

# LOS ANGELES: THE REGIONAL IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MIGRATION

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## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

MAY 9, 2008

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**LOS ANGELES: THE REGIONAL IMPACTS AND  
OPPORTUNITIES OF MIGRATION**

**MAY 9, 2008**

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## LOS ANGELES: THE REGIONAL IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MIGRATION

MAY 9, 2008

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,  
*Washington, DC.*

The hearing was held from 11:18 a.m. to 1:40 p.m. PST at California State University, Los Angeles, California, Hon. Alcee Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

*Commissioners present:* Hon. Alcee Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; and Hon. Hilda Solis, Commissioner, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

*Members present:* Hon. Diane Watson, Member of Congress from the State of California.

*Witnesses present:* Reverend Richard Estrada, Pastor and Founder, Our Lady Queen of Angles Catholic Church; Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda, Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies Associate Professor, UCLA; Lucy Ito, Senior Vice President, California Credit Union League; Kerry Doi, President and CEO, Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment; Angelica Salas, Executive Director, Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles; and Eunsook Lee, Executive Director, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium.

### HON. ALCEE HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you all for being here today. Certainly I want to thank my good friend and a person that I work actively with, our Congresswoman Solis. It's really an honor for the Helsinki Commission to be holding a hearing in Los Angeles today on migration, a topic that is not only a center of the great debate here, but also in the sphere that Ms. Solis and I work in.

I'm so anxious to get to our witnesses, and I'm going to pass over my responsibilities as Chair. I apologize. I didn't introduce myself. My name is Alcee Hastings, and I'm the chairperson of the Helsinki Commission in the United States Congress. I'm from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, so I come all the way from yet another diverse part of our country. Actually, the congressional district that I'm privileged to serve is one of America's most diverse districts in terms of the number of people that migrate there. But I am delighted that you all are here. I welcome all of our witnesses, and I'm sure that Congresswoman Solis will have a lot to say and will introduce our witnesses and we will hear from them.

I do encourage—the Helsinki Commission for the first time went green and, therefore, we don't have an awful lot of paperwork that we distribute anymore—but I do encourage you to go to our Web site. I think you will find it fascinating. The report from this hearing will go up on the Web site for those of you, particularly the students here from Cal State and other universities, when you are writing those papers, come down on our Web site. You might find some comfort there.

Thank you all for being here. Congresswoman Solis.

**HON. HILDA SOLIS, COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you, Congressman Hastings. I especially am grateful that Congressman Alcee Hastings joins with me to have this first historical meeting on migration with OSCE and Helsinki Commission. Some of you may not know what the Helsinki Commission represents, but several decades ago with the fall of the iron curtain, so to speak, countries came together with the leadership of the United States to talk, in general, about cooperation, security and democratization.

I am very privileged to have been appointed to this particular group of different countries representing the United States, and it's the first time that a Latina has ever had, I believe, a leadership position in the organization. What's unique for us is both Alcee and I share common values and the belief that with diversity there is strength. As responsible members of Congress, and working with Parliamentarians is to try to talk about issues that often don't get the ability to talk about thoroughly in the House of Representatives. This is one way of bringing out our interests, our responsibility to hear what is happening with this very important issue of migration. Some of you here may say, well, is it migration or immigration? It can be both.

We have brought together here, I believe, a panel of people that can help shed some light on what the challenges are, what best practices exist, and also what some of the positive aspects of that migration are. The reason why we came here is because Los Angeles, to me, is the greatest incubator of where all these different forces come together, and we are our own Ellis Island, so to speak, that New York had that decades ago, centuries ago, and now Los Angeles is a port of entry for many, many people from across the western hemisphere and from other continents.

I think it's very important today that we hear from our witnesses who can talk very credibly about that experience and what we can take back and report back to our members of other parliaments. So the information that we gather here today will be put together in a report that will be shared with other parliamentarians at our fall meeting that will be held near Russia, Kazakhstan, which is a new developing country, but to talk about why it's important to hear about the discussion of migration. You see it happening in South Africa, you see it happening in Morocco, in Spain, you see it happening in Ireland, you see it happening in England, you see it happening in the Middle East where Iraqi refugees, for example, are being driven out of their home and sent to other countries. Some are welcome, some are not.

Here, our experience is very unique. I know the bulk of the people living in the surrounding area come from Hispanic, Latino background, and we have been going through this experience, I think, since the birth of Los Angeles. So I know that we have much that we can add and much wealth and talent that we can share with other people in the world.

I want to tell you very briefly that I'm excited to be here. The reason why I have been appointed was because my unique experience as a child of immigrants and a member of Congress who can speak and understand what that means as a value in a member of Congress. So I've been appointed by the OSCE as a special representative on migration. I will be delivering whatever information we gather here to that body of other parliamentarians, about 3- or 400 that will gather, so it's very critical that we begin this discussion.

In many cases, other countries have been accustomed to only dealing with the administration, the current Bush administration. Obviously, Congressman Hastings and myself come from a different perspective, and we believe it's important and critical for people to understand that there are differences of opinion, and in that difference of opinion, we believe that we can shed light on the positives of what is happening in our communities across the country, globally, but also the positive aspects that immigrants make to our great country.

With that, I want to thank our panelists; I want to thank the audience. I know we have students from UCLA, from Cal State L.A., we have members representing different labor organizations, and we have different businesses, federations also representing different groups in our community, the religious community. I'm overwhelmed with the excitement that you bring to this discussion today. With that, I would like to begin with our first speaker, and this is going to be Father Richard Estrada who I have known for several years. He is the associate pastor of Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church, known to many here as La Placita in Los Angeles, the oldest church in Los Angeles. He is the founder and executive director of Jovenes, Inc.

Jovenes, as you know, means young people, a nonprofit organization which serves homeless and at-risk immigrants and youth.

Father Estrada received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of San Francisco and studies theological and pastoral studies at the Graduate School of Theology in Berkeley, California, the Mexican-American cultural center in San Antonio, Texas, and the Fred C. Nelles School in Whittier, California. He has spent over 30 years of youth advocacy and program management working with high-risk youth in Los Angeles and is nationally recognized as an advocate for the less fortunate. He's a champion of the humane treatment of immigrants, and I remember fondly him on many occasions asking me to attend with him on visits on the border to provide bottles of water for those migrants who were trying to come here and seek jobs, but more importantly to save lives for those that didn't make it across that desert.

I'm proud that last September Father Estrada joined me in Washington, D.C., as one of the first Hispanic, I believe, significant

individuals in this movement for immigrants and provided the opening prayer for the Congress during Hispanic heritage month.

Thank you very much, Father Estrada. We look forward to hearing your testimony. If you can please begin.

**REVEREND RICHARD ESTRADA, PASTOR AND FOUNDER, OUR  
LADY QUEEN OF ANGLES CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Mr. ESTRADA. Thank you. My name is Father Richard Estrada from Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church. As a Claretian missionary, Catholic priest, and religious leader in the new sanctuary movement, I am grateful, Chairman Alcee L. Hastings, Representative Hilda Solis, and members of the Commission on Securities and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Helsinki Commission for inviting me to testify on Los Angeles Regional Impact and Opportunities of Migration.

Let me remind everyone here that the fundamental issues before this commission are nonpartisan and do impact the lives of thousands of people and families in Los Angeles. Please take what you hear today and work with your colleagues in Congress to seriously discuss and address legitimate concerns regarding the separation of immigrant families, the exploitation of immigrant youth, exploitation within guest worker programs, the protection of our borders, and curbing the flow of unlawful immigration. The Catholic church and fellow paid communities call for the caring for and the just treatment at all times from our elected officials on this very important issue.

I am here today to share my personal experiences with immigrants, communicate the position of the Catholic church on immigration, and, by extension, immigration reform and the effects and opportunities presented by migration. My testimony will focus upon my firsthand accounts of the contributions made and continuing opportunities resulting from immigration, the role of the Catholic church and interfaith communities in immigration.

In the 1980s youth advocates and myself became aware and concerned for Central American children who were fleeing civil war and arriving alone in Los Angeles. They would knock at the door of our church and ask for shelter. They were hungry, traumatized, and homeless. Our Lady Queen of Angels church at Olvera Street, the birthplace of our great city, better known as La Placita, small plaza, has always been an active and spiritual sanctuary for the Hispanic Catholic community. It was then that placita became a sanctuary church for our refugee sisters and brothers.

At that time we discovered that public and private agencies were unresponsive to the needs of unaccompanied refugee children. A nonprofit organization was established to meet the needs of this population of youth. Jovenes, Inc. not only provided them with health and human services but advocated on their behalf. Jovenes, Inc., which means "youth," continues to reach out to lonely, traumatized immigrant youth, when giving them hope and the tools to succeed; they become culturally integrated into society.

Hundreds of homeless youth have become U.S. citizens and are responsible adults. Some examples of our success are Johnny, a Honduran and Hurricane Mitch refugee. He is now a youth counselor. Nettie, a Guatemalan civil war refugee, has been in the U.S.

Army and is an officer for the past ten years. Oswaldo, a Mexican immigrant, is a university graduate student. Bowong, a Vietnamese refugee, is a chef. These youth are living proof that, when given a helping hand, immigrants will contribute to the fabric of our society.

Los Angeles is fortunate to have a coalition of churches, temples, nonprofit organizations, community leaders, elected officials, and labor unions who work together on behalf of immigrants. For the vast majority of immigrants, migration to the United States, including Los Angeles, is an economic and/or family unifying necessity. Churches', synagogues', and temples' work in assisting migrants stems from the belief that every person is created in God's image.

From the Old Testament, Deutera, God calls upon his people to care for the alien because of their own alien experience: "So, you too, must befriend the alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt." Taken from the book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 10, verse 17 to 19. It is for these reasons that religious leaders hold a strong interest in the welfare of immigrants and the ways in which our nation welcomes newcomers from all lands.

This country has always been an immigrant nation. The Catholic church is historically an immigrant church, and like other faith communities, is present throughout sending countries. In the United States, more than one-third of Catholics are of Hispanic origin, and our church in this country is made up of more than 58 ethnic groups from throughout the world, including Asia, Africa, the Near East, Mexico, and Latin America.

The churches, temples, and synagogues have a long history of involvement in immigration issues; both in the advocacy arena and in welcoming and assimilating waves of immigrants and refugees who have helped build our nation throughout her history. Many faith-based immigration programs were involved in the support for and implementation of the Immigration Reform & Control Act, IRCA, in the 1980s, and those programs continue to serve immigrants today.

As providers of pastoral and social services to immigrants, the growing partnerships between interfaith communities continues to give witness to and care for the human suffering occurring each day in our base communities of faith, social service programs, hospitals, and schools that have resulted from a broken immigration system which fails to uphold the dignity or protect the human rights of many immigrants seeking simply to improve their own or their families' lives in our land of opportunity.

We believe the current surge of separating U.S. children from their undocumented parents, apprehending noncriminals in immigration work site raids, and the exploitation of workers is immoral. The current immigration system is morally unacceptable and must be reformed. Indeed, we see peaceful members of our communities living in the shadows of undocumented immigration status.

What is needed to respond to these problems is a true comprehensive immigration reform that will provide opportunities for legal status for the undocumented currently living in the United States that will lead to permanent residency and eventual citizenship.

A work permit is needed for undocumented workers presently residing in a nation with protection from employer exploitation. We must strengthen the goals for family unity that has been the cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy. These are the essential elements of the Catholic church and the broad network of interfaith communities proposed for effective, comprehensive immigration reform.

Moreover, we need national policies that help overcome the pervasive poverty and deprivation, lack of employment, violence, and oppression that push people to leave their home countries because in the ideal world, for which we all must strive, migrants should have the opportunity to remain in their homelands and support themselves and their families. Addressing the root causes of migration is as humanitarian a mission as is reforming our own immigration system.

We respect and reaffirm the right of our nation to secure our borders and to regulate immigration for the common good of all citizens. We also pray for the women and men responsible for enforcing the law, but we cannot ignore the human needs of immigrant workers and their families when the law fails to protect their basic human rights.

The above principles will help guide this effort so that human rights and dignity of persons are protected. But this must be made clear to lawmakers: Enforcing immigration law in the absence of providing a path to legalization for the undocumented will be a monumental setback to reform. Simply stated, status enforcement provisions will work only in conjunction with the other aspects of comprehensive immigration reform, legalization and provisions for a work permit for undocumented workers.

Deportation of 12 million people is unreasonable and immoral. It would divide families, create economic turmoil throughout our nation's work force, and create fear on a massive scale. It will essentially create a police state environment. People will refuse to cooperate with police or report crimes in order to avoid suspicion as being illegal.

When combined with a reasonable worker program and an ability to earn legal status, then enforcement-only provisions and increased border security will mitigate the amount and efforts of undocumented migration because enforcement agents will be able to concentrate their efforts on protecting the border and pursuing the decreased number of people smuggling drugs and arms and human trafficking.

We are all pilgrim people. For more than two centuries European immigrants have travelled here in the hope of making a better life for themselves and their families. The same human hopes and needs are trapping a new generation of immigrants today, and as generations of past immigrants were successful, our newest immigrants will improve their lives and contribute to our nation economically, culturally, and socially. Let us not forget that it was our immigrant ancestors who built this country.

Thank you very much.

Ms. SOLIS: Thank you, Father Estrada. I failed to mention that each speaker or panelist will be given five minutes and after we will go through a series of questions and then we will go into the

next panel. I want to now welcome Dr. Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda, who is the associate professor of the UCLA Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies and the Cesar E. Chavez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction. Dr. Hinojosa-Ojeda is also the director of the Northern America Integration and Development Center and author of numerous books on political economy of regional integrations in various parts of the world. He has strong knowledge in investment and migration relations between the U.S., Mexico, Latin America, and the Pacific Rim.

Dr. Hinojosa-Ojeda, welcome, and I'm glad you are able to join us today.

**RAUL HINOJOSA-OJEDA, DEPARTMENT OF CHICANA AND CHICANO STUDIES ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UCLA**

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. Thank you. My Congresswoman, you call, I'm here. Congressman Alcee Hastings, I'm pleased to see you again.

Mr. HASTINGS. Yes, sir.

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. First, I want to begin by commending the Commission for having this hearing here. It sends a very important message. This is a global issue, and it's going to also increase on a global scale. My remarks which I presented to you reflects years of study that actually shows that the process of migration and remittances, combined are actually much more important to the future of the world economy than a lot of the discussions that are being held on trade, liberalization, and investment.

If you look at the value of what immigrants provide to a world scale, on an annual basis, it's more than \$2.5 trillion. It's the third largest economy of the world is basically what immigrants provide. Going forward, it's going to be even bigger because we are expecting over two and a half billion people to leave the country side and move into cities.

At the same time, we are having massive demographic implorions in the rich countries of the world. So both the demographic dynamics are there as well as the potential for very strong economic benefit. That's the second point that I really commend the nature of the hearing on, not only the impacts but really the opportunities.

Our research center at UCLA, and there's many people from UCLA here today that are very excited about this and are engaged in research on exactly how it is that these issues can be quantified. How can we really make the point? Being supportive of immigrants is absolutely a moral issue.

I completely agree with Reverend Estrada that it's also one of economic necessity on a world scale. It's one of fundamental importance that we get it right and the policies right.

Ms. SOLIS. Can I interrupt a moment, Dr. Hinojosa? We have been joined by Congresswoman, the Honorable Diane Watson. Diane, we have begun our panel discussion, and we will let Dr. Hinojosa finish and then we will allow for questions. Thank you for joining us. Good morning.

Dr. Hinojosa, please continue.

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. Thank you, Congresswoman Watson, for joining us.

What I was saying is that specifically, if we look at the case of Los Angeles, it is a microcosm of what this potential economic benefit could be of doing the right thing on immigration, in particular, as well as the negative consequences of doing the wrong thing.

Lately, you may have heard recently that there is a very strong focus on Los Angeles by Department of Homeland Security and ICE and on the raids here. We are now studying the economic impact of that. The mayor and business leaders made an important statement last week.

I'm here to tell you that the economic study that was presented then and our analysis shows that that's actually a very small underestimation of what is actually happening. Our estimation is that on an annual basis the undocumented population contributes \$225 billion to the State of California, \$80 billion to Los Angeles alone. So the economic impact of actually following through on what is the policy of this administration would actually wreak havoc, the worst economic depression in the history of the state. They are playing with fire, and this is, in a sense, an opportunity, again, to make clear to the American people the necessity of dealing with the immigration issue and doing it right.

Our analysis also shows that if we do it right, if we do move towards a process of legalization and, more importantly, the economic incorporation of immigrants out of the shadows into the economic mainstream, the economic benefits far outweigh anything that we have now conceived, the world bank and what everybody tells us about, as trade liberalization.

Doing the right thing on immigration, legalization of immigrants, creating the proper flow for them to come because they are needed, creating the right policy framework is a win-win proposition. This is not an issue of simply being kind to strangers. It is something that is of vital economic importance for our nation to incorporate immigrants. We have a history, a very, very important history, that when we do bring in immigrants and we fully incorporate them, great things happen.

One of the studies we recently completed is a 20-year impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act, IRCA, which was bipartisan legislation, but there's very little tracking of what these legislations have actually done. What it did immediately was a win-win situation. It raised wages and raised the social floor and did away with most of the easily exploitable sweat shop environments, even in Los Angeles, in the first six years of IRCA.

Also, very significant, the biggest drop-offs in history of undocumented crossing of the U.S. and Mexican border occurred right after legalization for over six years without spending the billions and billions of dollars that is currently being talked about. So the priorities are all wrong with the Congress people in Washington in terms of these issues. Legalization first. That is really the vital issue.

Second, questions of economic incorporation are of incredible vital importance both here and abroad. What we have been doing is an analysis of the economic contributions of legalized immigration. For example, in the State of California—over the last 25 years, we finished this study. It's an astonishing number, \$5.5 tril-

lion, has been added by the foreign-born workers. In Los Angeles alone, \$1.5 trillion. That's a lot of zeros. This is very significant.

What happens also when you legalize people, when you really bring them into the economic mainstream? When we did our analysis 20 years later of IRCA, you see the profile of the typical undocumented family before legalization and now where they are now 20 years later. Many of their children are here in the room as students at UCLA, for example. But shifting dramatically to an unbanked environment to the banking sector that in itself is the single major contributor of the economic benefit.

By the way, in this country there are over 60 million people that don't have access to financial services, and this is extremely important. This is an issue that cuts way beyond undocumented immigration and immigrants in general. It affects all our communities. The bringing in of people into the financial sector is, in a sense, the most vital issue.

Now, particularly, I wanted to mention the issue of remittances. On a world scale, there are now over \$300 billion of remittances. That is more than all direct foreign investment and international financial assistance. Specifically in Mexico, we are talking over \$25 billion, far surpassing direct-born investment and aid. This is money directly from our communities supporting communities abroad. We are actually taking care of business at the grassroots level in terms of having a binational, transnational economic strategy, but we are doing it the wrong way.

These billions of dollars are moving in the forms of cash out of our cash economies here in our communities which do not let us have the multiplier effects we should be having here to cash economies in rural areas which actually distort those economies and actually move the likelihood of more people moving here faster. So what's the answer? The answer is not only legalization, absolutely we need to do that, but we need to move especially towards embracing a new generation of technologies.

We haven't had a chance to talk about this lately, but the work we are doing now is looking at how the cell phone, which all of us can't live without? There are now four billion cell phones on the planet. Last year it was 1.2 billion cell phones that were bought mostly by poor people. The technology is now available for this instrument to be the basis of a banking of the unbanked and a movement of remittances directly into micro-financial institutions, both credit unions here as well as micro-financial institutions abroad.

I know Lucy is going to talk about this as well. We worked with the California credit unions for many years, and what we are doing is working with people like Professor Muhammad Yunus, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in Bangladesh, and networks of financial institutions in Latin America who are now part of the hundred million who now have micro-finance institutions.

We are now on the brink of a major breakthrough of taking this huge transnational economy of migrants here and of their families abroad and they are now part of the solution. They are not the problem. They are part of the solution of global economic development. If we bring the people out of the shadows into a legalized framework and empower them with technologies for this new generation of banking the unbanked, the economic impacts far out-

weigh—the full study is being made to the Commission, and we do it here and many other countries around the world—far outweigh anything that will dole around of trade liberalization, something it will produce. That's all very positive.

But really focusing on migration, remittances are of critical economic importance on a global scale. I really would like the Commission to take this up in its next hearing. A lot of the studies we have been doing, as Congresswoman Solis has mentioned, Los Angeles and North America in a global comparative perspective. Europe, since this is a commission that is embedded in the history of Europe, actually has a great deal to tell us. We did an analysis of 50 years ago. The income gap between Spain and Europe was the same between Mexico and the United States. Today, that gap has disappeared between Spain and Europe, okay, as well as Ireland as well as Portugal. They have done economic integration right.

One of the critical things was these were all migrant-sending regions. Spanish migration, everyone knows about the Irish migrations, the Greeks. There's no more migration from these areas. They are now part of an integrated affluent Europe. What was the major difference? It turns out, the European regional development funds, as Congresswoman Solis knows, and we worked Councilman Torres to create the North American Development Bank, which was an attempt to get North America to think about things in a new way here. Europe, they did it right. It had a very positive impact.

It is interesting. Our studies have now shown that what really made a difference in Europe and Spain, in particular, was migration and remittances. Legal migration and remittances going back into the full banking of the Cajas Popularis in Spain. The fascinating multiplier effect of remittances created small businesses and jobs, that shaped a vibrant grassroots economy. We can do this right now. We can do this right here. It's of vital importance specifically to L.A. There are a million undocumented families in Los Angeles. We are the undocumented capital of the world. That's not a great thing to say.

But, on the other hand, it's an immense opportunity. If we do things right, and we have to be at the forefront of saying the policies have to be changed, they have to be changed now. We have the most to gain from doing that. This will separate us beyond the divisiveness of the raids and conflicts that people think about immigration and really see it as a brilliant example of the American vision of fully giving people rights and having them be fully incorporated is both political and moral, but it's also a great economic benefit and can lead the way in terms of how we enter this century and meet this most basic challenge of economic integration with four billion people that are extremely poor on the planet and we are going to have to deal with it.

This is actually immigration, and remittance is doing the right thing. It is an extremely vital part of moving forward. Thank you very much.

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you. I'm delighted to have been joined by one of my favorite congressional members representing the Greater Los Angeles area. That's Congresswoman Diane Watson. She and I spent time in the state senate, and I recall when I ran first for that

seat, both she and another member of congress were so welcoming in having the first Latina placed there next to her. We spent many years working on the health committee and did some very good things back in our days.

But I'm delighted she is here. She is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and she is a member of the House Oversight Government Reform Committee. Before she was elected to the House in 2001, she was also our United States ambassador to Micronesia under President Bill Clinton. She has had a legacy here in Los Angeles serving as state senator and also one of the first African-American women to serve on the L.A. Unified School District. She comes with a great deal of wealth and experience, and I'm so delighted that she could be here with us this morning. Please, Diane, take a moment to speak to us.

**HON. DIANE WATSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much. I want to welcome the chairman, and I like to call him "Judge," Alcee Hastings, and our co-chair and my good friend Hilda Solis for having me take part. I did attend one meeting before you became the chairman. I hope to get back on the commission because I think that this is the commission that does the important work globally. I am so pleased to have come in at the time that Dr. Ojeda was speaking because I'm an alumni of this university.

I think you summarized what migration and the focus on migration means to the global economy that we are in internationally. We cannot hide from the fact that we must receive the talents and skills of those who choose to come here because they do enrich our economy and our country. We are no longer a country that can live in isolation.

As Hilda can tell you, we are surrounded, particularly here in California, with people whose attitudes are, "Keep them out." But we are finding our work force is diminishing, those with skilled sets are diminishing and we are finding that the salaries are not keeping pace with the rise in the economy. We have got to figure this out because the people who come here legally or illegally, they come to work. They take the jobs that Americans no longer want to do, and I'm highly aware of this.

What the panelists need to know is that the political will in Congress is not there to deal with this issue of immigration in its complexity. We say many things, but when it comes down to working out solutions to be able to utilize the people who come here but to have them come through a door of acceptance has not really been attended to like it should. So I want the audience to know we are tied in to the rest of this globe, we are tied into it economically, and we will be tied into it culturally. We have got to understand the cultures and the beliefs of other groups, and particularly those who are not as fortunate as we. Otherwise, we become the target. I'm not going to go into that piece of it, but we have to know how to live in this global economy that we are in, we have to know how to trade, and we have to know how to invite people.

As I was reading through the materials, I think the best suggestion that has been made out of all of those who have had input

today is that we probably need to expand green cards. Let people who are not citizens come and get a green card, but we need to monitor them to be sure that when time runs out they return. I think the ICE operations where they come in and do the raids and they split families and they take workers off is an indignity and crime. Let me put it like that.

The migrants that come to Southern California in the area where we live, we work, and we represent come to work, and the remittances that they send back home keep people alive right across the border. I have explained to my constituents that there are no lines in the sand. People who once were in control of this area feel that they can go back and forth across the border.

Fences will not do it. So we have to get out of this ideology that you put a fence up and you block it and you keep somebody out. We are going to have to control the flow over these borders, and it takes those at the highest level of government to do that. The highest level of government. Our president and I think we are going to have a new president quite soon, and they are going to have to negotiate.

But I am so pleased that the Helsinki Commission is looking at the impacts regionally. As you know, California as being a nation state, the sixth largest economy in the world, is very, very important when we consider because many, many of our immigrants come from over the Pacific, Southeast Asia, over the border, and they migrate within the United States from the colder, over industrialized northeastern—they are bypassing Texas and coming here.

For the Helsinki Commission to look at the impact of migration is a very important focus, Mr. Chairman, and I want you to take that back to the commission, because we can be anywhere in this globe in nine or ten hours, as you know, and a free trade issue we have to look at to be sure there's balance in trade and that human rights are observed on both ends.

When you come here to Los Angeles and you take a look at migration, you are going to get a composite of all of the complexities that we deal with when we talk about migration. So I want to thank the panelists. I came in to hear exactly what we needed to hear. Would you come to Washington and help us work through this immigration bill?

I would ask the chairperson and the co-chair if we could invite people to e-mail us their ideas about how we can enhance the immigration proposal that the Hispanic caucus has already put forward. Obviously, we are not ready to deal with it and that's why it hasn't come to the floor and hasn't passed. We are not sure that all of the aspects of immigration are considered. But I certainly welcome the input from our witnesses and people in the audience on how we can enhance not only California, not only this region, but the United States and our relationship to the rest of the world.

Thank you so much for holding this hearing today. I'm going to stay as long as I can, and that's about the next 20 minutes. We have a tough schedule today.

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you for your statements, your very eloquent statement, Congresswoman Watson.

Our next speaker is Ms. Lucy Ito. She is the senior vice president of research, communications, and credit union development for the

California and Nevada Credit Union Leagues. She is well versed in remittances and previously worked with the World Council of Credit Unions for 14 years where she provided management oversight for International Remittance Network.

The issue of remittances is particularly important to understand given the critical role that they play in the development of countries. It is even more important to understand today given the impact of the slowing economy and the impact that that will have on those developing countries as well.

So, as you begin your testimony, we look forward to hearing what solutions and advice you have for us. Thank you, and welcome, Ms. Ito.

**LUCY ITO, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CALIFORNIA CREDIT UNION LEAGUE**

Ms. ITO. Thank you, special representative Solis and Congresswoman Watson. I'm honored and it's a very big honor and a pleasure to be here this morning. As Congresswoman Solis mentioned, I'm here not only representing the California Credit Union but also the International Credit Union System, which has helped educate the United States Credit Union System on the importance of remittances.

Instead of reading my testimony, which is quite long, I've prepared one for you. There is a handout that I think will enable us to get through the points more quickly. If I could ask Alex to please provide those. As the handouts are being distributed, let me make a comment about the immigration context for remittances. Dr. Hinojosa-Ojeda mentioned the degree of immigration that is taking place worldwide.

According to our country's last census bureau, 10.3 percent of the U.S. population is foreign-born. Depending on what estimations you look at today, we are talking about 28 to 30 million recent immigrants, foreign-born immigrants. It won't surprise anyone in this room when I make the observation that it's the youngest, the poorest, and the most recent immigrants who typically are the ones sending money back to their homes. It's not a coincidence that this same group also happens to be the most unbanked population both here in this country and relatives of theirs back in other countries.

If you look at the table on the top of what would be Page 2 in your handout, Congresswoman Solis mentioned the Credit Union International Remittance Network, IRnet. About ten years ago, because of work that the World Council of Credit Unions was doing in Guatemala and El Salvador, we were very shocked at the rates that were being charged to remit money back then.

A few of us were talking earlier about 40, \$50 to send \$100 to another country. It was because of that that the California Credit Unions and World Council of Credit Unions and other folks decided to experiment, could we remit funds for a more affordable price. Back in 1997, we introduced IRnet where there's a flat \$10 fee. We are very pleased that the market has matured, recognized that that's a rate that's out there, and today the going rate is \$11 per remittance. If you look at the chart that is at the top of Page 2, you'll see in 2007 the IRnet system remitted \$578 million from the

U.S. to other countries. That equates to 1.5 million transactions in 2007.

This year, in 2008, it's going to be very interesting to see how the U.S. economy affects remittances, but right now for first quarter of 2008, \$127 million has been remitted through IRnet, and that was a total of 350,000 transactions. That's for the first quarter of 2008. If we stay on that track, it looks like we are going to be at about the same level that we were for 2007. In a couple remarks I'll be making about global remittances, there's reason to believe that that may taper off due to the U.S. economy.

I wanted to make a few comments about IRnet before I talk about global remittances. It's not to tout IRnet. It's what we hope other remittance transfer programs will do. Something the credit union remittance program does is, in the receiving country, it does not require a recipient to have a bank account in that country. The remittances are delivered to a person's home or—in that case they get it in the form of a check, or they pick it up at a credit union or some other site.

This is important because in other countries, developing countries, the unbanked population is estimated to be 80 percent of the population. If you don't have a bank account, you can't receive traditional remittances so it's important that there are some nontraditional remittance options.

Secondly, often people are cheated with the exchange rates they are quoted here, but when they remit the money, it is not the same exchange rate that is used when the money arrives to its destination. Credit unions are making sure that rate is guaranteed until delivery.

Thirdly, often foreign recipients are charged a receiving fee at the other end. That's terrible. That adds to the ridiculousness of gouging people. Dr. Hinojosa-Ojeda mentioned that new technologies coming through the IRnet system at the moment is more traditional. People bring cash, send it out. Besides the mobile phone technology that's coming up, I'm pleased that card technology is going to enable us to send remittances using debit cards in other countries, so we would be delighted to keep you posted on that technical development.

Let's move to remittances globally. I was really pleased to hear the figures before. The World Bank does not estimate all remittances but only those that are recorded and they can see that there was a lot of unrecorded remitting happening. In 2007, the World Bank estimated that \$240 billion was remitted around the world, up from 221 billion in 2006. These recorded remittances equal two times international foreign assistance to developing countries.

So let's say international aid is approximately \$120 billion a year, remittances are double that amount. The World Bank estimates that these remittances amount to two-thirds of foreign direct investment globally, and certainly remittances are the largest and least volatile source of external finances in many a poor country.

In Southern California here, we have many diverse communities, many represented from Latin America and Caribbean countries. That's certainly the largest region that's receiving remittances estimated at \$60 billion in 2007. The Inter-American Development Bank has made this observation. They have said that remittances

may be more than doubling the income of the core 20 percent of the population in Latin America and Caribbean.

Turning to our last page here, I did want to share with you observations that have been made about the economic impact in other countries. You will see on this page that I am only taking the top four or five examples of each.

You look at GDP in a country like El Salvador. The remittances that go into El Salvador total 15.1 percent of GDP. In an extreme case, Haiti remittances account for 24 percent of GDP in that country. Nicaragua, 20 percent of the GDP is the amount of remittances in that country. If you look at participation by local population in receiving remittances, in El Salvador 28 percent of the El Salvadorian population receive remittances, Guatemala 24 percent, and Mexico 18 percent.

Congresswoman Watson made this comment about how everything is interconnected in the economies. That is so true. A very disturbing observation that we have made is that if you take Mexico alone from 2002 to 2006, each year remittances grew by 20 percent, so you would expect in 2007 another 20 percent. Instead, for the first three quarters of 2007, remittances to Mexico had only grown by 1.4 percent as compared to 20 percent in the previous five years.

Looking at why that might be, the conclusion has been that the weak job market in the U.S., especially in construction where a lot of Mexican immigrants are employed, that has contributed to this decrease, and also the tighter border controls that are being practiced have meant that fewer people are coming here, so fewer remitters are here to send back remittances.

I will end my comments there on remittances, but I did want to thank all three of you as co-sponsors of HR 1537, the Credit Union Regulatory Improvements Act. I'm not pitching for it here, but if that passes, that will enable us to open credit union services to more underserved communities.

Another problem—yes, there are limited services, but often immigrants are also victims of pay day lending. This would allow credit unions to offer pay day lending alternatives to underserved communities. Thank you.

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you very much. Because of schedules here, I want to accommodate Congresswoman Watson and will ask her to go ahead and ask a series of questions for five minutes and to direct her questions to the panel.

Ms. WATSON. You said something, Ms. Ito that just caught my attention, pay day lending and it's such a rip-off, and it also was mentioned to send monies, remittances of \$100, you are going to pay 50.

We are going through, at this particular time, with the banking market out there and the different items they come up with to really gouge people, so when we talk about the complexities, we have to include how remittances are gouged, and they are making money and the persons at the other end who are the recipients really lose.

You were talking about the credit unions and you mentioned that there would be a card. Could that card be then converted into the cash of the country of the recipient?

Ms. ITO. Yes.

Ms. WATSON. It's like the telephone card?

Ms. ITO. It would be a debit card that you put in the machine of the receiving country and get local currency.

Ms. WATSON. Very good.

Dr. Hinojosa, and I called you Dr. Ojeda. I know those are hyphenated names so I can take my choice, right?

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. That's right. Thank you.

Ms. WATSON. How do you view the future in terms of migration, immigration, legally and illegally on this area of the country, Southern California? I know you've done a lot of research. I've followed you over the decades, and what do you see for the future?

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. I think the question also is what would be the optimal. I think it's inevitable that we are going to have to bring in a significantly larger share of the workforce going forward from immigration.

In fact, if we don't have immigration, we will be having a substantial decrease of close to ten percent in the population without immigration. So we need to be growing not only positively in terms of the workforce size, but as you were mentioning, also the nature of the skills.

This is a combination of both bringing in the right types of workers, recognizing how we are integrated with certain parts of the world, but making sure when they get here they are as quickly as possible brought in with full rights and economic opportunities to make them the most productive as possible.

Remember, we have, in a sense, a reservoir here. IRCA, another thing it did in terms of skills, as soon as legalization took place, people's own spending on their own capital, human capital increased by over 200 percent, GEDs, ESLs, and on-the-job training.

We actually are looking at productive increases from that that more than outweighs this positive impact, which are wage increases. We can bring in, and we are estimating, again, about 12 percent to 14 percent of the growth in a positive way has to come from immigration, and it can be done at a higher wage and skill level. If I can say one quick thing about the technology issue. This is something that we have spent a lot of our time lately on, working with what is the problem, why don't we have the banks and the credit unions and now the cell phone companies?

There are the debit card solutions. That is definitely part of what we already sort of studied and worked with the Ford Foundation and California Credit Union League, and that's a major advancement. But the problem is the credit unions—the debit cards, you need ATM machines and POS, and most of the countries don't have that, and that's what's interesting about the cell phone.

El Salvador is a hundred percent cell phone ready today in the smallest villages. So marvelous things are happening even in the so-called backward countries like Kenya.

Ms. WATSON. You triggered something in my mind when you said cell phones. I started going to Kenya in the early '80s. When you get away from Nairobi and you really get out in Masai territory and people are walking in their costumes, I come back 20 years later and everybody is running around the bush with a cell phone.

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. You know what they are doing now is they are using their cell phones to send money within the network.

That's what I've been doing, traveling the Philippines. As another very important example, we don't have it here. It's absurd. Right in Latin America—in L.A., everyone's got two cell phones, right? I should say we are and the students all here are part of a project where we are Google-mapping every single money remittance location, check casher, and pay day lender. What we are doing is we are measuring the amount of money that's being taken out of the community through this unnecessary cost. Ms. Ito said its \$10. There's no reason it's not less than \$2. The technology is there to do this.

We've analyzed the economic impact of moving toward this new type of technology and giving people—anybody who has a phone number can essentially have a virtual bank account now. That technology is available now. The economic-multiplier effects, we are studying it right now in the L.A. areas, and some of your districts are part of our study areas. We have multiples of economic growth that can happen as a result of this empowerment. In the villages, it's more than ten times. A village that moves towards having their money arrive, not in cash, but with a local micro-finance institution that can then lend money for productive activities, things that the whole town associations spear-headed now can be done on a much broader scale. It's a very, very important time. We really need to focus having that as an integral part of migration and remittance negotiations, next year and take advantage of this huge new interesting possibility.

Ms. WATSON. What is really frustrating to us is that we know the politics of all of this. And rather than a resolution to these problems, we get tied up with the politics of it. Believe me, that's where we are right now. I mentioned before it's going to take a whole new way of thinking about this under a different kind, not ideology, but an open mind, thinking how we play into this global atmosphere in which we find ourselves now. We need not kid ourselves. It's all political.

What happens with this border to the south, we don't have the same problem with the north? Have you noticed that difference? So it operates in an arena that is not always authentic. I want to say this to Reverend Estrada. I'm sorry I missed your testimony, but I was reading the background on this hearing and I know many of our churches have become sanctuaries.

Mr. ESTRADA. Yes.

Ms. WATSON. And there is a counter-movement, and we see it where we work, too, for giving sanctuary to people who are here without the correct credentials. Can you remark at this point how strong the sanctuary movement, I know that our bishop here has offered our archdiocese as a sanctuary and getting a whole lot of political pressure. Can you give us a view into the very near future as to this movement?

Mr. ESTRADA. The movement is a national movement, so there are 52 different faith communities that are part of the sanctuary movement. We believe its saving lives. We don't want families to be broken apart. Our hierarchy is not fully, I guess I would say supportive, supportive in the sense of how we are doing it, to take in a family or a person into your church for a period of time that

has a deportation order. It's a little bit controversial. But I think morally it's the right thing to do.

Out of 52 faith communities in the country who are stepping up to the plate, and it's all about faith, all about what you believe is right and moral, but the real work is trying to change policies, trying to change the current policy.

In Los Angeles, each one of our five families who have been working really hard with attorneys to try to get them to reopen their case, to reconsider, so that they could stay here with their children because they have—each one of the families has a U.S.-born citizen, and we are adamant about the separation of families. The heroes here are the people that say, “Yes, I will go into sanctuaries.” It's a sacrifice for them. Is it going to grow and make a big difference? It will in a small way, but it's people of faith standing up for what they believe in.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much to all of the witnesses, and I appreciate you holding this regional hearing here so we can air from a different point of view than what we get in Washington, D.C., all the time.

Ms. SOLIS. I'm going to defer to my colleague, Alcee Hastings and the Chairman, to begin his round of questioning.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much. I won't take much more time because of the fact that we have additional witnesses. Early on, the counsel general of Honduras was here, and I'd like it if we could recognize her. I know there are others. I also know that our dear friend and colleague is going to have to leave because of previous commitments she had told us about. Diane, I want to thank you.

Particularly, let me see a show of hands of the students that are in college. Okay. You know the term, using a sports metaphor, of an impact player. Well, you today, if you have not seen or heard of Diane Watson, you have seen a real impact player in the lives culturally, socially, economically, and politically of this community. She is indeed a living legend, and I'm glad she is with us today.

Thank you, Diane.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. HASTINGS. I only have one question, and I'll try to approach it from the standpoint of Father Estrada. You and I have lived a few decades and we have seen and heard immigration discussions. How do you compare the current migration debate with that of previous eras? Is there any specific advice or factors that you would urge that we as policymakers look at? That will be my only question.

Mr. ESTRADA. Our church, La Placita, Queen of Angels Church, is right in the center of the city. In the '30s, there was this immigration, these immigration raids. They say that immigrants would run into the church seeking safety, sanctuary. There have been immigration raids, immigrants that were not wanted and so forth. But I believe that today it's a lot meaner. It is a force that is immoral. It's an issue that has to be looked at as a moral issue.

I believe that the faith communities have a lot to say here. There is a growing movement of interfaith communities that really are stepping up to the plate, organizing, are coming together, and real-

ly being a witness. I guess to answer your question, it's a lot meaner, it's a lot deeper, and it needs to stop.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much. Madam Chair, I know we have other witnesses and I don't want to get too far into that. I won't ask additional questions, and I've taken all your information to heart, Ms. Ito.

Ms. SOLIS. I want to mention to the audience that we will be posting some questions for our witnesses, and they can respond and we will post that on the Web site. But I wanted to thank you, Father Richard, for coming. You mentioned three individuals that you have worked with that have been now successful that may have come in without documentation. What kind of resources did you use to make that happen? How did that come about?

Mr. ESTRADA. Well, we are a nonprofit organization, 501(c), and we develop programs for education, and we don't ask, "Are you documented or undocumented?" We create a program for advancement, a program of learning English to learning how to get a job, et cetera, health programs, and so forth, and they become part of a population that we work with, and that's how we do it.

Ms. SOLIS. What is your source of funding, primarily?

Mr. ESTRADA. Primarily, we get government funding from the city, from the county, we get private funding, and the future doesn't look that good. There's a lot more work that has to be done. We have here with us our program directors of Jovenes, Inc., and our grant writer that are here today. Yes, it's not only Jovenes but organizations that reach out to youth and families that are getting the brunt of the economic situation.

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you, Father Estrada, for your work. I wanted to pose this question to Dr. Hinojosa. We talk a lot about remittances and the importance and the economic strength that provides to the sending countries in terms of the benefits that they get.

Have you seen in your review of how remittances are used in countries, for example, like Mexico or maybe Indonesia or Asian-Pacific communities, if there's any movement to utilize those remittances to build an infrastructure? Because I think that's something of great concern, and people in Europe are talking about that as well.

As we see people migrating from, say, old Eastern European countries, as an example, they are coming up to work in Spain and Greece and Germany, and they are sending that money home, and in some cases there is a system to send that money—to bank it back from the sending country, and they actually created an infrastructure of hospitals, housing, things that actually add stability to the country.

Can you reflect on that? Have you seen any of that?

Mr. HINOJOSA-OJEDA. I got off the plane this morning. We were in Mexico meeting with various state governors. What we are doing is something very interesting. These are, of course, monies that belong to families and they need it to live on. But if you move it through a banking system and you create an infrastructure of saving and investment, that investment can then have very significant local impacts.

One of the things we know about migration and remittances is that people are migrating to save money, to try to save money.

What don't exist are basically institutions that produce products for savings. One thing we are doing for various states now is to create a development savings bond for remittances so people can, through their cell phone, send the money back and put a little bit of it into a savings account which they are receiving a return of investment and then that gets matched through this notion of 3 for 1.

Instead of 3 for 1 for individual projects which again was breaking through, as you know, Zacatecas and various other communities, now we can take it to a larger level. We can create local savings bonds for development in the States, and with the federal government and the international development institutions leveraging that, and then those funds can be used for a wide variety of things, infrastructure for housing, and also for productive activities.

We are doing something quite interesting now where women's cooperatives in Mexico are producing USDA certified organics and nopales, and everybody loves nopales, right? The market for these foods is now bigger in the United States than in Mexico, and now this creates new small business opportunities here for companies to import this working directly with economic advancement on a scale unprecedented. That's how you can leverage these remittances to really provide economic activity on a sustainable basis and a tax base which can then support the infrastructure investments and be educational.

There's a way out of here. There are absolutely clear cases. The answer goes directly to our streets in our neighborhoods, and that's what we have to focus on, create, at the local level, working with the churches and credit unions, all this networking and we can solve the problem like we run our daily lives here.

Ms. SOLIS. I think maybe later on I can get a response from Dr. Hinojosa and Lucy Ito. I'm curious about the amount of money that goes untracked through money orders, and I think about my own family when my mother years ago would issue a money order, send it back to Nicaragua, and are we able to track that?

That also is evidence that there is economic strength and stability that is being exposed to those Third World countries. And not just Central America, but I know it's in the Asian-Pacific regions as well. Those are things I'd like to get information back on. Let's thank the panelists. This is a very good discussion.

With that, we will transition to our second panel of witnesses. I'd like to ask Kerry Doi to come forward, Ms. Angelica Salas, and EunSook Lee, please come forward and join us at the table. We are going to dive right in. We are going to begin with our first panelist, Mr. Kerry Doi, who is the executive director and president of Pan-Asian Consortium in Employment, better known as PACE, the largest Pan-Asian community development organization in California.

PACE was founded back in 1976 with an initial grant from the City of Los Angeles to address the employment and job training needs of the Asian-Pacific islander communities. In the last 30 years, PACE efforts have broadened to include workforce development, housing, business assistance, and early childhood education. Two years ago I was proud to have the opportunity to join PACE to honor 11 women, who were small business owners, with checks of \$1,000 to help them begin their new companies. I looked at it

as micro-loans, and so I know that it's a very successful program. With approximately 300 employees speaking 26 different languages and dialects, Mr. Doi will speak to us about the services such as housing programs, job training placements, and youth education and business and economic development.

**KERRY DOI, PRESIDENT AND CEO, PACIFIC ASIAN  
CONSORTIUM IN EMPLOYMENT**

Mr. DOI. Thank you. Thank you very much, Representative Solis and Mr. Chairman. It's an honor to be here, and this is a really important occasion. So because it was so important, I wracked my brain about what kinds of things to say and came up with about 30 minutes of remarks. But in the interest of time, I will try to highlight it and cut it down to five minutes. I did submit my written testimony to the panel.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you.

Mr. DOI. So I will try to rip through it quickly and highlight some major points.

As Congresswoman Solis said, we are proud to have been of service for over 30 years in Los Angeles. And since 1976, we have served more than half a million illegal people living in the Los Angeles area. Of these, almost two-thirds have been and continue to be people who are new to the United States. Having worked with hundreds of thousands of immigrants over the past 31 years, we believe that we learned a little bit about what works and what does not, and we welcome the opportunity to share some of what we have learned with the commission.

As you know, the County of L.A. has one of the largest and fastest-growing immigrant populations in the United States. Immigrants bring a huge surge of energy and possibilities to the entire area. Founded in '76 by leaders in the API communities in L.A. know that having a job is critical to economic prosperity.

Over the years we have added programs that provided complementary services to our primary target population. Today we offer, as the Congresswoman said, a full range of programs and services to help families achieve economic self-sufficiency including energy conservation, early childhood education, affordable housing development, asset building and financial education, and small business development.

What makes our program work to empower immigrants to use their skills, energy, and ingenuity to fully engage with their new country and make a positive contribution? First and foremost, we believe that you must respect the heritage and experience. More than 85 percent of our staff speaks one or more languages in addition to English. It's more than language. It's also important to understand the culture and life experience of our clients. One example is the problem of getting the immigrants to use banks as has been stated earlier. Many come from countries that have unstable or nonexistent banking systems. Many escaped from repressive governments, and as a result, not only do they not understand our banking system, they don't trust any banking system.

Traditional means of outreach and program improvement won't work in this case. Trust, word of mouth, referrals and experience over time with friends, relatives, and neighbors are essential ele-

ments to be able to effectively reach deep into immigrant communities and be considered an organization to be trusted. So what kinds of programs and resources and services are needed?

PACE has identified eight program elements that we offer that we believe are critical to effectively empower migrant communities and promote prosperity. No. 1, English as a second language, because overcoming the language barrier is a must for people to fully participate in our system. No. 2 is financial education, as has been stated earlier, and I don't want to beat that point. But No. 3, asset accumulation, is important, and building on financial education. There are many existing government and private bank programs to help low-income people leverage their resources and promote savings. No. 4, job training, as stated earlier, is vital to economic self-sufficiency. No. 5, business development, because many immigrants become entrepreneurs because it offers the most immediate and sometimes the only way for them to earn a livable wage. No. 6 is affordable housing. The high cost of housing in Southern California is legendary and true. No. 7, comprehensive family services. Finally, mentoring and advocacy. The transitional trauma that impacts individuals and families who immigrate to a new country cannot be underestimated.

This is exacerbated if the reason for the immigration is because of war, persecution, political instability, and a hundred other reasons. Our staff and clients have stories of their journey to America that would make you weep, brothers who disappeared, children who drowned in sight but out of reach, families living in foxholes and eating bugs.

That they arrived in the United States at all is a miracle. Many of the men and women in PACE have shared that experience. It infuses what we do with an appreciation, a respect, and a humanity that transcends programs and funding. We work very hard to identify programs that share our passion for low-income people of all ethnicities and nationalities who want a chance, and we try to give them that chance.

So what proactive policy development could government undertake to help PACE do what we do better and for more people? Eight critical areas immediately come to mind. One is direct job training funding to community organizations that do not trickle down through the state and local government. No. 2, expansion of the Community Reinvestment Act to include the new, emerging class of banks that are currently exempt, such as insurance companies or retail-sponsored banks. No. 3, restoration of the Community Reinvestment Act to again include banks that have been exempted over the years. No. 4, elevate and increase affordable housing responsibilities for government-sponsored enterprises. No. 5, we need Congress to insist on continued enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which says that "Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races, colors, and national origins contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial color or national origin discrimination." No. 6, in light of Title VI, we need Congress to be diligent in their economic support programs such as those being discussed right now in response to the mortgage foreclosure crisis be equally available to people in need in all communities. No.

7, increased funding for refugee and immigrant services and inclusion of funding for services for political and economic asylees. Lastly, we need for Congress to have the kind of vision that sparked the community development movement in the 1960s. Foundations are trying, banks have stepped up to the plate, and the federal government's commitment to communities dwindles each year.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate that America is a nation of immigrants. They provide a vibrancy, resilience, and energy to our nation. Programs that serve to ease their way into life in America are not expenses; they are investments, investments in America's greatest asset, our people.

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you. Our next speaker is Ms. Angelica Salas, who is working with the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, known as CHIRLA since 1995. CHIRLA was initially created to help coordinate between directors, service providers, and advocacy groups dedicated to advancing the human and civil rights of immigrants and refugees in Los Angeles. CHIRLA's staff of 30 runs over a dozen programs to help educate immigrants about their rights, offer legal aid referrals, train immigrants to become leaders, and assist in employer/employee wage disputes. They are also an important voice for humane policy at the local, state, and federal level.

Ms. Salas, welcome, and thank you and please give us your five-minute testimony.

**ANGELICA SALAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COALITION FOR  
HUMAN IMMIGRANT RIGHTS OF LOS ANGELES**

Ms. SALAS. First of all, I want to say, Madam Representative, thank you so very much and also Congress for hosting this hearing and for having this forum. It's so important that we get to voice from our perspective from the ground what is happening in immigrant communities and also to celebrate all their many contributions.

CHIRLA was formed in 1986 to advance the human and civil rights of immigrants and refugees in Los Angeles, promote harmonious multi-ethnic and multi-racial human relations, and through coalition building, advocacy, community education and organizing, empower immigrants and their allies to build a more just society. I speak before you today to testify to the great and open secret in our midst that is the often unheralded fact of the immigrant contributions to the County of Los Angeles despite the many obstacles in their way.

As an immigrant rights organization, CHIRLA has been witness to the powerful presence of immigrants in our county and their amazing contributions to development and transformation of Los Angeles. The future of Los Angeles hinges largely on how we integrate and provide better opportunities to the millions of immigrants in our midst.

The Migration Policy Institute, in a recent report on immigrant integration, revealed that Los Angeles County remains the largest immigrant metropolis in the nation with more than one-third of its 9.9 million residents and nearly half its workforce comprised of immigrants.

Consider also the following data from an upcoming report that we are releasing today called "A Closer Look: Fortress of Immigrants in Los Angeles," and I will provide you with a copy. In this report we have compiled over six years of information collected from different reports that have been distributed within the last six years, but often I think are shelved and we don't really understand the great information. This report basically says that the City of Los Angeles is home to people from more than 140 countries who speak at least 224 different languages.

Los Angeles County has the largest population of Asians in the entire United States with a total of 1.3 million people. The county has the largest population of Hispanic or Latino at 4.7 million people. By 2050, these populations are expected to grow 200 percent and 187 percent respectively. Additionally, over 30 countries have the largest representation of their nationals outside of their home country here in Los Angeles. Examples include the largest population of Mexicans, Central Americans, and Iranians.

The percentage of Los Angeles County residents age five and older who are foreign born as of 2006 is 35.4 percent. In addition, 63 percent of children in Los Angeles County are members of immigrant families. However, 87 percent of these children are themselves U.S. citizens. The percentage of Los Angeles County residents who speak a language other than English at home is 53.6 percent in 2006.

Immigrant worker populations in Los Angeles County are concentrated in a variety of sectors which vary according to their immigration status. Immigrants as a whole are highly representative, in contrast to the general population, in manufacturing and personal service trades.

In terms of percentages of the labor force as a whole, immigrants in Los Angeles County, including the undocumented, make up 59 percent of the service sector workers, 80 percent of production of manufacturing workers, 67 percent of construction workers, 62 percent of transportation workers, 61 percent of installation workers.

And even in fields where immigrants are less likely to work, their numbers are significant. They account for 30 percent of professional workers, 38 percent of office support workers, and 34 percent of management and business workers in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County is an immigrant county.

As of 2005, first-generation immigrants have started at least 22 of Los Angeles's 100 fastest-growing companies. Immigrant entrepreneurs in Los Angeles have founded nationally successful firms such as El Pollo Loco, Panda Express, and LuLu's Desserts.

According to one estimate, immigrants are starting as much as 80 percent of all new businesses in Los Angeles. Throughout Los Angeles, immigrant entrepreneurs are revitalizing whole neighborhoods, opening up business and creating jobs, not just for themselves but for all Angelinos.

According to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, immigrants play a vital role in the fashion, furniture, and food-processing industries, the main engine for the local economy. Immigrant participation in these industries produces millions of dollars in tax revenues and accounts for tens of thousands of jobs. The three industries together created 495,000 jobs for immigrants

and U.S. citizen workers and paid \$103 million in local sales taxes in 2006.

CHIRLA works with low-wage immigrants in the underground economy. These are workers who are day laborers, who are household workers who care for others' homes and others' children and their elderly parents.

We also work with street vendors. These are men and women who many of them and many of the successful restaurants actually started by people who first started as street vendors, individuals who sell food and who sell wares on the streets of Los Angeles, a very thriving economy.

Unfortunately, these are also the industries in which we see some of the worst abuse, day laborers who work many, many hours a day who don't get paid, not even for the work that they do, household workers who, after we did a report in 2004, we found that some of the average wages for some of the household workers was \$2.37 an hour for their work.

Street vendors who are not allowed to work in the city of Los Angeles, even though they pay business taxes, even though they pay permits for their carts, yet in the city of Los Angeles it is illegal to be a street vendor. A worker cannot be illegal. It cannot be a crime to work.

However, there are possibilities, and we have seen that through the creation of worker centers and through the organizing of workers in all industries, even the informal economy, this can change and workers can demand higher wages, can demand that their labor rights be represented, and together they can voice a change to their industries and change policies that basically keep them poor.

We have also launched a partnership, now I think in its fourth year end, Playo, which basically is a collaboration of the regional Hispanic chamber of commerce. It includes most of the Latin American consulates, the Central America consulate chapter. We have here one representative, the Mexican, the diocese and the diocese of San Bernardino, an organization like CHIRLA, together in the past four years we have collected \$6 million in unpaid wages and back wages. It also includes the U.S. Department of Labor and the California Department of Labor all working together to make sure that at the end of the day people get paid for their work.

Promoting civic engagement and language access will help immigrants better participate in their social and political environment. Immigrants know their social and economic possibilities are multiplied when they learn English. One-third of Los Angeles County adults or 2.3 million are limited English proficient. Today most English classes are filled to capacity and require additional government attention to meet the extraordinary need. With increased investment in English as a second language, programs all over Los Angeles will benefit.

Over 60 percent of immigrants in Los Angeles have a high school or college or advanced degree. These are 60 percent of immigrants in Los Angeles. Many of their skills and knowledge are not utilized because there are few programs to recognize their credentials and help them incorporate into high-skilled employment. In 1999, CHIRLA began a program called Wise Up. Wise Up is an immi-

grant youth program where we go into the high schools and work with immigrant youths who are undocumented. We are in eight campuses in the city of Los Angeles.

We also launched the California Network, which is a network of 29 college campuses in which there are undocumented students. I'm sorry, in the County of Los Angeles, we estimate that 10,000 young people for graduating every year who are undocumented, who do not have access to financial aid. Many of these young people are stellar students. Some of them are in this room. They are stellar students who cannot go on to school despite their grades and despite incredible willingness to do so.

Right now, in the state of California, we have in-state tuition so children who can show they have been in the high school at least three years can actually have access to that in-state tuition, but we don't have access to financial aid. I know of parents who are working two and three jobs, one job to pay the rent, one job to put food on the table, and the third job to put their kids through schools.

Opening up access to higher education and financial aid programs will also allow for the best and brightest to become professionals that contribute to Los Angeles society and tax base. Opening the doors of education to immigrants is critical to capitalizing on all the talent that immigrants have to offer.

Immigrants in Los Angeles County are also contributing to the vitality of the Los Angeles County democracy. Los Angeles immigrants are active in campaigns to improve housing, educational, health care, and labor conditions in Los Angeles.

Immigrants are central to improving conditions for all who live and work in L.A. Examples include the increase of wages and working conditions in the hotel and tourist industry in Los Angeles, the adoption of living wage ordinances, the protection of First Amendment right to work for day laborers, and the community for active citizens in Los Angeles are demonstrating to the rest of the country and the world that positive change can be achieved in their communities, and I thank the millions of people who are marching the streets of Los Angeles for immigrant families.

Most recently, immigrants have filed a record 1.4 million nationalization applications, a demonstration of their willingness to become engaged in the American process. Most of the applications filed were from immigrants living in Los Angeles County. Yet there is little investment in the citizenship or the legal visa family.

Billions have been spent on borders and interior enforcement while billions have been diverted from the citizenship and service provision. Fees have increased, but the services have not gotten better, and we see this by the backlog of citizenship applications and the legal visas, that there's many of them for many reasons that can be up to two decades.

Immigrants thrive in a welcoming environment by creating social and cultural networks that encourage them to invest in the creation of safer, cohesive communities. Yet, over two decades of restrictive and hostile immigrant policies are having a detrimental impact on immigrants and their ability to advance politically, socially and economically.

For many immigrants, their lack of access to a path of citizenship is relegating them to low-paying jobs with few prospects to

achieve their full potential. As stated earlier, over one million undocumented immigrants live in Los Angeles. According to the Migration Institute, over 537,000 children have at least one undocumented parent in Los Angeles. For these children, their future is put in peril as a result of their parents' own uncertain future and threat of detention and deportation because of their immigration status.

We run an immigrant assistance hotline and receive 15,000 calls a year. Many of these calls are people who are calling as a raid is happening in their home. There have been residential raids throughout Los Angeles County. Homeland Security has instituted 75 fugitive operation teams. These are composed of five or six team members, and what they do is they go through a list of individuals who had previous deportation orders or many times were deported without them knowing.

There is a list with a person's picture and, from my perspective, these are bounty hunters. They try to seek these individuals. Many times they don't find them. What they do find is other people who happen to live in the same address, and those people are picked up. We have seen raids in the city of Los Angeles that have devastated our community. I've seen and been with children who have been left behind because their parents have been picked up in these raids. For these children their future is in peril.

The passage of just and humane immigration policies that include legalization for undocumented, decreasing the wait times for legal visas and increase in labor protections and economic opportunities will exponentially grow immigrant contributions to Los Angeles and the nation. And I could go on and on to illustrate the obvious: There is a great deal of untapped potential in our midst, and it is our loss as a community if we continue to fail in recognizing the critical need to address immigration integration issues in our county in a genuinely committed and coordinated fashion. We can no longer wait for a government to seize this momentum, especially when its enforcement-only policy sends the wrong signal to immigrant families and threatens everything that they hold dear about this country.

Immigrant integration is a concrete manifestation of the American dream made real. We carry the responsibility of making sure that immigrant workforce participation is recognized and reinforced, and that the future generations of immigrant children join the mainstream of civic and economic life.

As the facts of immigrant contributions continue to emerge, we can no longer hide from the consequences of inaction. The absence of just and humane immigration reform will continue to haunt our efforts at local integration if we also do not work towards addressing the policy gaps that exist to pursue positive integration programs.

This is the challenge and opportunity before us, and I hope that as we have done so in the past, in the many battles we have fought with our immigrant families and friends, we will also rise to this challenge and make Los Angeles County the best example of how immigrant social, political, and economic incorporation is done.

Thank you.

Ms. SOLIS. Our next speaker is Ms. EunSook Lee. She is the executive director of the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium. This organization was founded in 1994 by local community leaders of Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York who recognize the strength in a common voice. Their main mission is to project a national voice on major civil rights and immigrant issues and to promote the full participation of Korean-Americans in their society through education, organizing, and advocacy.

Ms. Lee will focus her testimony on the immigrant integration needs of the Asian Pacific Islanders in the area of education, health care, employment, and political advocacy. Thank you, Ms. Lee, for being here.

**EUNSOOK LEE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL KOREAN AMERICAN SERVICE & EDUCATION CONSORTIUM**

Ms. LEE. Representative Solis and Representative Hastings, thank you also for giving me the opportunity to speak today at this hearing, and I've submitted written testimony, so I will try to keep to the five-minute limit.

Given that there are one million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, who I will refer to as AAPI, are undocumented and 1.5 million are caught in the backlog, immigration reform is a priority we share with others who testified. Again, for this morning, I want to focus on integration of immigrants.

In L.A. alone, there are close to 400,000 AAPI and 96,000 Korean-Americans, of which 75 percent are immigrants. NAKASEC is a national consortium of community-based organizations that work directly daily with AAPI and Korean-American immigrants, and so we know what daily struggles we face, and we know both the successes and challenges that Los Angeles has sought to address the impact of migration. The City of Los Angeles and our nation, America, must recognize that we have a social compact with immigrants. Immigrants work hard to create the tools and resources that strengthen our city and nation.

In exchange, they should not be driven underground as second-class citizens, but be able to take full advantage of those tools and be able to safeguard the health, education and progress of their families and participate fully in civic life, for the very future prosperity and security of America is incumbent of local governments and Congress to respond to migration by honoring and strengthening and not neglecting this social compact.

The newly released report by the National Conference of States Legislatures found that in the first quarter of 2008 more than 1,100 bills of largely anti-immigrant bills have been considered basically on the five issues of employment, identification/driver's licenses, law enforcement, public benefits and services, and education. What is encouraging is that while there have been publicized activities by vocal minority fanning the flames of anti-immigrant sentiments, few of these local anti-immigrant measures have actually passed. Moreover, it is our belief that immigrant integration is the antidote to anti-immigrant measures and sentiments. Communities that hate or fear immigrants are those who have never had contact with them.

Integration is essential to breaking that ignorance and fear of the unfamiliar, and it is best done on the local level. I will focus on immigration integration of AAPI in the area of education, health care, and political. First with education. Throughout Southern California we have worked with thousands of students and their parents who are AAPI to advocate for access to public education at K-12 and post-secondary institutions.

These students have been denied admissions primarily because of a misunderstanding of the federal immigration laws or California State Educational Code which explicitly protects immigrant students' rights to admission regardless of immigration status.

Undocumented immigrant students, particularly from Asia, face the added barrier of being denied in-state tuition, again because of a misunderstanding of federal immigration laws. Education, as we know, is a chief determinant of an individual's future success and quality of life. And for this reason, it is of great concern for us.

It is also important to understand that we must enable parents to become engaged in their children's activities both in school and education. At the heart of the problem is the inability of schools to provide multilingual communications to immigrant parents other than Spanish speakers.

We have cases of young Korean-American kindergarten students waiting extra hours because their parents only receive notices of early school out in English and Spanish. We also have cases of Korean-American parents being forced to ask other bilingual parents that they can find at a parent night to interpret for them confidential information about their child.

As a result of the public schools' failure to provide language access, limited English-proficient AAPI parents are disempowered from monitoring their children's academic progress or having a voice in determining school policies. Too often immigrant children or children of immigrant parents must navigate the educational system on their own, some unsuccessful. Provisions of language access are part of the solution.

The other part is increased funding for English as a second language and civics classes for adults. Contrary to the myth that immigrants do not want to speak English, the experience of our L.A. center, the Korean Resource Center, which runs an English and civics class in partnership with L.A. Community College, there's a long waiting list of immigrant parents willing to enroll in English classes after an eight- to 12-hour workday. Immigrant parents do not question the importance of learning English, not only for work but also to remain a central part of their children's lives.

On the issue of health care, nationally one out of two Korean-Americans lack health insurance. That is the highest of any community. This is because of two primary reasons. One is the high costs make coverage unaffordable and language barriers make coverage unusable.

AAPI, particularly Korean-American households in Southern California, have the state's highest level of linguistic isolation. Quantitative and qualitative research shows that language barriers are associated with lower health education, poor doctor/patient interaction and lower patient satisfaction.

These patients are less likely to receive counseling on proper diet, smoking cessation, and exercise habits. The immediate danger is that language barriers delay care, facilitate misdiagnoses, and wrong prescriptions could be dangerous for a patient's well-being. Sometimes it's fatal.

We have on record a story of a limited English proficient Korean-American patient who was admitted to Queen of the Valley Hospital in West Covina suffering from kidney failure and diabetes. After a week's stay she began to feel better and the hospital made discharge plans.

However, while attempting to go to the rest room without assistance, she fell off her bed and broke her right arm and hip causing her to prolong her hospital stay. A few days later, she complained about pain saying, "Apah," which means "pain" in Korean.

The hospital staff did not attempt to find an interpreter to understand her repeated comments of "apah." Finally, they asked her husband, who is limited English proficient, and they understood that "apah" meant "pain." From that period on, the nurses would ask, "Apah?" and give her painkillers. They never asked where the pain was located or the extremity.

When the niece came to visit, she was shocked in her aunt's treatment and questioned the hospital staff about patient communication and lack of interpreter services. Even after referring the hospital staff to PALS for help, an organization that provides free medical interpretation, the hospital continued to ignore interpretation requests.

It was later discovered the patient had an infection in her arm which traveled up to her shoulder. A week later, by the time the infection was detected, it already entered her bloodstream and it was too late to cure. Complications from kidney failure, diabetes, and the new infection, the patient slipped into a coma and passed away. The entire time the patient simply said, "I can't speak English, but I should be thankful that they are treating me."

Lastly, integration is socioeconomic but also political. A recent report by Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees found that 93 percent of AAPI children ages 12 to 17 have an immigrant parent. Moreover, 28.5 percent of the sum of all potential voters in California in 2012 will be made up of immigrant voters.

AAPI voters are referred to as the sleeping giant who must be stirred in order to advocate for policies that impact their lives. While only 52 percent of AAPIs who are U.S. citizens over the age of 18 are registered, 85.2 percent of AAPI registered voters did vote.

In other words, while we suffer from lower voter registration rates, when registered, AAPI promises healthy rates of consistent voter participation, particularly when appropriate and adequate resources and support are provided. In seeking to cultivate a sustained culture in civic engagement, we have a responsibility to facilitate their engagement through comprehensive voter empowerment activities that are bilingual and bicultural. What is particularly exciting is the work that many of us on this panel are a part of within our own organizations, but also in coalition regionally and nationally.

Unfortunately, rather than facilitating the political participation of immigrants, some state and federal governments may be making it more difficult for immigrants as naturalized citizens to fully participate. On April 28, 2008, the Supreme Court by 6–3 rejected a Constitutional challenge to an Indiana law requiring voters to show government-issued photo I.D. before voting. This ruling is expected to open the doors for other states to move forward with wholesale voter disenfranchisement tactics against ethnic and language minority voters. In my submitted testimony I cite more clearly how minority young people and seniors will be disenfranchised because of this specific law.

In addition, more than one million legal permanent residents seeking to become U.S. citizens are now caught in the naturalization backlogs. The processing time will increase from seven months to 18 months. It's now estimated that half a million may not be processed before the November elections.

These naturalization backlogs are a grave form of backdoor disenfranchisement. While Dr. Emilio Gonzalez, director of USCIS, has resigned, it is not clear whether USCIS will begin to take serious action to enable immigrants to become full participants of American society.

In closing, not only is it important for Congress to focus on the enactment of a comprehensive immigration reform that is a workable solution to the problems of our nation's immigration system, but it must also work with local cities in focusing on key integration issues such as health care access, education, and civic engagement.

Taken as a whole, I urge the committee to consider the need for holistic approaches that promote the full integration of immigrants. Like their fellow Americans, immigrants arrived to contribute to the greatness and strength of this nation, and at the same time expect that Los Angeles and America as a receiving city and nation will provide them with equitable and fair opportunities to build a better life for themselves and their children and their community.

Thank you again.

Ms. SOLIS. I will note the time, but the information that this panel has provided is very striking and very, very timely. A lot of issues that were raised here regarding the federal government's lack of movement in processing applications for legal residents to become citizens is a big issue and problem. We realize also the detention of youngsters occurring right now and the separation of families is something that, in my opinion personally, is immoral. We have, some of us in Congress, begun to discuss that issue.

I do want to make clear that we do have legislation that I have introduced that would look at—it's called Families First Immigration Act, H.R. 3890. Whether or not it gets the light of day in committee is one thing, but the purpose is to try to enlighten our communities that there are individuals in Congress that realize that ICE and those involved in detention are actually violating the civil rights of many of our young people as well as parents that are being detained.

We know there have to be protocol set up. We have sent letters also to ICE to question them as to what authority they have in terms of rounding people up and bringing them in with the fact

that they are not providing adequate legal assistance or the opportunity to obtain legal assistance that is, seeking an attorney or counsel for many of those that are being detained.

We know that there is a series of major violations going on. This administration has been very reluctant in even corresponding back to members of Congress. That's how blatantly their disregard for our role as members of Congress.

We are going to continue to fight on that forefront and to see that we find protection for those that are being detained, whether it's in Texas, because we know of the horrendous separation of infants from mothers and what that is called, the posttraumatic stress that our communities are facing, not just the Latino, but also other immigrants that are being detained.

My understanding is that facility in Texas, as we are speaking, has many individuals from the Asian Pacific Islander countries as well as other Third World countries and that are not also having their personal needs addressed as well. We know that's a problem.

There was a horrible incident in Arkansas where a woman was detained for three days. They did not know she was being held. The enforcement authorities found her dead after three days. Nobody listened to her pleas and cries for assistance and they kind of forgot about her. That, to me, is something that I know our members of the Hispanic caucus and one of my good friends from the CBC, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson from Texas, has encouraged us to work on getting some answers from this administration on the treatment of immigrants and those individuals that are innocently being rounded up and incarcerated. We know that's an important issue.

It isn't just happening here in the United States. I think that's what we need to try to underscore here. Our role with the OSCE and Helsinki Commission. We are finding very treacherous incidents that are occurring every single day in European countries.

The most vulnerable population happens to be children and women is why we are having this particular hearing here today because we want to share those similarities, those things that are not just happening here but reflective of what's happening in other countries that are trying to achieve democracy.

We know our countries stands on very strong principles of democracy and social justice and civil rights, but we are failing, I think, in our constitutional duties to uphold those rights of everyone regardless of their legal status in this country.

I am very, very sympathetic to many of the statements that you all have made, but I also want to hear from you what the federal government—in particular, we haven't talked about the media and the portrayal of immigrants in the plight of this country, and if each of you could maybe tell me what your observations have been, that might be some of help to us as well.

We obviously have a bad public relations image with respect to migration and what values immigrants bring or don't bring to this country. If you could do that. We will start out with Kerry Doi and go through really quick. If you could summarize in a minute or so.

Mr. DOI. It's really a complex issue that I've been trying to battle in the last 40 years, the portrayal of Asians in the media. Yesterday over the radio some talk show host was using ching-chong

chinaman kinds of jokes, and it was absolutely ridiculous. Aren't we in the 21st century? But it's still going on. And it does hurt.

I mean, it continues the image of Asians being sneaky and all those kinds of things, which is why back in the '60s we decided to drop the term Oriental and recreate the term of Asian to self-identify and recreate a new image.

Ms. SALAS. I think the first thing that needs to happen is we need to understand that for the past, I would say, almost 15 years we have created "immigrant" synonymous to "criminal," and what has happened is that that is the excuse that the anti-immigrant, the native movement in this country, many of them who then are anchors on major newscasts. Certainly, Lou Dobbs, the O'Reilly Factor, and we can go on. They are not the only ones. In our local press, the newspaper articles that are written or the local television newscasts and how they portray immigrants. But the foundation of this possibility of treating and speaking of immigrants with such hate and venom is this idea that immigrants are equal to criminals.

We have to decriminalize the act of working, the act of trying to survive and provide for their families. I think through Congress and in all these other countries around the world where we are putting billions and billions of dollars on the enforcement and then castigating and then trying to round up immigrants as criminals. They are not. They are workers.

I think that needs to happen because then what ends up happening when you are talking to a Lou Dobbs or O'Reilly, they say, "Well, they have committed a crime and therefore we have to pursue them and treat them this way and we have to talk about them as one," and we have to reject that idea, reject it once, reject it twice, as many times as we can.

These are hard-working people who we should be proud of and who we should support and certainly not round up.

Ms. LEE. I wanted to agree with both speakers and say what we need to do is have Americans understand that the immigration problem is something that doesn't get fixed and benefit just immigrants but all Americans.

There are two key misperceptions. One is that there is a diminishing opportunity that immigrants are taking away and the feeling that there's a loss of American culture with the migration of immigrants. And that's why—for example, the assumption that immigrants don't want to speak English and so on and so forth. So I really believe that there are two key parts of it that we have to address.

One is integration and identification. If nonimmigrants can better identify immigrants as part of their own, their political perception will change. Political views are the same in themselves, but personal views and the attachment to individuals is what changes our communities.

I wanted to mention a case of Andrew Young, a Korean boy born in U.S. and raised in Ohio. His parents were deported when he was 14. The community around him was nonimmigrant, predominantly white, and predominantly Republicans and predominantly Baptists. They knew nothing of immigration, but they knew him and his family.

Because of his case, they take political views in terms of immigration. If this is what the immigration laws are going to do to people like him, those political views need to be changed.

What the media needs do is show how immigrants are more diverse but personalize the issue in a human way and not, as Angelica and others mentioned, criminalizing the person as someone as the outsider and someone that doesn't want to be integrated to the American culture.

Ms. SOLIS. Alcee, I'll turn it over to you.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much. Our witnesses have answered all of the questions. I guess if we have any follow-up at all, it should attend what I always say is the subject of solutions. As all of you were speaking, I was thinking of how interactive our overall society is and can be, and to write a, so-called comprehensive immigration reform measure, one good way to do that in today's society might be to start with just a clean slate and have everybody phone in, e-mail in, call in and say what ought to be on it and have a big slate. I don't think we are going to get it in this political system because we play too much gotcha, and somewhere along the lines I don't think people are fair-minded listeners.

I won't ask you any questions. I want to compliment and thank Hilda and the administration here at Cal State for accommodating us. Also Hilda's staff that have done a tremendous job in arranging this in a short period of time, as well as those that work with us on the Helsinki Commission. Additionally, we are particularly grateful of the law enforcement in our community here has been helpful and very accommodating to all of us as well.

You, as an audience, have been extremely patient, and I really, really appreciate it. I always feel that it would be better to not have the high table and a low table, but to have everybody—there are so many ideas in this audience, there's so much expertise right here. Earlier we were meeting. I offered a measure dealing with the Iraqi refugees, and a young lady seated here now actually lived in Iraq during the era of Saddam Hussein, and it would be interesting to have her perspective as well as those of you who are here from labor unions and knowing the extraordinary experiences that you have in that regard.

I wanted to end two ways, Madam Congresswoman, really three. I want to point to something Ms. Lee pointed out about the law that the Supreme Court upheld, that is, an Indiana law regarding persons requiring identification.

My mother died three and a half years ago, and because of her age and circumstances, she did not have photo identification and she never drove a car to any relative degree. When she did try to drive a car, she had a red '55 standard car, and we had a dog named True Boy, and the next day they tried to get True Boy to get into the car and he ran under the house. He wouldn't ride with my mama. She never had a car, she didn't have that. In Indiana last Tuesday in the election five nuns showed up to vote from a convent there in Indiana, and all of them were in their 90s. None of them had identification.

I mean, come on, what are we saying here? But for this nation to reconcile its problems, and I do want to speak to the momentary politics of Mr. McCain and Mr. Obama and Mrs. Clinton. They

don't know it yet and we don't feel it yet, but what they are doing by being a woman, an African-American man, and a white man, and there was a Latino in this race and there were other nationalities as well, but what they are doing is taking us to a better level.

When all is said and done, the residual from it will be that some level of tolerance will be manifested in a different way by virtue of the mere fact that they are in the position, particularly Obama and Clinton, to be president of the United States. I think that's a very healthy thing for all of us.

Ms. Salas, I agree with you so much about decriminalizing the criminal notion. 9/11 didn't help very much because it added to the word criminal, terrorist, and then everything became suspect, and it made it manifest even more for those that divide us as we go forward.

But I want to end with a story that I know from the experience of having lived on this earth for 71 years. In Arkansas, outside of a town named Hughes, Arkansas, a black singer was on his way to Texas with his band. He was a blues singer. His name was Percy Mayfield. He had a nephew who went on to some considerable fame, Curtis Mayfield. Percy Mayfield, on a foggy night when his band had finished and they were moving on, he and his band was struck by a white family from New York from the rear.

One of his band members died, and he was disfigured such that he only had a limited career after that, but he was a songwriter until he died. In those days, there were only three black doctors in Arkansas, and one came, and a white woman assisted him to be treated in the alcove of the emergency room of the hospital in Hughes, Arkansas. He couldn't convalesce in the place, so they took him to the home of a negro woman that was a widow. And he heard her pray and he wrote a song that I, as a little boy, also thought was just a blues song and danced close to my girlfriend. But the song sums up what we all could be about and what Hilda and I are about and Diane and those of us who are sensitive to these issues are about. It says, Father Richard, "Heaven is searching for all mankind"—and I would make his song be gender perfect today and say, "humankind understanding and peace of mind. If it's not asking too much, Lord, please send me someone to love."

In the refrain of the song he says, "A less man"—and I would make it gender perfect and say, "a less man or woman," he does not say, "unless Latino or Hispanic man," he doesn't say, "African or Asian man." He says "unless man," not Catholic man or Protestant man or Jewish man, "unless man puts an end to this damn noble sin, hate will put the world in a flame. What a shame."

Thank you all so very much for being here.

Ms. SOLIS. It's hard to follow Alcee sometimes because he's so eloquent and has moving stories that I enjoy hearing all the time. I want to reiterate that the testimony that all of our witnesses have given will be posted, so everyone can see the full length of their testimony.

I know five minutes doesn't give us enough time to hear everything that should be said, and the questioning could go on for one whole day on one subject matter, whether it's remittances, education, whether it's allowing access for our young people who are

undocumented to receive higher education and receive the full benefits of our society. Those are all issues we care about.

In the framework of this body, the OSCE, and my role as special representative of migration, I'm going to take back everything that we have learned here today and we will put it in a report and we will post it.

I would ask you to also share with other individuals who represent the various communities here. We have representatives from Honduras, from Guatemala, from Mexico, from our Asian Pacific countries, to also ask them what are they doing about this issue in reference to their own home countries and do they accept some of the principles that we talked about here today. Because this is about one family. It's not just one L.A. It's not just one L.A. County. It's not just one California. It's about the entire globe in the planet, and I think all of us can really learn from that.

So I ask you to think about that and to take that message back to your countries and to your representatives who also have a great deal to say in this body of politics that we have. I thank the witnesses for coming, and I really want to thank the audience. We have a number of people in the audience who I know may not have had the full extent of understanding everything that was said.

Part of it was because we didn't have interpreters, primarily in Asian, but also in Spanish. So I think our challenge will be to try to translate this information also and post it perhaps on my Web site in Spanish so people can read what took place here today because a lot of information here was very powerful, and the fact that we had Congresswoman Watson, Congressman Alcee Hastings, and this is probably one of the most important hearings that you will hear about that took place outside of Washington, D.C., where you had some of your premier leadership on this issue come forward and testify to members of the Congress.

With all that is going on surrounding the migration and immigration debate, I, like Alcee, am waiting after November to see, when we come back to the House in January, and we will begin to pull off the shelf the bills and bills that need to be implemented, and that is to address immigration reform and also to work better with our neighboring countries to see that we have better relationships with them as well.

We have done a great disservice, I think, with our friends south of the border. We have not outreached to them adequately. Even to our friends on the other parts of the continent to really allow them to understand us better, to really see the heart of the American people.

You may not always see that reflected in our leaders or so-called leadership in Washington, D.C., as it currently stands. That will change. I think many people across the country and across the world that I have run into, just based on this particular group, this one organization, are very, very delighted to see the change in our House administration.

That's what it is. It's about healing. There are some very bad and mixed feelings about how people perceive our country. If we can't treat our own citizens of our country well, we are not going to be respected by anyone outside of our own borders. We have a lot of work to do and a lot of what you say and said here today about

how we need to make improvements we take very strongly to heart.

I want to thank all of you for being here. The next part of our hearing or our tour will be to go to Olvera Street to see La Placita there and to meet with some people and also tour the Chinatown Action Service Center to hear about how immigrants are re-integrated into society and the positive things that go on as well as the challenges.

The federal government has a role to play here, and we obviously know we have failed in the last seven years. It's time for a change and we see it coming, and we want you also to understand that we are going to be calling on you. This is not a job of just two people. It is all of us working together.

So on behalf of the people that I represent in the 32nd District and also part of my role as representative on migration for the OSCE and also as a concerned daughter of immigrants, I understand the role that we play and take very deeply all the comments that have been made today. I want to thank you. Before we depart, Cal State L.A., on behalf of President Ross, he wanted me to present this to Alcee Hastings, who I understand is a close colleague of the president.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you.

Ms. SOLIS. I would say to the audience here that if you have any comments that you would like to make, you have our Web site, and you can also send us information and we would like to hear from you.

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