

Legal Immigrants Sought Support from Citizens behind HR 1823 for Family Unification

Unitefamilies.org members campaigning around the country to shore up support behind HR 1823 and urging Congress to save families of legal immigrants by acting upon House bill HR 1823

Washington, D.C. (PRWEB) June 21, 2005 -- Unitefamilies.org, an organized group of legal residents (website: www.unitefamilies.org), is urging congressional representatives to support HR 1823 proposed by Rep Andrews, Robert (NJ) and Rep. Jackson-Lee, Sheila (TX). This bill will amend provisions of the V-visa – a temporary, non-immigrant visa- and help unite spouses and minor children of legal immigrants. The group has expressed their appreciation to the offices of Rep Frank, Barney (MA), Rep Lofgren, Zoe (CA) Rep Moran, Jim (VA) for co-sponsoring the bill and urges other Congress members to do the same regardless of their party affiliation.

The group has been garnering support from organizations such as USINPAC (www.usinpac.com). USINPAC has been advocating on behalf of Unitefamilies.org, including contacting Senator John Cornyn (R-TX). “We are grateful to Senator Cornyn’s office for giving USINPAC an opportunity to highlight the family unification issue of Legal Permanent Residents. We also thank USINPAC for taking this initiative and for lending us a helping hand. Hopefully more such friendly organizations will help us with various political offices and help unite legal immigrants of this great nation with their spouses and infant children.” The group says.

Unitefamilies.org members started a signature drive petitioning Congress to pass HR 1823. The group is urging its members and concerned citizens to sign the petition. In an effort to raise awareness about the family separation issue, they are raising funds to cover their media and advertisement expenses.

Many legal permanent residents (green card holders) are currently living in the United States, separated from their spouses and infant children. They are waiting for their immigrant visa petition petitions (application for spouse and minor children) to be approved. Statutory numerical limitations on available visas, coupled with immigration backlogs and bureaucratic delays, cause waiting times of five years or more. Legal immigrants feel that it is unfair and cruel to break up nuclear families.

During this long wait, the foreign resident spouse and young children are not allowed to enter the United States, even for a brief visit. The permanent residents, on the other hand, must reside predominantly in the United States and thus the web of US immigration laws ruthlessly separates married couples from each other and parents from young children.

Legal immigrants feel that the existing restriction on the V-visa is arbitrary and obsolete, as it ensures family separation of immigrants who got married after December 2000. Unitefamilies.org is supporting house bill HR 1823, which will amend the outdated restrictions on V-visa and make it usable by foreign resident spouses and minor children of legal immigrants to enter and live in the US temporarily while their I-130 petitions are pending with the Immigration department.

“Amending provisions of the V-visa need not necessarily be the only solution. Amending the Immigration and Nationality Act to include the spouses and minor children of legal immigrants as US citizens ‘immediate family’ will also serve as a complete solution. This will enable spouses and minor children of legal immigrants to make use of existing non-immigrant K-visa category”, states Unitefamilies.org. Group members have

already requested offices of Senators John McCain and Edward Kennedy to address family unification issue of legal immigrants in their bipartisan immigration reform bill. The group regrets that both offices, however, failed to provide any solution for the unification of spouses and minor children in their proposed bill in the Senate.

Unitefamilies.org urges its members and concerned citizens to write and call their congressional representatives to act on the proposed bill. Keeping husbands and wives separated from each other and from young children is sending wrong messages about American family values. Group members point out the contradiction that is in the current political atmosphere: (a) the claims to promote family and moral values, yet having policies that break up immediate families of law abiding, taxpaying legal immigrants and (b) the rush by Washington lawmakers to help and save families of undocumented workers, completely ignoring devastated families of legal immigrants.

The nucleus of Legal Permanent Residents' families is shattered due to separation from spouses and minor children, thanks to contradictions in the current immigration law. All types of temporary guest workers and even students are allowed to bring their spouses, children and even parents to the US without any delay. However, the same immigration law forces a taxpaying, legal immigrant to wait for a minimum of 5 years to be united with his/her foreign resident spouse and infant child. "It is appalling that such contradictions within the law have so far escaped notice. It is time Washington lawmakers took a good look at the heartbreaking stories coming from legal immigrants of this country", says Unitefamilies.org.

Unitefamilies.org is a volunteer group and is growing strong. New members, mostly victims of family separation caused by unfair immigration laws, are joining this group every day. The group's website can be found at www.unitefamilies.org. Contact: email protected from spam bots

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