inflicting such harmful effects on immigrants and U.S. citizen family members. Given the public’s overarching concerns about “securing the borders,” an investment in this area may help reduce harmful enforcement policies and lead to the development of more humane immigration policies in the long run.<sup>28</sup>

- ❖ *Integrate the above analysis with public opinion research to produce messages and advocacy strategies that support the re-examination of harmful or wasteful enforcement policies.* Many advocates believe that current enforcement policies need to be re-framed as anti-integration measures that work at cross purposes with economic, law enforcement and other government goals. Foundation-supported public opinion research and message development can be incorporated into broader advocacy strategies to address the effects of specific enforcement practices and to begin public discussion of alternative policies.

## 9. Support efforts to counter anti-immigrant proposals at the state and local levels.

While the recent focus on federal reforms has shifted attention away from defending newcomers at the state and local levels, advocates urge funders to continue supporting efforts to oppose the various anti-immigrant proposals discussed earlier. These issues can be incorporated into local and regional civic engagement and leadership development projects that can mobilize immigrants and their allies to oppose such proposals. Interviewees emphasize several key funding recommendations in this area:

- ❖ *Support national or regional technical assistance projects.* These projects provide legal and technical advice as well as information on effective practices, talking points for legislators, technical analysis, and media messages that help local and regional advocates effectively address anti-immigrant proposals.

- ❖ *Fund community-organizing efforts that develop leadership capacity and increase civic engagement of newcomers.* These affirmative projects are especially important in the current context and can include advocacy to oppose

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25. Massey, Douglas S. 2005. “Beyond the Border Buildup: Towards a New Approach to Mexico-U.S. Migration.” *Immigration Policy in Focus*, Vol. 4, No. 7, September, Washington, D.C. (demonstrates how punitive immigration and border enforcement policies have backfired, resulting in higher numbers of undocumented individuals spreading across larger areas of the United States).

26. Expedited removal is a procedure that allows an immigration enforcement official to summarily remove a non-citizen without a hearing or review by an immigration judge, if the person is encountered within 100 miles of a border and cannot establish that he or she has been present in the United States for 14 days or longer. 69 Fed. Reg. at 48878.

27. For example, a provision of the Hagel-Martinez Senate bill makes the carrying of fraudulent documents an “aggravated felony,” which would result in automatic grounds for deportation. Advocates worry that the change could prompt the government to expel people who use such documents to escape oppressive regimes.

28. For instance, several interviewed advocates indicate that any alternative enforcement proposals must start with increasing wage and safety protections for low-wage workers. If real workplace protections exist for these workers, they argue, employers would have fewer incentives to hire an undocumented workforce. See also National Employment Law Project. 2006. *More Harm Than Good: Responding to State’s Misguided Efforts to Regulate Immigration*. New York, NY: National Employment Law Project.

anti-immigrant proposals as part of broader projects.

❖ *Prioritize support for immigration battleground states.* These include Arizona, Colorado, and a number of new gateways in the Southeast, stretching from Oklahoma to Virginia, where anti-immigrant activities are on the rise and where outcomes of proposed ballot measures in November 2006 could have a national impact.<sup>29</sup> The large number of immigrant marches that occurred in these states indicate growing capacity for organized immigrant advocacy that can be strengthened with foundation support.

## 10. Support efforts to improve wages and working conditions for low-wage workers.

An important way for foundations to support immigrant communities is to help improve the wages and working conditions of low-income workers. Advocates note that the enactment of any legalization program, by itself, will not necessarily improve working conditions for many immigrants. In fact, legalizing immigrants will need to meet a number of work requirements, which could lead some desperate workers to accept abusive or harsh treatment by employers. Undocumented immigrants who are unable to legalize their status will be even more vulnerable to exploitation. "If sweatshops and poor work conditions are allowed to continue," says Bruce Goldstein of Farmworker Justice, "legalizing immigrants will have neither the time or resources to integrate into U.S. communities, support their family members' development, or participate in civic activities." Supporting efforts to improve working conditions for low-wage workers can also provide opportunities for newcomers to build bridges to other disadvantaged communities and work together to address shared goals (see Recommendation #11, below).

**"Our experience is that immigrants and African Americans share many issues in common—the need for better police protection, education, and access to healthcare, just to name a few examples. What is needed is a concerted effort by funders to support projects that facilitate dialogue, relationship building and organizing on shared interests so that our communities can harness this amazing potential for solidarity and empowerment."**

David Lubell

*Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition*

## 11. Support efforts to build stronger relationships between immigrants and African-Americans.

Developing and maintaining good relationships with various low-income communities, particularly African-Americans, is a critical priority. Although many immigrant and African-American leaders have worked hard to find common ground and support one another's agenda, interviewees also acknowledge increasing signs of tension between the communities, most visibly due to competition for jobs and government services and growing electoral rivalry.

Foundations interested in investing in this area should consider developing a comprehensive strategy to fund both national and local organizations to improve their analysis of key issues as well as their capacity to engage in activities across communities. For example, funders could help interested

national African-American organizations improve their understanding of immigration's impact on their communities, with the goal of enhancing their ability to communicate this information to constituents, engage in dialogue with immigrant leaders, and develop public education materials that can be used by local affiliates.<sup>30</sup> Similar support could be provided to immigrant groups to help their communities understand the role of race in American history, the lingering effects of discrimination, and the economic relationships between the communities. Some of these activities could be incorporated into the immigrant civic participation activities described above in Recommendation #5.

Foundations could supplement these projects by supporting dialogue and joint work between immigrants and African-Americans at the regional level to achieve shared policy or advocacy goals. Existing local projects that work on a wide array of shared concerns, such as employment and health, could serve as good models for expanded work in this area. Some of the most exciting recent work has been done by worker centers, housing activists, and other community organizations that engage with multiracial, low-income constituencies.<sup>31</sup>

29. As of this writing, Arizona will have an immigrant-related ballot measure for the November 2006 election, and anti-immigrant activists are gathering signatures to qualify measures in Colorado and Washington State. However, the Colorado Supreme Court recently ruled that the proposed anti-immigrant ballot measure violates the state's constitutional requirement that initiatives deal with only one subject matter. As a result, its proponents may not be able to qualify their measure for the 2006 election. Sarche, Jon. 2006. "Court: Service Denial Measure Can't Be On Ballot," *The Associated Press*, June 12.

30. These materials could summarize the impact of immigration on different segments of the African-American community, and could include position papers, public education materials, and talking points that could be used to guide communications with the media.

31. For some promising practices, see Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees. 2006. *Investing in Our Communities: Strategies for Immigrant Integration*. Sebastopol, CA: Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees.

# IV. Funding Recommendations If Congress Were to Adopt Comprehensive Immigration Reform

# IV

**W**hile there was a great deal of uncertainty about whether Congress will pass a comprehensive immigration law when the interviews took place, most interviewees believe that the momentum for enacting such legislation is building, and that the field needs to begin to prepare for implementation.

Beyond the substantive priorities described below, interviewees believe that coordination and shared strategic planning by a broad range of funders will be critical to maximize limited resources. Some of the ways in which funders should consider collaborating with each other include:

- ❖ Make relevant analyses, studies, information or data on implementation issues widely available to interested funders to help identify their potential roles.
- ❖ Ensure coordination to prevent duplication of efforts.
- ❖ Facilitate participation by local foundations and funder networks to complement efforts by national foundations.
- ❖ Identify other potential funding sources, including support from businesses or state and local governments.
- ❖ Develop and distribute funding recommendations to regional and local foundations, including proposed strategies, prioritized activities and promising practices.
- ❖ Urge funders to make a commitment to provide multi-year funding since any legalization program is likely to occur over an extended period of time.

One possible strategy for national funders is to support a combination of (1) organizations with substantive expertise in specific areas and (2) existing networks that reach across multiple

regions.<sup>32</sup> By itself, this approach will still result in geographic gaps or limited services for specific populations. But support from regional funders, familiar with the needs of local populations, could complement any national strategy. In addition, national funders can prioritize regions that need assistance but which have few funding resources.

Interviewees identify the following funding priorities if a comprehensive law were adopted: public education, application assistance, and legal services; administrative and regulatory advocacy; litigation; long-term planning; and continued advocacy to address the immigration system's flaws. Advocates emphasize that much of this work needs to begin before a law is adopted.

## 1. Support large and coordinated campaigns to educate and assist immigrants in the implementation of any new comprehensive immigration laws.

If large-scale legalization programs were adopted, immigrant-serving groups will need to quickly develop the capacity to

make information and services available to help the country's estimated 11-12 million undocumented immigrants make informed choices. Some critical elements in this process include:

- ❖ *Planning and assessment to identify priorities.* Research to assess where the affected populations are located and the capacity of local organizations to help with implementation will be needed. Such research can build on a demographic study commissioned by Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) that analyzes the undocumented population within the Catholic Church's dioceses across the country.
- ❖ *Public education materials and trainings.* Multilingual public education materials and in-depth documents and trainings about the new law and its impact will be needed to help community organizations prepare for questions from their constituents. These materials

32. Examples of networks include Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (with its International Institute affiliates), the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) and other farmworker community groups, the Appleseed Centers, the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, worker center networks, regional immigrant rights coalitions, and national ethnic-based organizations or coalitions.



Thousands of supporters of immigrant rights rally at the State Capitol in Salem, Oregon on May 1, 2006.

must specifically address how the enforcement and legalization provisions of the legislation interact to affect program eligibility. Funders should invest in organizations that have expertise, relationships with community service providers, distribution networks, and capacity to provide ongoing technical assistance to do this work.

Coordination between these organizations is critical to minimizing confusion and duplication of services.

❖ *Ethnic media outreach.* Funders can support the development of materials and briefings for ethnic media outlets so that they can convey accurate and timely information.

❖ *Community service organizations' capacity to help with legalization applications.* Foundation funding is critical to (1) help immigrant organizations plan for the implementation phase, (2) add staff members to provide direct services and/or recruit and oversee volunteers, and (3) develop local outreach and public education. Several organizations have begun working with local groups to prepare for implementation. For example, CLINIC has developed a "train the trainer" curriculum; the United Farm Workers Union is working with several California communities to establish an infrastructure to assist farm workers in filing their legalization applications.

❖ *Immigration legal services.* Because most undocumented immigrants are ineligible for federally funded legal services<sup>33</sup> and many legal aid agencies offer only limited immigration law representation, increasing the availability of low-cost immigration legal services should be prioritized. For example, undocumented immigrants with complicated factual situations will need legal advice in deciding whether and how to apply for legalization. Those who apply and are deemed ineligible will be placed in removal proceedings, where legal representation will also be needed.

## **2. Fund public education efforts on other provisions of any new law.**

These include a wide range of enforcement issues, new guest worker programs, and the expansion of family unification opportunities.

## **3. Support administrative and regulatory advocacy.**

Such advocacy will be required to address policy ambiguity at both the agency and district office levels of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). It could also prevent the DHS from developing unworkable procedures and overly restrictive interpretations of the law. Administrative and regulatory advocacy is especially important because changing caselaw and statutes limiting immigrants' access to the judiciary are likely to make affirmative legal challenges more difficult than those filed against the 1986 legalization program.

## **4. Support litigation to protect immigrants' rights.**

While administrative advocacy has grown in importance, litigation by immigrant advocates will be needed if Congress were to pass legislation that denies due process or other constitutional protections to immigrants. Litigation will also be necessary to challenge any misinterpretation of the law by DHS when administrative advocacy is unsuccessful. Advocates predict that litigation is likely to occur over the following issues: rules allowing for extended or indefinite detention, attempts to limit the judiciary's power to address legal violations within the U.S. immigration system, new deportation grounds, and the implementation of legalization programs.

## **5. Support planning for longer-term implementation of legalization programs and integration of newcomers.**

Beyond the immediate goal of helping immigrants become eligible for legalization programs, advocates and policymakers will need to develop policies

and programs that support these immigrants' goal of becoming lawful permanent residents and, ultimately, citizens. Funding will be needed to increase the supply of English and civics classes. Since foundations alone cannot expand the availability of such programs, they should consider convening various stakeholders (e.g., immigrant leaders, adult educators, business leaders, government policymakers, legislators, etc.) to begin planning at both the national and regional levels for expanding opportunities for immigrants to learn English.

Local and regional foundations could play a similar role in working with stakeholders to develop policies to support the integration of immigrants who attempt to legalize their status. Policies that ensure access to education, health and human services, and economic mobility can help maximize the skills and contributions that immigrants can provide to their communities.

## **6. Continue to fund ongoing advocacy to improve U.S. immigration laws and policies.**

A number of interviewees strongly urge foundations not to let funding for implementation reduce support for other advocacy-related activities. Continued support for community organizing, leadership development, public education, and advocacy is essential to addressing anti-immigrant sentiments as well as the flaws of any "reformed" U.S. immigration system. Without sufficient funding for these activities, public support for any new legalization program is likely to erode over time, and it will become more and more difficult to reverse the harmful enforcement provisions that have been enacted over the past decade.

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33. For more information about immigrant eligibility for federally funded legal services, go to [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org).

## V. Funding Recommendations If Congress Fails to Adopt Comprehensive Reform and the Federal Government Emphasizes Enforcement-Only Policies

**E**ven if Congress fails to agree on a compromise immigration bill, most interviewees believe that some enforcement and border provisions are likely to be adopted either administratively or through an appropriations bill. Indeed, the Bush administration has indicated that it will take a number of administrative steps to increase border security, including sending National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border.

In addition to the recommendations previously described in Section III, interviewees urge funders to prioritize the following issues under an enforcement-only scenario:

### 1. Support civic engagement to build support for comprehensive immigration reform.

Depending on the scope of the new enforcement provisions, advocates may need to mobilize a strong public response to interpret the events for their constituencies and to focus the public debate on reversing these measures in future immigration legislation. Such efforts would require coordination of activities across the country. The newly formed We Are America Alliance could serve as a potential vehicle for large-scale mobilization activities, as well as existing national coalitions that support immigration reform.<sup>34</sup> In addition, funders may want to support communities that will be disproportionately affected by any new enforcement harmful measures (e.g., border or specific ethnic communities).

### 2. Support public education efforts.

Advocates will need to develop public education materials, manuals, trainings, and media strategies to inform immigrants of the details of any new enforcement programs and how they would affect their communities.



Members of the Farmworker Association marching in Tallahassee

### 3. Support administrative/regulatory advocacy and litigation.

These strategies will be needed to limit the harmful impact of these new policies.

### 4. Support efforts to monitor implementation and increase service providers' capacity to assist immigrants harmed by new policies.

The proposed enforcement policies will require immigrant organizations and service providers to increase their monitoring of immigration enforcement agencies, address potential abuses or unlawful practices, and provide legal assistance to growing numbers of immigrants facing detention and deportation. The lack of free or low-fee immigration legal services already prevents many immigrants from asserting their rights in immigration proceedings. With proposed new enforcement

measures expected to further increase the number of immigrants requiring such assistance, additional resources will be needed to help service providers respond to these increased demand.

### 5. Expand the field's communications capacity.

Publicizing the harmful effects of new enforcement policies and helping to develop more effective messages in support of immigrant rights will be important to minimizing the likely negative effects (see discussion in Section III, above, for specific recommendations).

34. Some of the major national coalitions and movements include the New American Opportunity Campaign (the legislative advocacy arm of the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform), the Center for Community Change's Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), the American Friends Service Committee's Project Voice, the Rights Working Group, National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities, and the Catholic Church's Justice for Immigrants Campaign.

## VI. Conclusion

The recommendations in this report provide a starting place to build upon the recent immigrant groundswells. The dramatic series of marches and rallies that spread across the United States, facilitated by groundwork laid by immigrant organizations, created a powerful moment of recognition. Mainstream media and politicians who had long ignored immigrants' concerns began to understand the power behind this emerging movement and its potential to shape not only immigration policies but the future of this country. Immigrant communities and their supporters are energized and eager to capture the moment.

Regardless of whether comprehensive federal legislation emerges from Congress in 2006, funders can play a critical role to develop a stronger infrastructure for the movement, nurture new leaders, increase immigrants' electoral power, and provide opportunities for immigrants to build coalitions with other communities that share similar social justice concerns. Funders can also help communities begin preparing for the possibility that some type of legalization program will be available in the future to help millions of undocumented immigrants legalize their status.

The emerging movement can realize its potential, however, only if funders provide support in a timely, informed, and strategic manner. The Four Freedoms Fund and Grantmakers Concerned for Immigrant and Refugees welcome comments on this report and look forward to working with the field to strengthen the emerging movement and help immigrant communities realize the promise of their new homeland.



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# Interviewees

The Four Freedoms Fund, GCIR, and the authors extend their thanks to the numerous people, listed below, who provided background information and advice that informed the recommendations contained in this report.

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Deepak Bhargava and Son Ah Yun, *Center for Community Change*

Oscar Chacon, *Enlaces America*

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Christina DeConcini, Douglas Rivlin, Frank Sharry, Lynn Tramonte, and Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, *National Immigration Forum*

Jesse Diaz, *League of United Latin American Citizens, Dallas Council*

Julian Do, *New America Media*

Father Richard Estrada, *La Placita Church*

Janice Fine, *School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University*

Michael Fix and Doris Meissner, *Migration Policy Institute*

Mark Franken, *United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's Immigration and Refugee Services*

Andrew Friedman, *Make the Road By Walking*

Fernando Garcia, *Border Network for Human Rights*

Bruce Goldstein, *Farmworker Justice*

Javier Gonzalez, *SEIU Local 1877*

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Eun Sook Lee, *NAKASEC - National Korean American Service & Education Consortium*

Kimi Lee, *Garment Worker Center*

Nativo Lopez, *Hermandad Mexicana Latino Americana and Mexican American Political Association*

David Lubell, *Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition*

Eliseo Medina, *Service Employees International Union*

Nancy Morawetz, *New York University School of Law*

Ann Morse, *National Conference of State Legislators*

Milo Mumgaard, Felix Rivas, and Darcy Tromanhauser, *Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest*

Cecilia Munoz, *National Council of La Raza*

Karen Musalo, *Center for Gender and Refugee Studies, University of California Hastings College of Law*

Karen Narasaki, *Asian American Justice Center*

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Shirley Sagawa, *Annie E. Casey Foundation* (Consultant)

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Rebecca Valdez, *Chicano Awareness Center*

Louis Velasquez, *Office for Vicar for Clergy, Archdiocese of Los Angeles*

Eric Ward, *Center for New Community*

# Four Freedoms Fund

The Four Freedoms Fund seeks to uphold and advance core democratic values to strengthen U.S. society. The Fund makes grants to foster a strong, cohesive national movement for justice and democracy by enhancing the capacity of local and state organizations to actively engage immigrants in the civic, social and economic life of their communities and participate in national policy and advocacy efforts.

Established as a national funding collaborative in July 2003, the Four Freedoms Fund responds to the urgent need to safeguard immigrants' human rights, civil rights and civil liberties, as well as to strengthen the democratic values upon which America was built. The Fund derives its name from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union address in which he shared his vision of a world founded upon four interconnected freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom of speech and expression, and freedom of religious worship.

To date, the Fund has invested over \$6 million in 47 grantees across the country that:

- ❖ Organize immigrants and refugees to take leadership and speak on their own behalf.
- ❖ Translate grassroots mobilization into lasting change through civic participation.
- ❖ Work with under-represented constituencies (e.g. Arabs, Muslims and South Asians) and issues (e.g. workplace raids, detentions and deportations).
- ❖ Unite diverse issues and constituencies.
- ❖ Connect immigrants with native-born allies and address the tensions between them.
- ❖ Are growing their organizational and networking capacity.
- ❖ Operate in strategic geographic areas with large and/or growing immigrant populations.
- ❖ Play an important role in national strategies.

Current funders include the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Ford Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund, Horace Hagedorn Foundation and Open Society Institute. The Fund also works closely with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which created the American Dream Fund as a sister fund to promote immigrant integration in 26 local communities.

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# Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees

Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) seeks to move the philanthropic field to advance the contributions and address the needs of the world's growing and increasingly diverse immigrant and refugee populations. With a core focus on the United States, GCIR provides grantmakers with opportunities for learning, networking, and collaboration. Our information resources aim to:

- ❖ Enhance philanthropy's awareness of issues affecting immigrants and refugees. Deepen the field's understanding of how these issues are integral to community building in today's dynamic social, economic, and political environment.

- ❖ Increase philanthropic support for both broad and immigrant/refugee-focused strategies that benefit newcomer populations and strengthen the larger society.

Given immigrants' growing numbers and their expanding role in the economic, social, and cultural life of nations across the globe, GCIR has become an invaluable resource to many foundations, whether they have immigrant-specific funding initiatives or wish to incorporate the immigrant and refugee dimension into their core grantmaking programs.

GCIR provides members the opportunity to connect with diverse colleagues, build new skills, increase knowledge, and become part of a dynamic movement to fully integrate immigrants into U.S. society through:

- ❖ A one-stop center for high-quality Web-based and printed resources, including in-depth issue reports that help funders quickly grasp the substance of specific topics and learn about proven grantmaking strategies.

- ❖ Substantive opportunities to learn about emerging trends and share experiences and strategies through member-driven programs, learning circles, and national convenings. Technical assistance and consultation to members wishing to incorporate immigrant and refugee issues into their portfolios or seeking to expand or redirect their immigrant-related grantmaking.

- ❖ Technical assistance and consultation to members wishing to incorporate immigrant and refugee issues into their portfolios or seeking to expand or redirect their immigrant-related grantmaking.

In 2005, more than 1,500 grantmakers took advantage of our information resources and another 1,000 participated in our programs.

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