

Proposals for Immigrant Restrictions in the 110th Congress:

- *Harmful to Citizens and Legal Immigrants*
- *Unnecessary, Wasteful, and Divisive*

- Undocumented immigrants have never been eligible for major federal welfare programs, even before the immigrant restrictions of welfare reform were enacted in 1996.
- The 1996 welfare law created additional restrictions on immigrants, but also incorporated exceptions to the restrictions that protect the life and safety of all persons.
- Since Congress' inability in 2007 to enact a comprehensive immigration reform law to fix the nation's broken immigration system, Members have been advancing proposals to restrict immigrant participation in many programs, including:
 - children's health care
 - tax rebates
 - Social Security
 - nutrition assistance
 - foster care
 - lead-based paint testing
 - unemployment compensation
 - homeownership and rental housing relief, including housing for veterans
- The many proposals advanced in Congress usually seek to target immigrants in one of the three ways:
 1. New documentation requirements to prove citizenship or immigration status.
 2. English-only requirements that attack the margins of civil rights law.
 3. Restatements of current law that trumpet the exclusion of undocumented immigrants
- The immigrant restriction proposals are hastily-drafted, and thus often lead to unintended negative consequences.
 - Enacted provisions have had an overwhelmingly restrictive impact on citizens and lawfully-residing immigrants.
 - The difficulty of administering impractical and undesirable restrictions creates administrative burdens at the state and local level that undermine the effectiveness of critical government programs.
 - Bad law is difficult to repeal and revise, and once a problem is mistakenly assumed to exist, trying to fix the legislation re-opens the false debate.

Increasing restrictions on participation in services and benefits by some persons in our communities costs society by deepening the suffering of the most vulnerable among us and by promoting divisiveness.