

By: Anchia

H.C.R. No. 44

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In an increasingly complex global economy, labor
2 mobility is crucial to the prosperity of the United States, but our
3 rigid, outmoded immigration policies are making it difficult for
4 the nation to compete; and

5 WHEREAS, The U.S. Congress last enacted major immigration
6 legislation more than a quarter-century ago; since that time,
7 piecemeal attempts at reform have failed to create the kind of
8 rational and effective system we need to maintain competitiveness,
9 whether in an industry like agriculture, which requires large
10 numbers of workers able to perform physically demanding tasks, or
11 in technology, where the demand for employees with advanced degrees
12 in math and science is projected to outstrip supply by 2018; and

13 WHEREAS, Immigrants perform vital functions in a variety of
14 industries, and in Texas, they start nearly a third of the state's
15 new businesses; even undocumented immigrants produce more in state
16 revenue than they receive in state services, according to a 2006
17 study by the Office of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts,
18 which estimated that their deportation would cause more than a six
19 percent decline in the workforce and nearly an \$18 billion decline
20 in the gross state product; and

21 WHEREAS, The United States is now home to some 11 million
22 undocumented immigrants, including millions of children brought to
23 this country illegally who have grown up here and know no home other
24 than the United States; a commonsense road map to citizenship for

1 these residents would stimulate the economy by allowing them to
2 open bank accounts, obtain college degrees, buy homes, establish
3 new American companies, and create jobs; a recent study published
4 by the Cato Institute estimated that a complete overhaul of the
5 immigration system would yield at least \$1.5 trillion in added
6 U.S. gross domestic product over 10 years; and

7 WHEREAS, A rational overhaul of the immigration system
8 requires a tough, fair, and practical program to address the status
9 of undocumented immigrants, contingent on success in securing our
10 borders and addressing visa overstays; in order to protect all
11 workers, whether native or foreign-born, it must include an
12 efficient and transparent employment verification system that
13 identifies qualified candidates while penalizing employers who
14 knowingly hire undocumented immigrants; immigration policy must
15 also be designed to respond to labor needs in science and
16 technology, as well as in agriculture; and

17 WHEREAS, Recognizing the characteristics that will help
18 build prosperity and strengthen our society, a commonsense road map
19 to legal status for undocumented immigrants would encompass a
20 health and criminal background check, proof of a stable U.S. work
21 history and current employment, and payment of taxes; to gain
22 probationary legal status, individuals would be further required to
23 demonstrate knowledge of English and American civics; fairness
24 demands that the system take into account special circumstances
25 surrounding candidates for probationary legal status, such as
26 minors brought to the country as children or agricultural workers
27 whose labor is essential to maintain the food supply; and

1 WHEREAS, National security and our national interests are
2 poorly served by an embattled immigration system, and patchwork
3 attempts to mend its deficiencies undermine our potential for
4 prosperity and leave us ill-prepared to meet the challenges of the
5 modern world; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas
7 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to swiftly
8 enact and fund comprehensive immigration reform that creates a
9 commonsense road map to citizenship for some 11 million
10 undocumented immigrants, promotes economic growth, and strengthens
11 national security; and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
13 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
14 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
15 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
16 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
17 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
18 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.