



SENADOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS ★ AL SERVICIO DE LOS CIUDADANOS DE IDAHO

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[HTTP://CRAIG.SENATE.GOV/ESPANOL/](http://craig.senate.gov/espagnol/)

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Senador Craig brinda discurso sobre beneficios de inmigración

WASHINGTON, DC – En el contexto del debate migratorio que se lleva a cabo en estos momentos, el senador de Idaho Larry Craig se dirigió hoy al pleno del Senado para expresar su inquietud con el tono de algunos comentarios en la discusión nacional; y para resaltar las contribuciones de la población inmigrante de Estados Unidos.

Adjunto el discurso escrito, seguido por enlaces de audio y video:

“In this immigration reform discussion, I have stood here to emphasize our imperative duty to guard our borders and strengthen national security. But today I want to talk about another component in the immigration debate. I am concerned about some of the comments being flung around as we address this critical issue. Certainly this is a topic that awakens emotions, but I can’t help but reflect on what those comments reveal about us as a nation.

It is as though America does not want to face the mirror to look at herself. She doesn’t want to see what she is and what that means. But for her own good, she has to.

She is a blend. She is English, German, and Italian. She’s Polish, Irish, Asian, African. And she is Hispanic. She is multiracial and multiethnic; diverse since her inception. That’s why she’s admirable; that’s why she has prospered and that’s why she’s strong.

What is true in science is true in sociology: Mixing results in advancement and strength. We ought to think about that. We ought to evaluate some of the conceptions we have regarding immigrants and measure them against reality, to see if they hold true.

Immigration is a challenge, but it’s not a threat. Quite honestly, immigrants represent solutions to many of this country’s problems, both current and future.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a shortfall of 10 million workers in this country by 2010. The reason is very simple; our workforce is growing older and shrinking. On the other hand, immigrant labor is behind the significant employment growth the country has experienced in different areas in recent years. These are the economics of necessity.

Can we recognize this? Do we see that foreign nationals are cleaning up New Orleans and binding her wounds? Do we know that the Pentagon was rebuilt with Hispanic muscle?

Immigrants are sweating it out for this country. They consistently have, for a long time.

In my home state, Hispanics were digging mines in the 1860s. Mexican cowboys and ranchers were solid members of pioneer communities even before Idaho became a state.

Hispanics were mule packers in the 1880s. They were building and maintaining the railroad system of the American West in the 1930s.

Today they are harvesting apples in Washington, peaches in Georgia and oranges in Florida. They are gathering grapes in California, potatoes in Idaho and corn in Iowa. Their footprints are in fields across the nation.

Immigrants are hard workers. They work hard because they are grateful people and feel a sense of debt for the opportunities this country has given them. Contrary to what some believe, immigrants –who have entered legally and illegally, are not here to siphon services, but to produce and contribute.

Idaho Commerce and Labor reports that between 1990 and 2005, Hispanic buying power in Idaho rose more than twice as fast as total buying power across the state. Nationwide, the purchasing power of Hispanics will reach one trillion dollars in four years.

Beyond their role in sustaining the country's labor force, immigrants make a net fiscal contribution to the U.S. economy. The President's 2005 Economic Report, which used figures of the most authoritative analysis to date of the economic impact of immigration, says "the average immigrant pays nearly \$1800 more in taxes than he or she costs." Undocumented immigrants are believed to contribute billions of dollars to a Social Security system they will not benefit from. According to the President's report, the administration's Earnings Suspense File, made up of taxes paid by workers with invalid or mismatched social security numbers, totaled \$463 billion in 2002.

While other nations of the developed world are aging, America still sees a youthful face reflected in that mirror. Immigration renews the United States and keeps it young. While countries like Japan, Russia and Spain are facing problems because their populations are decreasing, America has the necessary arms to support its pension system. Therefore a comprehensive immigration reform is in America's best self-interest.

Understanding these realities erases some of the misconceptions bouncing around, misconceptions that sometimes smack of prejudice. Previous immigration waves have experienced it to some extent. But I believe we as a nation are greater than that.

When every one of us, except Native Americans, belongs to families that came from somewhere else, we should be careful not to erect mental borders, the type that keep people that are different from us at arms length. We are a nation that encourages new thinking and benefits from the growth that results from it. American poet Oliver Wendell Holmes said it best when he said, “A mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original shape.”

It expands.

Immigration is a source of new ideas, entrepreneurship and vitality.

The meeting of cultures simply does not happen in a one-way street, but in a bridge, where both sides give and receive.

When America looks at itself in a mirror, it will see that her multicultural character has always been one of her greatest assets.

Nota: Para escuchar el discurso, siga este enlace:

http://craig.senate.gov/clips/immigration_04-06-06.mp3

Para ver el discurso, este es el vínculo:

http://recap.fednet.net/archive/Buildasx.asp?sProxy=80_sflr040606_038.wmv,80_sflr040606_039.wmv,80_sflr040606_040.wmv&sTime=00:01:18.9&eTime=00:02:58.6&duration=00:11:39.0&UserName=sencraigid&sLocation=G&sExpire=0

Por efectos de inmediatez, el discurso se ha enviado en inglés. Los interesados en una traducción del discurso en español, favor solicitarla vía telefónica o electrónica al número y dirección provistos.