



# Agenda Cover Memorandum

Meeting Date: April 22, 2013

Meeting Type:  COW (Committee of the Whole)  City Council  Budget Workshop

Item Title: Resolution on Immigration Reform

Action Requested:

Approval

For discussion

Feedback requested

For your information

Staff Contact: Shawn Hamilton, Acting City Manager

Phone Number: 847-318-5205

Email Address: shamulto@parkridge.us

## Background:

For several years the Northwest Municipal Conference has been partnered with various organizations to further improve immigrant integration within member communities. In 2008, the NWMC Board approved a proposal to partner with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) to develop programs that assist immigrants. In 2009, HIAS and the Conference surveyed the membership on immigrant awareness and services provided to the immigrant population.

The NWMC formed the Immigrant Integration Committee in September 2010 to further "develop programs and services to promote immigrant integration and civic engagement in NWMC member communities." The 2011-12 work plan included working with HIAS on the Partnership for Inclusive Communities (HIAS still seeking grant funding to implement the initiatives) and development of a best practices guidebook in conjunction with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. (in progress)

The NWMC Board received a presentation at the February 2013 meeting from Addison Mayor and Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Diversity Task Force Chair Larry Hartwig on a report from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs on immigration reform, [http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/files/About\\_Us/Press\\_Releases/FY13\\_Releases/130228.aspx](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/files/About_Us/Press_Releases/FY13_Releases/130228.aspx). He requested that individual mayors sign on as supporters of the immigration framework identified in the report. The NWMC Immigrant Integration Committee then met on March 29, and, as part of their agenda, developed the model resolution for adoption by NWMC members that calls on congress to take action on immigration reform and lists a number of parameters.

By passing the resolution, Park Ridge would join other municipal communities in "recognizing that the immigration system in the United States is in need of meaningful reform" and asks the federal government to pass "comprehensive legislation to reform the country's immigration system". It further states that we "support immigration reform that provides a clear and earned path for citizenship...". I recommend that the Council pass this resolution and join other Northwest Municipalities in its support. Staff would like direction as to whether or not the Council would support this resolution. The resolution would be brought back to the P&R COW in May.



# Agenda Cover Memorandum

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Recommendation: Provide direction to staff to place resolution on May P&R COW for approval.

Budget Implications:

Does Action Require an Expenditure of Funds:  Yes  No

If Yes, Total Cost:

If Yes, is this a Budgeted Item:

Yes  No  Requires Budget Transfer

If Budgeted, Budget Code (Fund, Dept, Object)

Attachments:

- Press release on immigration reform
  - Executive Summary Metro Mayor Task Force Report
  - Draft resolution
-



## Midwestern Business and Civic Leaders Call for Immigration Reform at DC Summit

*Bipartisan Group Offers Recommendations and Outlines Priorities for the Midwest to Ensure U.S. Economic Competitiveness*

February 28, 2013 WASHINGTON - At an immigration summit in Washington today, a diverse and bipartisan group of Midwestern business and civic leaders will release a report urging immigration reform to ensure regional and national economic competitiveness. Former Midwest Governors Chet Culver and Michael Rounds as well as former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and Crate and Barrel Co-Founder Carole Segal will discuss the report from a bipartisan task force convened by The Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Follow [@ChicagoCouncil](#) and [#MidwestImmigration](#) for live tweeting from the event starting at 9:30 am ET. Download the report at [MidwestImmigration.org](#).

"Like the rest of America, the Midwest is frustrated with federal immigration policy, and states are coping as best they can," said Michael Rounds, former governor of South Dakota, and task force co-chair. "But the region's growing need for immigrant workers and its deepening appreciation of the talent and vitality they bring require Midwesterners to be active in demanding better answers from Washington."

The task force report, *US Economic Competitiveness at Risk: A Midwest Call to Action on Immigration Reform*, analyzes the role of immigration in ensuring the Midwest's future competitiveness and prosperity and identifies necessary policy directions or interventions. It argues immigrants are essential to the region's and the nation's future prosperity and key to economic revitalization.



**Full Report (PDF)**

**Executive Summary (PDF)**

**TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS**

Chet Culver, former Governor, Iowa

Richard M. Daley, former Mayor, City of Chicago

Joe Loughrey, former President and COO, Cummins, Inc

Doris Meissner, Senior Fellow, Migration Policy Institute

Clare Muñana, President, Ancora Associates Inc.

M. Michael Rounds, former Governor, South Dakota

## TASK FORCE MEMBERS

### Task Force Cochairs

**Chet Culver**, *Former Governor, Iowa*

**Richard M. Daley**, *Former Mayor, City of Chicago*

**Joe Loughrey**, *Former President and COO, Cummins Inc.*

**Doris Meissner**, *Senior Fellow, Migration Policy Institute; former Commissioner, US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)*

**Clare Muñana**, *President, Ancora Associates, Inc.*

**Mike Rounds**, *Former Governor, South Dakota*

**John W. Rowe**, *Chairman Emeritus, Exelon Corporation*

**Samuel C. Scott III**, *Former CEO, Corn Products International, Inc.; Chairman, Chicago Sister Cities International Program*

**Carole Segal**, *Cofounder, Crate & Barrel*

### Task Force Members

**Ismael Ahmed**, *Associate Provost, University of Michigan-Dearborn*

**Lizabeth Ardisana**, *CEO, ASG Renaissance*

**Dave Bender**, *Executive Director, ACEC-Illinois*

**Allert Brown-Gort**, *Faculty Fellow, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame*

**Ellen Carmell**, *Director, Bridging America Project, American Jewish Committee*

**Frank L. Douglas**, *President and CEO, Austen BioInnovation Institute*

**Jim Edgar**, *Former Governor, Illinois*

**Ricardo 'Ric' Estrada**, *President and CEO, Metropolitan Family Services*

**José C. Feliciano**, *Partner, Baker & Hostetler; Chairman, Hispanic Roundtable*

**Katherine Fennelly**, *Professor of Public Affairs, Humphrey School, University of Minnesota*

**Mike Fernandez**, *Corporate Vice President, Cargill, Inc.*

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**Enrique E. Figueroa, PhD**, *Associate Professor and Director, Roberto Hernandez Center, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

**Paul H. Fitzgerald**, *Story County Iowa Sheriff; Former President, National Sheriffs Association*

**Tim Flakoll**, *State Senator, North Dakota*

**Bob Fox**, *Founder and CEO, Newspace Inc.; Founder and Board Chair, Casa de Salud*

**Suresh V. Garimella**, *Associate Vice President for Engagement, Purdue University*

**Mark Gerstle**, *Vice President, Cummins Inc.*

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**Bob Holden**, *Former Governor, Missouri*  
**Reverend Dennis H. Holtschneider, CM**, *President, DePaul University*  
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**Jeanette Hernandez Prenger**, *Founder and CEO, ECCO Select*  
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**John Rosenow**, *CEO and Co-Owner, Rosenholm-Wolfe Dairy and Cowsmo Inc.*  
**Elena Segura**, *Director, Office for Immigrant Affairs, Archdiocese of Chicago*  
**Alejandro Silva**, *Chairman and CEO, Evans Food Group*  
**Steve Tobocman**, *Director, Global Detroit*  
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**David Vásquez-Levy**, *Campus Pastor, Luther College*  
**Baldemar Velasquez**, *President, Farm Labor Organizing Committee*  
**Reverend Norman G. Wilson**, *Coordinator, Intercultural Studies Department, Indiana Wesleyan University, The Wesleyan Church*

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## **Lead Writer/Project Director**

**Tamar Jacoby**, *President and CEO, ImmigrationWorks USA*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Immigration reform for America's future

The future of the United States depends on far more than economic recovery: the holy grail for the long term is economic competitiveness. Can US firms compete with companies in other countries? Are our industries and our workers as productive as others? Is productivity growing as fast in America as it is elsewhere in the world? Many ingredients go into a nation's competitiveness. Yet when America or any region of America starts to fall short on too many criteria, companies making decisions about where to build plants, open laboratories, and create jobs go elsewhere.

At the top of the skill ladder and at the bottom, immigrants are an essential piece of America's global competitiveness. We as a nation must work harder to attract and retain immigrant talent and avoid wasting the potential of the immigrants already here.

Our problem: the nation's broken immigration system is holding back the region's economic growth and clouding its future. Worst of all, there is little we Midwesterners can do about the failings of federal immigration law. As the stories throughout this report illustrate, states, municipalities, educators, employers, faith leaders, and others across the Midwest are stepping up with local solutions to help newcomers thrive in our communities. But only Congress can do what needs to be done: create an immigration system that works for the Midwest—for our businesses and our communities.

### Key to competitiveness: A workforce that meets our needs

Despite increasing educational attainment across all levels of society, the US workforce alone is not educated enough to sustain a globally competitive knowledge economy. Sixty to 70 percent of the students in American computer science and electrical engineering graduate programs are foreigners on temporary visas. Twenty-five percent of US patents are held by innovators born abroad.

One-quarter of the high-tech firms launched in the United States between 1995 and 2005 were founded by immigrants. These newcomers don't supplant US workers. They enhance American productivity and create jobs. We need their talent to sustain our economic edge—and will need it increasingly in years ahead.

America also needs less-skilled immigrants. Long-term demographic and educational trends are changing the size and makeup of the native-born workforce. US families are having fewer children. Baby boomers are retiring. Perhaps most significant, Americans are increasingly educated. In 1960 half of the native-born men in the US workforce had dropped out of high school and were doing unskilled work. Today, the figure is around 10 percent. Much of the economy, particularly in the Midwest, is undergoing an industrial restructuring that makes less-skilled workers in specific industries even more essential than they were in the past.

The economic downturn has done nothing to change the fundamental educational and demographic trends that make foreign workers essential for American prosperity. Even with today's high unemployment, employers in many sectors—high-tech, agriculture, the seasonal economy—need immigrants to keep their businesses open and contributing to the economy. As the economy improves, this need will only grow. Global talent and the less-skilled workforce alike will play an essential role in the nation's economic recovery.

We must make the right choices about immigrants at both ends of the job ladder. We need innovators and investors, and we need a legal way for low-skilled immigrants to come to the United States to work.

### The Midwest—Successful past, microcosm of the future

When Americans boast that they are a nation of immigrants, the claim rests in large part on the experience of the Midwest. But the Midwest is also a microcosm of the three principal challenges fac-

ing the United States today as the nation grapples with a new wave of immigration: the need for labor at both the top and bottom of the economy, the need for better enforcement of immigration law, and the dilemmas posed by millions of unauthorized immigrants already living and working in the United States.

In the 21st century, as in the past, parts of the Midwest—major cities, meatpacking towns, some rural areas—are among the most diverse parts of America. Lao and Vietnamese refugees are spread across the region. Dearborn is the established capital of Arab America. Minneapolis-St. Paul is emerging as the capital of US Hmong and US Somalis. The wave of Bosnian refugees that arrived in the 1990s joined older Bosnian communities in St. Louis, Chicago, and Grand Rapids. And many traditional Midwest sectors would be at a loss without foreign workers. Some 40 percent of the dairy workers in Wisconsin are Mexican, as is much of the labor force in meat and other food processing plants across the region. Twenty-five percent of all physicians and surgeons in the Midwest are foreign born.

As recently as 1980, most of the towns now transformed by foreign workers were settled, homogeneous communities, 80 to 100 percent white. In some places, tensions flared when the newcomers arrived. But there have also been other types of responses, strongest in the communities where the influx has been most dramatic—a quintessentially Midwestern reaction that could hold the seeds of a new American response to immigration. It has come from many quarters, some of them surprising: local ministers, concerned neighbors, the town librarian, the mayor, a local bank, sometimes the company that owns the processing plant.

Whatever the source, the impulse is the same—to find a way to deal pragmatically with the newcomers transforming the region. Across the Midwest, settled residents have recognized the way newcomers are revitalizing their communities, demographically but also in other ways. And for all their initial suspicion, after a while many seem to recognize a spirit not unlike their own—hard-working, church-going, family-oriented people who make the region a better place.

Like the rest of America, the Midwest is hostage to federal immigration policy, and states are left to cope—or not cope—the best they can.

But that doesn't mean the Midwest must remain silent. On the contrary, the region's growing need for immigrant workers and its deepening appreciation of the talent and vitality they bring give Midwesterners a unique role—and unique responsibility—in spearheading the call for better answers from Washington.

## What the Midwest needs from immigration reform

- **A world-class skilled workforce.** Economists, business leaders, and other experts agree: the most important ingredient of competitiveness is innovation, and the key to innovation is a skilled workforce. Issues to be addressed include the H-1B visa process, the L-1 visa process, work authorization for the spouses of temporary high-skilled workers, per-country caps for employment-based green cards, and the severe bottleneck—one million people waiting in a queue—for high-skilled workers applying for permanent residence.
- **Foreign-born and home-grown entrepreneurs.** The Midwest cannot hope to keep up with other regions or international competitors without a vital entrepreneurial sector, but historically the region has had some trouble attracting and retaining this talent. Business incubators in immigrant communities, microloan programs, and other initiatives to make credit available can make a difference. But the heartland needs Congress and the immigration service to do their part, increasing visas for foreign-born entrepreneurs and streamlining the process.
- **STEM students.** Many of the skilled immigrants who achieve the most success in the United States enter the country at an early age. They arrive as students, graduate to temporary visas, and then, eventually, receive permanent visas or green cards. If the Midwest is to remain competitive, it needs to facilitate this trajectory. But without help from the federal government, there is only so much the Midwest can do to ease the path for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) students who want to stay and work in the United States. As of 2009 some 260,000 foreign students, graduate and undergraduate, were working toward STEM degrees at US universities.

How many will stay to make careers in the United States? The Midwest's future depends on retaining a robust share of them.

- **Legal entry for less-skilled workers.** Critical as high-skilled immigrants are to the economic future of the Midwest, the region also needs less-skilled immigrants to fill jobs when no willing and able US workers are available—especially in communities with stagnant or declining populations. We must bring the number of visas available more into line with US labor needs. This is not just critical for our economic future. It's also the key to effective enforcement. The best antidote to illegal immigration is a legal immigration system that works. And without a legal immigration system that works, we are all but sure to find ourselves with another huge unauthorized population in our midst 10 or 15 years from now.
- **A seasonal workforce.** Midwest seasonal employers who can't find enough US workers need to be able to hire foreign workers quickly, easily, and legally, while workers seeking to enter the United States on a temporary or seasonal basis need to be able to do so without fear of exploitation or abuse from employers or recruiters in their home countries. Only Congress can craft what's needed: new or improved, workable, streamlined visa programs that are user-friendly for employers and reliable and appealing to workers.
- **Better tools for employers.** The overwhelming majority of employers want to be on the right side of the law. It's their obligation as citizens and it makes good business sense. Midwest employers understand their responsibility to verify the work eligibility of new employees and will support a federal mandate that all employers enroll in E-Verify if it is introduced in the context of a broader immigration overhaul—combined with legalization and fixes to the legal immigration system that bring our annual intake of workers into line with our labor needs.
- **Border and visa security.** Gaining control of our borders is not just a cornerstone of immigration reform. In an age of global terrorism and international drug violence, it's a national imperative. Much has been done in recent years to secure the southwest frontier, but there is still work to be done, including better technology, better communication among law enforcement agencies, more cooperation with neighboring countries, and more efficient processing of people and goods. We in the Midwest know first-hand that much of our economy depends on trade across the northern border. Like all Americans, we have a stake in frontiers that work to keep us safe, but also connected to our friends and allies and trading partners.
- **A permanent answer for children brought to the United States illegally.** According to the Migration Policy Institute, the Midwest is home to 200,000 to 275,000 young people brought to the country illegally as children. Known as "Dreamers," they are waiting in limbo for an answer from Washington that would allow them to get on with their lives, finish their education, and find work not in the underground economy but in their chosen career fields. In mid-2012 President Obama and Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida floated similar proposals for a temporary reprieve—no deportation but no automatic citizenship either—and the administration implemented the idea. These are promising first steps. But the Midwest needs a permanent solution passed by a bipartisan majority in Congress. Without clear, unequivocal policy, the region risks a colossal waste of some of our best, brightest, and most motivated young people, squandering their potential and diminishing ours.
- **A path to citizenship.** According to the Pew Research Center, some 1.3 million unauthorized immigrants live and work in the Midwest. That's as many people as in all of Dallas, San Diego, or the state of Hawaii living on the margins of society. Most are otherwise law-abiding people, doing critical jobs that need to be done—work that bolsters Midwest prosperity and creates jobs for Americans throughout the local economy. No one realistically believes we can deport these workers and their families. The only other alternative—driving them out of the United States by depriving them of work and making it difficult for them to drive, go to school, get healthcare, and otherwise go about their lives—would be a Pyrrhic victory and a disaster for the Midwest economy. The heartland needs a better answer—one consistent with our labor needs and our Midwestern values.

- **Innovative integration efforts.** The flow of immigration from Mexico has ebbed with the economic downturn and may never again reach the level of the boom years. But this slowdown will have little or no effect on the most important immigration challenge facing America in the decades ahead: integrating the newcomers already here. A broad array of Midwesterners in local government, business, labor, faith-based groups, educational institutions, and civil society is stepping up to promote immigrant integration across the heartland. The federal government can help and should be helping more with programs and resources. But ultimately we in the Midwest must shoulder the responsibility—it's our duty as citizens and neighbors and one of the best investments we can make in our future competitiveness.

## **The Midwest needs a solution**

The time is now—it's time to get this done. Midwesterners understand political reality, and we see how hard it has become for Republicans and

Democrats in Congress to come together to produce solutions on any issue, let alone an issue as complex and polarizing as immigration. But that can't be an excuse. We can't afford an excuse. We need answers—now—for our economy and our communities.

We in the Midwest need better solutions on our borders. We need solutions in the workplace. We need visas for high- and low-skilled workers. We need a legal immigration system that works for entrepreneurs, inventors, investors, STEM students, nurses, home healthcare aides, busboys, farmhands, and seasonal hotel help. We need employment-based immigration that meets the needs of employers and employees. We need a family-based system that reunites relatives in a timely way. We need solutions that serve immigrants without shortchanging US workers. And we need a path to citizenship for Dreamers and their parents.

The region's competitiveness—our livelihoods, our future, our children's future—hangs in the balance. We need Congress to act. It's time to step up and get the job done. We in the Midwest need answers on immigration, and we need them now.

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Wheeling  
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**To:** NWMC Mayors and Managers  
**From:** Mark Fowler  
Executive Director  
**Date:** April 11, 2013  
**Subject:** Draft Model Resolution on Immigration Reform

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Please find attached the Northwest Municipal Conference Immigration Reform Model Resolution 2013-9, which was adopted at the April 10, 2013 NWMC Board meeting for your use. When your municipality adopts the Resolution, please send a copy to the Conference and as directed on the document.

Thank you for your consideration of this model resolution.

*President*  
William D. McLeod  
Hoffman Estates

*Vice-President*  
Sandra E. Frum  
Northbrook

*Secretary*  
Louella B. Preston  
Niles

*Treasurer*  
Wally Bobkiewicz  
Evanston

*Executive Director*  
Mark L. Fowler



**NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE  
RESOLUTION 2013-9**

**DRAFT MODEL RESOLUTION  
ON IMMIGRATION REFORM**

WHEREAS, the (VILLAGE/CITY of \_\_\_\_\_) is a member of the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) – a corporate organization representing municipalities and townships chartered within the State of Illinois and Counties of Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane and McHenry; and

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and Chapter 5, Act 220, paragraphs 1 through 8, of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, authorize intergovernmental association and cooperation; and

WHEREAS, the public officials of the Northwest Municipal Conference represent forty-four local governmental bodies and a population of over 1.3 million residents; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Municipal Conference established the NWMC Immigrant Integration Committee in 2010 to address the integration of the immigrant population in the north/northwest suburbs of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the NWMC Immigrant Integration Committee recommends this model resolution for consideration by the members of the Northwest Municipal Conference; and

WHEREAS, the (VILLAGE/CITY of \_\_\_\_\_) recognizes that the immigration system in the United States is in need of meaningful reform; and

WHEREAS, the (VILLAGE/CITY of \_\_\_\_\_) urges the United States Congress to pass comprehensive legislation to reform the country's immigration system; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the (VILLAGE/CITY of \_\_\_\_\_) supports immigration reform that: provides a clear and earned path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants; clears immigration backlogs; addresses the current labor market needs and improves state and local economic competitiveness; provides for effective employment verification; promotes immigrant integration; and, enhances national security and safety with a sensible enforcement policy.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of Congress elected from the State of Illinois.

Passed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2013

Approved this 10<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2013

  
William D. McLeod, President  
Northwest Municipal Conference and  
Mayor Village of Hoffman Estates

ATTEST:   
Louella B. Preston, Secretary  
Northwest Municipal Conference and  
Trustee, Village of Niles