

By: Anchia

H.C.R. No. 24

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

5 WHEREAS, The United States Congress last enacted major
6 immigration legislation more than a quarter-century ago; since that
7 time, piecemeal attempts at reform have failed to create the kind of
8 rational and effective system we need to maintain competitiveness,
9 whether in industries like agriculture, construction, and
10 manufacturing, which require large numbers of workers able to
11 perform physically demanding tasks, or in technology, where there
12 is increasing demand for employees with advanced degrees in math
13 and science; and

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

22 WHEREAS, The United States is home to millions of
23 unauthorized immigrants, including children brought to this
24 country illegally who have grown up here and know no home other than

1 the United States; a commonsense road map to earned legal status for
2 these residents would create additional tax revenue and stimulate
3 the economy by allowing them to open bank accounts, obtain college
4 degrees, buy homes, establish new American companies, and create
5 jobs; a study published by the Cato Institute estimated that a
6 complete overhaul of the immigration system would yield at least
7 \$1.5 trillion in added U.S. gross domestic product over 10 years;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, A rational overhaul of the immigration system
10 requires a tough, fair, and practical program to address the status
11 of unauthorized immigrants, stopping real threats and contingent on
12 bringing accountability to border enforcement programs, providing
13 additional funding for border communities that bear a
14 disproportionate burden in the enforcement of immigration laws, and
15 addressing visa overstays; in order to protect all workers, whether
16 native or foreign-born, it must include an efficient and
17 transparent employment verification system that identifies
18 qualified candidates while penalizing employers who knowingly hire
19 unauthorized immigrants; federal policy must also be designed to
20 develop a guest worker program to respond to the future labor needs
21 of U.S. business by matching willing workers with willing American
22 employers; and

23 WHEREAS, Recognizing the characteristics that will help
24 build prosperity and strengthen our society, a commonsense road map
25 to earned legal status for unauthorized immigrants would encompass
26 a health and criminal background check, proof of a stable U.S. work
27 history and current employment, and payment of relevant fines and

1 taxes; to gain probationary legal status, individuals would be
2 further required to demonstrate knowledge of English and American
3 civics and go to the back of the same line as those prospective
4 immigrants seeking to come to the United States legally; fairness
5 demands that the system take into account special circumstances
6 surrounding candidates for probationary legal status, such as
7 minors brought to the country as children or agricultural workers
8 whose labor is essential to maintain the food supply; and

9 WHEREAS, The United States is a nation founded upon respect
10 for the rule of law; national security and our national interests
11 are poorly served by an embattled immigration system, and patchwork
12 attempts to mend its deficiencies undermine our potential for
13 prosperity and leave us ill-prepared to meet the challenges of the
14 modern world; and

15 WHEREAS, Solutions that provide for blanket amnesty, such as
16 those presented in the Simpson-Mazzoli Act of 1986, encourage
17 future violations of the law and should be excluded from the panoply
18 of options to be considered by the United States Congress; now,
19 therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas,
21 1st Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the United States
22 Congress to swiftly enact and fund comprehensive immigration reform
23 that creates both a commonsense road map to earned legal status for
24 unauthorized immigrants and a guest worker program that
25 contemplates the future needs of U.S. business, in furtherance of
26 our nation's economic growth and national security; and, be it
27 further

1 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
3 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
4 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
5 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
6 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
7 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.