

Reform Immigration FOR America Campaign Calls For End of ICE's Ineffective 287g Program

Operator: Good day. All sides are now online in a listen-only mode. Later, there will be an opportunity to ask questions. It's now my pleasure to hand off the conference to your moderator, Ali Noorani. Please go ahead, sir.

Ali Noorani: Thank you. Good afternoon, good morning, everybody. My name is Ali Noorani. I'm the Executive Director of the National Immigration Forum and the Chair of the campaign to Reform Immigration for America. Today, we are gathered here as a campaign coalition to call for the end of the 287(g) Program. First, a little bit about the campaign. Reform immigration for America is a coalition of over 800 organizations across the country. Organizations including leadership from the faith community, labor, business, the immigrant community, civil rights, and others, all calling for comprehensive immigration reform in 2010. We come together today after a week of stinging news reports and investigative reports on Immigration and Customs Enforcement. About ten days ago, there was an initial report in the Washington Post about how internal memos within the Immigration and Customs Enforcement articulated the need for local officers to use quotas to meet particular enforcement quotas. That memo was retracted by Assistant Secretary Morton, but it was clear just from that first – that one report, that there are the management issue and the accountability issue ringing quite loudly within Immigration and Customs Enforcement. A few days later, there was a news report within the New York Times about evacuees from Haiti from the earthquake who had actually been detained for nearly three months, again another indicator of serious accountability and credibility problems within Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Then finally last Friday, the Office of Inspector General released the stinging report on the 287(g) Program which in essence allow or grant the immigration

enforcement authority to local law enforcement officials whether they are sheriff's officers or police officers, or even within jail facilities. The Inspector General's report indicated that ICE is unable to assess – that the program is unable to assess whether the 287(g)'s goals are being met, and laid out 33 recommendations for fundamental changes that need to be made to the program in order for it to be accountable and effective in its mission. Today, we gather to say our one recommendation to the administration is to terminate 287(g) and terminate it now. Sadly but truly, the 287(g) Program is really just more of the same failed policies of the Bush administration, and the Obama administration has not made good on its promise to change the immigration system and as long as programs like 287(g) remain in place, the Obama administration is not meeting its promise. Our speakers today come from a range of perspectives; Pablo Alvarado, Executive Director of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network; Eliseo Medina, International Executive Vice President from Service Employees International Union; and Crystal Williams, Executive Director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Gabe Gonzalez from the Center for Community Change was unable to make it unfortunately. Our first speaker will be Pablo Alvarado with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network. NDLO has been fighting this fight against 287(g) memorandum of agreement in communities across the country. Their membership is affected by this harsh, indiscriminate, unfair enforcement program like a few other parts of the immigrant community. So it's with pleasure and honor to follow the lead of NDLO in terms of calling for an end to the 287(g) agreement. So Pablo, please.

Pablo Alvarado: Thank you, Ali. Again, my name is Pablo Alvarado and I am the Director of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network which is a coalition made up of 41 community groups that work with day laborers in different fourteen states across the country. One of our member organizations is the

Macehualli Work Center in Maricopa County, Arizona where the 287(g) Program was made famous by Sheriff Joe Arpaio. The Office of the Inspector General report on 287(g) reveals what we have known for a very long time and that is that 287(g) Program and other initiatives that authorize local police to enforce immigration law are essentially a failure. These programs make our neighborhoods less safe because when police officers are seen as ICE agent, immigrants are less likely to report crimes and serve as witnesses. These programs imperil the civil rights for non-White members of our communities and they do essentially nothing to repair our unjust immigration system. Of course, we are very disturbed that the Obama administration has endorsed and moved so forcefully to expand the failed experiments of 287(g) in other similar programs. To us, it sends a very worrying signal in regards to the President's commitment to reform immigration law. In Maricopa County, the only thing that has actually changed since George W. Bush left office is that it is now the Obama administration that is enabling Sheriff Joe Arpaio to terrorize Latinos in the fourth largest city in America. In the past, the Federal law has been used to vindicate the civil rights of minorities. They have never been used to enable racist sheriffs like Joe Arpaio and others. The former head of the 287(g) Program, a gentleman by the name of Jim Pendergraph, the former sheriff of Mecklenburg County, Arizona made the following statement about the 287(g) Program. He said, "If you don't have enough evidence to charge someone criminally but you think he's illegal, we can make him disappear." Obviously, this for us is un-American and this is literally an invitation to violate the rights of people who are non-White. Fortunately, most of the police chiefs who heard this statement rejected the invitation and instead they issued a report that you can find in the Police Foundation website that indicate that it is the Federal government's duty to enforce immigration law and that our police officers have the responsibility to keep our communities safe. The OIG report is part of a

significant body of enough evidence to terminate the 287(g) Program. Frankly, I really don't understand why, it is such a mystery that the 287(g) Program; number one, still exists; and number two, that it's been expanded through its [2.0] version, the so-called Secure Communities initiatives. A few days – a couple of days actually after the President's State of the Union address, the head of ICE John Morton stated that he intends to have the Secure Communities programs in all jails in the United States, essentially turning jails into instruments of deportation by 2013. As you can see, the administration has a timeline for it by implementation of this program, but there's not a concrete timeline for the passage of a comprehensive immigration reform. This, in our view, is certainly not the change that we believe in and this is not certainly the change that we deserve. We need more reports like the OIG so that our country can have a conversation about whether we want to turn our local police into Joe Arpaio across the country or whether we as a country embrace immigrants by passing immigration reform with path to citizenship and political equality. Thank you.

Ali Noorani: Thank you, Pablo. Our next speaker is Crystal Williams, Executive Director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Crystal.

Crystal Williams: Thank you, Ali. The fact is that programs like 287(g) create needless fear in the ethnic communities and that fear harms law enforcement. The national organizations for police chiefs and for sheriffs have noted the way that their involvement in immigration enforcement has devastated their relationships with the communities that they serve. When things happen like accident victims being taken in for questioning on their immigration status instead of being taken to the hospital, something is wrong. When checkpoints are keeping people from going to church or going to the grocery store, or going to school, something is wrong. When scarce law

enforcement resources are being used on pretext to arrest Latino-looking people to explore their immigration status, something is wrong. We need enforcement, but we need smart enforcement. The stated goals of this administration to target serious criminals is laudable, but this isn't the way to do it. In fact, as the OIG report shows, those who have been targeted are not serious criminals, are not in most cases even criminals at all. This is a self-defeating way of going about law enforcement and is not serving this country or the local communities well. As a society that cares about civil rights and quite honestly, as taxpayers, we don't want to see these kinds of programs continuing when they are working poorly and working against the safety of our communities. It's time to retire 287(g) as the failure that it is, and we are urging the administration to take a hard look and to do the right thing, and to put 287(g) aside for good. Thank you.

Ali Noorani: Great. Thank you, Crystal. Our next speaker is Eliseo Medina, International Executive Vice President for SEIU. Eliseo, please.

Eliseo Medina: Thank you, Ali. The failure of 287(g) ICE enforcement program exemplifies the kind of deeper and broader issues that DHS is facing today. Their implementation does not match the stated goals. Poor training of rogue officers, mismanagement, and a failure in the chain of command has made it [impossible] for the agency to effectively target criminals. Instead, programs like 287(g) have just perpetuated and in some cases exacerbated the misguided immigration enforcement policies of the Bush years. When DHS first announced its enforcement goals including its increased focus on worksite I-9 audits, SEIU was optimistic that the Obama administration would clean up past wrongdoings. We had expected DHS to finally build an immigration enforcement program that would prioritize the abusive off-the-books employers who exploit on the community of immigrants and push down wages and working conditions

for all workers. Instead, the agency has replaced worksite raids with electronic raids. These worksite I-9 audits are not smart, targeted, or effective. They do nothing to curb behaviors of bad-acting employers and they get us further away from our shared goal of comprehensive reform. As a result of these senseless I-9 audits, thousands of workers are getting fired to no good end, creating a climate of fear and an uncertainty in workplaces across America. Thousands of workers once in the legitimate taxed economy are now being pushed into the underground economy which further drives down wages for US workers. The underground economy of sweatshops and cash payments benefits only the most abusive off-the-books employers who will never be reached by audits because they don't pay taxes or provide reports to the IRS. US citizens and lawful workers have been misidentified and mistakenly fired by their employers because they've been erroneously flagged in the worksite audits by a flawed Social Security database, and finally to add insult to injury, this is an inexpensive, ineffective program costing taxpayers \$17.1 billion per year, up 80% since 2005. On top of the [mounds] of failures from this wrongheaded approach, we continue to see reports of abuse and mismanagement at the most basic levels at DHS and ICE. Recent reports paint a clear picture of an agency that is completely out of control. Last week's reports by DHS's own Inspector General showed that local law enforcement enforcing immigration laws to 287(g) and other programs have received improper training with little to no oversight. ICE agents are acting more like Keystone Kops than serious well-managed officers, and of course we all saw the embarrassing reports of senseless deportation quotas and outrageous detention of Haitian earthquake victims from last week. Above all, we believe ICE's priorities must be to protect our nation's security and to help restore fairness for US workers, not to mess with busboys and janitors in a costly and futile game of musical chairs. ICE's incompetence and lack of focus hurts workers and undermines the

US tax base, but it doesn't make a broken immigration system work any better. When one in twenty workers is undocumented, we can't force our way out of this problem. Instead of solving problems, this kind of reckless enforcement without reform only succeeds in pushing undocumented workers deeper into the shadows and thus degrading the quality of life for the rest of us. In the end, we are nowhere closer to solving the broken immigration system and there communities lose, businesses lose, families lose, and America loses. America deserves a professional and well-managed enforcement agency with clear consistent objectives that sticks to the constructive mission of punishing criminals and the most abusive employers. We need a modern enforcement system that is part of a broader strategy to lift wages and standards for all workers. DHS must be able to distinguish between bad-actor employers and those who are merely caught in a broken system. They should focus scarce resources on the bad actors who intentionally take advantage of our dysfunctional immigration system to exploit workers and push down wages for everyone. That is why SEIU members across the country are turning out this week to hold vigils in front of ICE offices. Simply put, we will not take the ICE outrageous any longer. It's time for Secretary Napolitano and Assistant Secretary Morton to rein in ICE. ICE needs to stop operating like a headless monster. DHS and ICE must act immediately to get their house in order and restore faith in the agencies' competence. That means they must [set up] sensible enforcement priorities that are good for workers, good for our country, and are responsively implemented at all levels. Of course over the long term, the only real solution to our immigration problems is comprehensive immigration reform. Instead of pandering to extremists who fantasize about mass deportation, Secretary Napolitano and President Obama must intensify their efforts to pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform this year. It is the only solution and

it is the only way to restore sanity to the broken immigration system.
Thank you, Ali.

Ali Noorani: Thank you, Eliseo. Collin, if we could get the instructions for the Q&A please.

Operator: Certainly, sir. At this time, ladies and gentlemen, if you do have a question, simply press the star then one on your touchtone phone. You may withdraw your question at any time by pressing the pound key. Once more, star/one to ask a question. Our first question comes to us from George Condon from Congress Daily. Go ahead, please. Your line is open.

George Condon: Great. Thank you. I wanted to ask you a broader question following up on the last point that was made about Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Is there disappointment that the White House – that the President has been so out of this and not pushing this, or is there an understanding that the politics of it divides the Democrats and maybe just energizes the Republican opponents and the conservatives? What is the feeling about this and what do you think is the time table that we're going to see from the White House?

Ali Noorani: Eliseo, would you like to take that?

Eliseo Medina: Well, let me just say that we all understand that there had been other things that the President has been wrestling with, but the time has come to finally tackle this problem because it's getting worse, not better, and I believe that there is no division on this with the American people. Poll after poll shows that well over 2/3 of the American people want this system to be fixed. They know that it doesn't work, and for Republicans

who somehow think that this creates a political advantage, I think that if you look over the last several election cycles, every candidate that has run on immigration reform has lost, just ask President [Tancredo] how well his administration is going. I think that on this question, the President needs to step up his efforts to try and get this done. The Congress needs to do its part. This should be a win-win for everybody. Business agrees that we need Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Labor agrees. Communities of faith agree and the community as well. So now is the time.

George Condon: If I can ask a follow on that. What is the impact on the November election if the White House doesn't push this, if we don't see any move for Comprehensive Immigration Reform?

Eliseo Medina: Let me just – Ali, do you want me to follow up on that?

Ali Noorani: Go for it, please.

Eliseo Medina: Well, let me just say that the immigrant community and the Latino community are paying very close attention to what's going on with this debate. You saw on March 21 over 200,000 people come from all over the country to our nation's capital, but what is not properly known is that around the country, there were rallies being held simultaneously and that attracted somewhere in the vicinity of another hundred thousand people. So we actually have 300,000 people that came out and they were unions and business, and churches, and immigrants, and citizens, and everybody had one message. We need this fixed. So I think that the communities are expecting action and are also going to be paying attention as to who is on our side and who is not, and I think that they're going to be guided on their votes by how – who they think is on their side and who is not, and I think that I would counsel both parties to pay very close attention because

the immigrant and Latino vote is getting to a point where they can be a deciding vote in places all around the country.

Ali Noorani:

I would only add – this is Ali, and the only thing I would add is that message to whether the administration or Democrats or Republicans in Congress is “No more excuses.” The politics of this have never been better. The policy need for this has never been more clear. The political pundits in the Democratic Party are saying over and over again, this is an issue that is good politically for the Democratic Party. The grownups in the Republican Party who actually have the long-term viability of the Republican Party in mind are saying over and over again, this is an issue we need to get behind, this is an issue we need to get off the table and get to a win. In terms of a policy need like Eliseo said, it is across the board; business, labor, faith communities, civil rights, African-American, the immigrant community. People are demanding a solution and that they are demanding this solution be moved and passed now. So the conventional wisdom is that the politics aren’t right, but the reality is that the politics and the substance have never been better and the time to do it is now.

Pablo Alvarado:

I’d like to add this that I am a new voter. I voted for the first time for President Obama and I was proud to do so because I believe in the change that he promoted, but I am disappointed at the direction that the administration is taking, and I will personally consider my vote if things continue the way they are going, if we see more raids taking place, if we see the expansion of these programs such as the 287(g) agreement and other similar programs, then I will think of who I’m going to vote for, and of course I’m not going to run to the Republican Party and I don’t think that there’s going to be a massive exodus from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party, but some people would choose to stay home and that’s what I may do if I don’t see real changes taking place.

Ali Noorani: Great. Thank you. Can we get the next question please?

Operator: Certainly. Our next question comes to us from [Kenneth Tan] with the LA Times. Go ahead please.

[Kenneth Tan]: Hi! I'd just like to ask a follow-up question like last week, some of the leaders actually met with the RNC and then you guys said one thing, but the New York Times on the Caucus Blog also reported that Chairman Steele actually denied most of the things that you guys said about what – about how he like saw the meeting. I'm just curious what is your response to that?

Ali Noorani: Well, sure. Let me be clear here. That meeting with Chairman Steele was with the members of the Fair Immigration Reform Movement. There's nobody on the call who was part of that meeting and that back and forth...

[Kenneth Tan]: That's right.

Ali Noorani: ...but I think what is clear is that leadership is needed from the Republican Party. They have to step up to the plate and get to work on a bipartisan solution for immigration reform. This has always been an issue from the days of Reagan to the days of Bush. This has always been an issue that has enjoyed Republican leadership, and the leadership of this Republican Party whether to the RNC or within the House or the Senate, wants to turn their back on immigration reform and the demand from the majority of Americans [is to task Congress with] immigration reform. I think they do it at their own peril. Eliseo, Crystal, Pablo, would you like to add to that?

Eliseo Medina: Well, this is Eliseo. Let me just say that while I was not at that meeting, I do know all of the people that were there, representatives of community groups. I've known them for a long time and I have full confidence in what they reported out on the commitments that were made. I would just say that I'm very disappointed that Chairman Steele after seeming to have placed himself on the right side of history, on the right side of good public policy issue, should have backtracked, because I think he made the right decision, he should have stuck with it.

Ali Noorani: Can we get the [crosstalk]...? Go ahead.

[Kenneth Tan]: If I could ask a follow-up like one of the key things that has emerged over a possible bipartisan bill, it's the recruitment of a second Republican to support this bill other than Senator Graham. I mean I understand that different immigration groups have been lobbying the [bill]. I just want to ask if you guys are confident that the second Republican can – I mean you can get support of a second Republican in Congress right now?

Ali Noorani: As legislation moves forward, I am very confident we will pick up two, three, four, five, six Republicans because the policy and the politics of immigration reform will make complete sense to them. However, I dismiss the notion that we need a second Republican at the outset to start the legislative process. At the local and national level, Republicans and Democrats need to belly up to the bar and get to work, but there is no reason that Senators Graham and Schumer cannot continue the leadership that they've shown. Crystal, Pablo, Eliseo?

Crystal Williams: I'd totally agree. There are Republicans who will be willing to engage and willing to involve themselves in this. There's no magic to a second

Republican at this point, but I think the Republicans are there and will eventually show themselves.

Ali Noorani: Can we get the next question please?

Operator: Certainly, our next question comes to us from Santiago [Tavaro] with Notimex. Go ahead please. Your line is open.

Santiago [Tavaro]: Yes, what is your position in the Secure Communities Program and also what is your strategy in the coming months for immigration for in terms of fundraising activities and also voter's registration of votes?

Ali Noorani: Pablo, do you want to talk about the Secure Communities Program?

Pablo Alvarado: Sure. Thank you for the question. Actually, when the 287(g) Program was conceived, it was done in secrecy and the mechanisms for controls weren't there, for oversight weren't there, and it's exactly the same that's happening with the Secure Communities Program. We don't know the [unintelligible]. That is why my organization along with the Center for Constitutional Rights has submitted the Freedom of Information Act about this program and how it relates to the 287(g) Program. So we want to know where it's going and we obviously believe that when you turn local jails into instruments of deportation, you're going to see a lot of people who are not serious criminals being deported and that's precisely what the Secure Communities Program is already doing. So again, I mean we are trying to get as much detail as possible so that we can determine how we're going to fight back.

Ali Noorani: Then Eliseo, do you want to lay out some of the plans that SEIU has in the pipeline for the weeks and months ahead?

Eliseo Medina: Well, from SEIU's perspective as I've mentioned earlier, we are beginning to step our efforts all across the country to begin to bring to the attention of the public the failures of ICE and the failed enforcement strategy. We're doing it by our members who are being adversely impacted going out and publicly bringing this message to the communities and we're going to be doing that throughout the country. We've already had begun in Seattle. We are going to be this week in Minnesota, Sacramento, San Jose, Los Angeles, Oakland, and in Boston with Florida, the New York, and Chicago, and many other places upcoming, and we're going to be keeping up this conversation not only with the general public but we're also going to be having this conversation with the Congress, and at the same time pointing out that immigration reform is the only rational sensible solution to this problem, and we're going to be continuing to step that up and we're heading into a situation, we're going to be taking this message to our members in the general public and mobilizing them to begin to go meet and talk with their members of Congress and Senators with an eye of not only fixing this problem with the DHS but also getting commitments for CIR, and then leading up to November, because we want to make sure that in November, every Latino, every immigrant, and every union member shows up at the polls well informed and committed to voting for people who have pro-immigrant, pro-worker agenda.

Ali Noorani: Santiago, in terms of the broader campaign coalition we have a few things that are in action. One is that we are approaching members of Congress, House and Senate across the country to get them on the record in support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform in 2010. In fact, Senator Gregg from New Hampshire made such a statement last week at a town hall meeting. So number one is making sure that it is clear to the President, the Senate majority leader, and to the Speaker of the House that the support

for Comprehensive Immigration Reform is broad and it is deep. The second thing is that this weekend on April 10, there are events happening across the country that will be attracting upwards of 5,000 to 10,000 people in Seattle, Las Vegas, Chicago, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, and then finally on May 1, we are putting into place massive mobilizations across the country with events coming together of significant scale in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Tennessee, and others, and in fact on May 1 or just before May 1, we will be releasing a progress report on members of Congress to tell the public who is joining with the majority of the Americans in calling for Comprehensive Immigration Reform in 2010 and who is standing in the way of the progress that the majority of the Americans are demanding.

Santiago [Tavaro]: Thank you.

Ali Noorani: Can we get the next question please?

Operator: Certainly, sir. Just a reminder, ladies and gentlemen, if you do have a question, star/one on your touchtone phone. We'll now move on to Bill Fisher with Inter Press News. Go ahead please. Your line is open.

Bill Fisher: Yes, hi! Does anybody remember what the situation was like before there was the DHS and before there was ICE?

Ali Noorani: Crystal or Eliseo, would you like to take that?

Eliseo Medina: Well, you're asking that's going way, way back. I can tell you that we used to have a much different system than we have now. In the old days, we still had a problem with a broken immigration system, but we had basically a system where people would come and they would work several

months – four, five, six months and then go home. They didn't need to bring their families. There was a circular pattern of immigration because it was not the same kind of difficulties getting into this country as we do today. Now when DHS and all of this enforcement stuff happen, what winds up happening is now they started putting up fences on the border, they started putting a lot more people, and the people that they were catching are not drug smugglers or criminals, but janitors, farm workers, nannies, and what they started doing is pushing people further and further out into the desert, to the point where we now have hundreds and hundreds of people that die every year to exposure or because they get assaulted by criminals along the border, and then once they do make it into the US, it's become so difficult to return home that they're in essence trapped here. That circular pattern no longer exists. So what this – perversely, what this whole system has done then is force people to stay here because to do otherwise would be extremely difficult to handle. So I think this is what we need to do. This is why Comprehensive Immigration Reform would then restore the circularity that we need so that we can have balance between labor needs and workers wanting to come here, and this is one of our big issues at SEIU where the current situation is that they claim that they're trying to get control of immigration, but the only way you can do that is coming up with a rational system that actually would work, that would legalize people here, and that would also make it possible to channel future flows through a phased legal and orderly process rather than what we have today, and so I think that what we have now is a much worse situation than we had before the DHS and all of this ICE activities.

Crystal Williams: I will say it doesn't matter whether the back of the jacket says INS or the back of the jacket says ICE. What matters is the policies that are being carried out, and the policies that are being carried out now are self-defeating. Many of these policies came into existence around the

same time or following the formation of DHS. We can argue back and forth as to whether those two things had anything to do with one another, but the focal point now has to be on what the policies are, why they're not working, and why we need reform. We needed reform in 2003 before DHS came into existence and we need reform all the more now. So I don't want to see us get distracted by structure when the fact is it's policy that's our problem.

Eliseo Medina: Something that wasn't there before DHS is actually there has always been collaboration between Federal agents and local police. That was happening before DHS, but it gained momentum and legitimacy when DHS was created. That's when we began seeing more collaboration as we see it today. There was less racial profiling practice being implemented across the country and of course, there were attacks on immigrants but not at the scale that we are seeing right now which is like practices that we haven't seen – that our country hasn't seen in a generation. Take a look at Arpaio and the Secure Communities Program being expanded all over the [country]. That's why we need to terminate both the 287(g) Program and the Secure Communities Program.

Bill Fisher: Could I have a brief follow-up? [Crosstalk] You seemed to be suggesting that while things were not great back in INS days, they were better than they are today. Is that a correct interpretation? You seemed to be saying that the DHS and ICE have caused more problems than it solved.

Ali Noorani: Well, I think what's happening – the fact is that the system that we have now is broken and needs to be fixed and...

Bill Fisher: Is this Ali?

Ali Noorani: I'm sorry?

Bill Fisher: Is this Ali?

Ali Noorani: Yes, this is Ali. I'm sorry.

Bill Fisher: Thank you. Okay.

Ali Noorani: So the fact is that the system that we have now is broken and needs to be fixed and whether you compare it to the days of INS or yesterday, the problem is that our immigration system is not serving our nation's interest and the Congress and the President need to get to work.

Pablo Alvarado: Well, and we see a lot of rogue police in Sheriff Departments across the country, and I've seen an increase in enforcement against day laborers. I work with that community, so I have seen it. It intensified particularly after September 11. So I've seen the changes and yes, it is worse – at least for the community that I work with, it is a lot worse.

Eliseo Medina: This is Eliseo. Let me just say picking from is bad or worse better? From my point of view, the system has been broken for a long time. It's getting worse as time goes by and unless we take action to fix it, we're going to wind up spending a lot more money on enforcement that is ineffective. We're going to wind up with a lot more churning at the workforce. We're going to wind up with the growth of the underground economy, with attendant loss not only of benefits for workers but also to the tax base, and the erosion of wage standards for all workers. I think that the key question is that where we stand today is an absolutely critical moment that we cannot fix this economy unless we figure out a way in which all workers can have the same rights and responsibilities, and we can only do that with

a Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill. Otherwise, we are going to just continue repeating the mistakes of the past only at a much worse level.

Ali Noorani: Okay. Thank you. Can we get the next question please?

Operator: Yes, sir. The next question comes to us from Ivan Cruz with Que Pasa Media. Go ahead please.

Ivan Cruz: Hello. Yes, I would like to know if – do you believe that something is going to happen, something is going to change with the DHS report about the 287(g)? Do you believe the ICE will adopt all the recommendations and if they could fix the actual situation?

Ali Noorani: This is Ali. I believe that ICE has realized that their enforcement system they have in place is broken. We are here today as a campaign coalition demanding that they fix the problem and that means that they end the 287(g) program. I don't think – we're not going to settle for anything less and it's not up to us to – and that's what it is, is that that's our demand, and ICE has a problem, they have an accountability problem, they have a credibility problem, and it is clear that this program is not keeping our community safe.

Eliseo Medina: I would just add – this is Eliseo, they are doing it costing the taxpayers a ton of money, and they're going to need to fix it because the problem is not going to go away and neither are we.

Ali Noorani: Thank you, and then are there any other questions please?

Operator: Yes, sir. We now go to the side of Armando Garcia with Western American News. Go ahead please.

Armando Garcia: Yes, thank you. I've got a question. Now all the efforts asking for immigration reform, is that included in the legislation to get rid of the 287(g) Program? Also, I need to know how many cities across the country are enforcing this particular program?

Ali Noorani: Crystal, do you want to take that question?

Crystal Williams: Yes, on the first question, I have – as you know, the reform bill has not actually been written yet. We hope that we would see the elimination of 287(g) in any reform bill. I, unfortunately, cannot tell you – I don't have it at my fingertips – the number of police agencies that are [signed] up under 287(g). As a percentage of police agencies, it's not a very large number, but as a matter of impact, it's a very impactful number and the activities that have taken place under it have had a tremendous impact. Even communities that are not under 287(g), the communities have responded and in some cases the police departments have responded as though they are, and so it's having a spreading of the impact beyond its numbers.

Pablo Alvarado: Yes, and if I may add, the bill that Congressman Gutierrez introduced, also the termination of 287(g) to further answer to the first question. Then the second aspect is that there are 66 287(g) agreements across the country and 144 Secure Communities agreements across the country as well.

Armando Garcia: Okay. Thank you.

Ali Noorani: Thank you. Can we get the next question please?

Operator: Just a reminder, ladies and gentlemen, star/one if you do have a question. At this time, I'm showing no further questions.

Ali Noorani: Well, I want to thank everybody on the press for calling in today. I want to thank Pablo Alvarado with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, Crystal Williams with the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and Eliseo Medina with Service Employees International Union for joining us on today's panel. Look forward to talking to everybody again very soon and again our single recommendation to DHS today is to end the 287(g) program. Thank you very much.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, this does conclude today's teleconference. You may disconnect at this time.

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