

City of Miami, Florida

MANUEL A. DIAZ
MAYOR



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On the occasion of
The Fair Immigration Summit
September 2, 2009

I am very pleased to write to congratulate our City's Community Relations Board for convening its Fair Immigration Summit to discuss the critically important issue of immigration reform.

As an immigrant and a Miamian, I understand that this issue goes to the heart of our community. Many of you know me as a longstanding advocate for equal policy treatment for immigrants and may know of my involvement and work with S.A.L.A.D., the Spanish American League Against Discrimination, as well as my advocacy in support of immigrant rights dating back to the 1980's.

More recently in 2006, I was pleased to co-sponsor a resolution issued by the U.S. Conference of Mayors calling for definitive action by the U.S. Congress in support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, along with other mayors from around the country. Integral to this policy was a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, a workable and efficient guest worker program that satisfies our country's labor and employment needs and that provides a safe and orderly process for immigrant workers, and stronger border security. This policy resolution was adopted unanimously by the nation's mayors and these positions were reiterated at the Mayors' annual national conferences in Los Angeles in 2007 and Miami in 2008.

I have urged the Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to immediately grant Temporary Protected Status for Haiti and Haitian nationals resident in the United States. Similarly, I was pleased to urge passage of a policy resolution at the annual U.S. Conference of Mayors this past June calling for the immediate cessation of immigrant community sweeps and deportations of Haitian nationals. The resolution further called for the immediate granting of Temporary Protected Status to all Haitian nationals. I was pleased to receive the support of my fellow mayors in the unanimous adoption of my recommendations.

Unfortunately, as demonstrated by the failure of the McCain-Kennedy bill several years ago, Washington has refused to act on this most important issue. In light of this inaction in Washington, immediately following my election as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 2008, I created a Comprehensive Immigration Reform Task Force to actively advance the mayors positions in Washington. However, immigration reform remains a prominent national issue that requires the immediate and urgent attention of our federal representatives on Capitol Hill.

I look forward to learning of the many interesting ideas developed during your summit to address this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Manuel A. Diaz".