



## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

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## PASS COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM ASAP (H.R. 4321)

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) represents more than 1,000 congregations that uphold liberal values in the world, among them the celebration of diversity and a commitment to economic and racial justice.

### Unitarian Universalism and Immigration

The UUA has been on public record in support of immigrant rights since our very first assembly in 1961. Since then, the Association has passed dozens of resolutions that affirm that 1) all people deserve access to fair wages, education, housing, healthcare, and other social services regardless of status; and 2) immigrants, at high risk for being denied basic rights and services, particularly warrant our support. Many Unitarian Universalist congregations were actively involved in the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s. In the wake of September 11<sup>th</sup>, Unitarian Universalists have decried the denial of due process to immigrants, refugees, and foreign nationals.

### Facts About Immigration

- Due to processing backlogs and insufficient quotas, the wait for a visa to enter the U.S. can be up to twenty years.
- The U.S. detains over 280,000 people a year, at the annual cost of 1.2 billion dollars to tax payers.
- In spite of the billions spent on fences, raids, patrols, and prisons, undocumented immigrants have increased since 1992 from 4 million to about 12 million.
- The number of working visas issued each year is only a fraction of the number of available, unfilled jobs for unskilled labor.
- The existence of large pool of undocumented workers, vulnerable to employer abuse, causes the wages of documented workers to be hurt as well.
- The vast majority of undocumented workers pay taxes, and are less likely than the general population to be involved in crime.
- Anti-immigrant rhetoric is tied to a 40% increase in hate crimes (from 2003 to 2007) directed against Latino/a/Hispanics and people perceived to be immigrants.

### The Comprehensive Immigration Reform American Security and Prosperity Act (H.R. 4321)

- Provides pathways to legalization
- Addresses both family and work visa backlogs
- Protects worker rights
- Oversees border security so that it is effective and accountable

CIR ASAP (H.R. 4321) is supported by a broad coalition of civil rights, labor and religious groups, including the AFL-CIO, the SEIU the Interfaith Immigration Coalition.