



# Making the Case for Passing Comprehensive Immigration Reform This Year

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**Comprehensive Immigration Reform** is the name given to a legislative strategy to fix America's terribly broken immigration system

It has also been known as **McCain-Kennedy, or Kennedy-McCain**, after the bill's original authors



## **CIR's strategy has three key planks**

Toughen up on the border and on employers illegally hiring undocumented workers

Better manage the future flow of legal immigrants

Create legal status and a path to citizenship for those already here



## **A Clear and Consistent Majority of Americans Support the Strategy Behind CIR**

Fixing the broken immigration system is a top-tier concern for a majority of Americans. They are looking for action.

In polls, a clear majority of Americans support CIR. Few blame the immigrants. Offering a path to citizenship is preferred to offering just legal status to the undocumented.

Only about 15 percent of the country is opposed to any solution other than expulsion of the undocumented.



## **CIR Has Been Among the Most Bi-Partisan Pieces of Legislation in a Highly Partisan Age**

CIR has been supported by a large and diverse bi-partisan coalition, with partners ranging from immigrant rights groups to the Chamber of Commerce to labor unions to high-tech and agricultural groups to the faith community to governors, mayors, sheriffs and Chiefs of Police across the country.

CIR was one of the most bi-partisan bills of its era, attracting 62 votes with the support of President Bush, John McCain, Harry Reid, Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama.



With a majority of Americans supporting CIR,  
and a deep and broad bi-partisan coalition  
behind it...

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Is No  
Third Rail

It is a mainstream, common-sense, pragmatic  
effort to solve a vexing national problem.



# **More Reasons to Pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform This Year**



The Administration and Congress will grow weary of fighting immigration proxy wars on issue after issue as the year grinds on.





The pressure on Washington from state and local officials – in key battleground states – will continue to mount.



It will help depoliticize an already highly contentious census and reapportionment process.



As the economy worsens, it will remove a trap door under the minimum wage.

Fully 5 percent of the American workforce today is undocumented. Bringing them under the protection of American law will allow them to be paid minimum wage, prevent exploitation by unscrupulous employers, allow them to unionize will relieve downward pressure on the wages of all Americans.



As the year unfolds, CIR will become seen as a vital component of a broader strategy to calm the increasingly dangerous border region.



The current immigration detention system was not designed to handle its current caseload, and has quickly become a legal and moral disgrace.



Support of CIR has become a litmus test for Hispanics / Latinos—the fastest growing part of the American electorate. It will be very difficult for either party to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century without significant Hispanic support.



Finally, in this new age of racial reconciliation, passing CIR this year will take the air out of the balloon of some of the most shocking and unacceptable public displays of racism in America today.



## **Our advice to Democrats:**

You promised.

In recent years, President Obama, Speaker Pelosi and Senate Leader Reid have all repeatedly promised to pass CIR right away, with no delay. Now is the time.

It will also help lock in the gains made with Hispanic voters in recent elections, and show the electorate that you have what it takes to tackle the tough problems of this new century.





## **Our advice to Republicans:**

Sue for peace.

Pass CIR, renounce your recent national commitment to demonizing Hispanics, and give yourself a fighting chance to win these voters at some point in the future.

Oppose CIR this year, and watch your chance to win national elections again evaporate for a generation or more.



## **Our Conclusion:**

It is in the best interest of both political parties, and the nation, to pass CIR this year and begin the process of fixing our terribly broken and increasingly unjust immigration system.

There is a pragmatic, bi-partisan plan, with broad public support and a deep coalition behind it, ready to go.

There simply is no compelling political, economic, legislative or moral argument against moving now.



Mr. President, we are fired up and ready to go.

Let's do it.

This Year.