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Press Release

AGUIRRE TESTIFIES ON PROPOSED TEMPORARY WORKER PROGRAM - Presents Five Points for Congressional Consideration

Washington, D.C.– Eduardo Aguirre, Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) testified today before the Senate Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship. Director Aguirre, joined by Department of Labor Deputy Secretary Steven Law and Under Secretary Asa Hutchinson for Border and Transportation Security in the Department of Homeland Security, presented five points that compliment the President’s recent proposal for a new Temporary Worker Program.

“On January 7th, President Bush courageously confronted a broken system, one that has been ignored for too long. We are talking about an entirely new immigration category that would facilitate economic growth, enhance national security and promote compassion,” Director Aguirre told the Subcommittee.

Rather than amnesty, which joins the illegal immigration track with the legal one by facilitating green card status, the President proposes a one-time regulated opportunity for the estimated eight million undocumented aliens already in America to legitimize their status for a finite period before returning home.

In his testimony, Director Aguirre presented five points that complement the President’s proposal:

- 1) Enforcement will be paramount;
- 2) American workers come first;
- 3) Incentives for registration, and for return to home country will be required;
- 4) The program should be fair and not come at the expense of legal immigrants; and
- 5) The program should be simple and user friendly – one that can be effectively administered

He added that certain programmatic features might also be considered, including:

- A one-time fee to be assessed upon registration, separate from the application processing;
- A web-based mechanism for petitioning for program participation be used;
- A labor market driven program when no American workers can be found;
- A retroactive date, requiring proof of employment, be utilized;
- A duration of time be required in the home country, prior to re-eligibility; and
- Options for ineligibility for or termination of status based upon the worker’s failure to meet responsibilities, or in the interests of national security or public safety

Director Aguirre’s prepared testimony is available at: www.uscis.gov. For additional information on the President’s proposal for immigration reform, visit: www.whitehouse.gov.

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