



News From Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis 31st Congressional District of California

1640 Longworth HOB | Washington, D.C. 20515 | 202.25.5464 | 202.225.5467 f.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 10, 2002

CONTACT: EDITH ROBLES

(202) 225-5464

Cell- (202) 225-2167

SOLIS' STATEMENT ON THE EARNED LEGALIZATION BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Today, Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis (CA-31) issued the following statement regarding the Earned Legalization Act and Family Unification Act of 2002:

“I strongly support the Earned Legalization and Family Unification Act of 2002. This important legislation will allow millions of hard-working men and women the opportunity to regularize their immigration status and officially recognize the enormous contributions they make to our economy and our communities.

“Around this country, millions of undocumented immigrants are paying taxes, working hard, raising children, and serving their communities. Their dreams are the same as all Americans: quality education for their children, clean and safe communities, and livable wages. They too seek the American dream.

“This legislation will ensure that hard-working, tax-paying immigrants will be able to adjust their status if they have resided in the United States for at least five years, worked at least two of those years, and pass a rigorous criminal background check.

“It is important that we reward these immigrants for their work. They are an essential component of the United States economy, contributing at least \$300 billion to the U.S. gross national product each year. Many of them clean our homes, harvest the food we eat, mow our lawns, construct and maintain our buildings, and care for our children. Many others are entrepreneurs, revitalizing their communities with viable small businesses. Without their labor, our economy would quickly falter.

“Those impacted by this bill also have children serving in the United States armed forces. Their children have answered our nation’s call to duty. This legislation will ensure that these families remain united in the United States, without the fear that some of their loved ones will be sent to countries they no longer call their home.

“This bill would also strengthen our national security. Greater accountability of this sizable population will enable our country to better focus its resources on locating those that truly come to the U.S. to harm our people, not those that come to make positive contributions to it. Immigrants welcome this opportunity to lend their hands to national efforts to secure our country.

“Introduction of this bill today is an important first step to rewarding these immigrants for their hard work. Earned legalization is about fundamental fairness, economic and education opportunity, and family unification.

“Although passing this bill will not be easy, I look forward to the day that the Congress recognizes the crucial role that immigrants play to the well-being of our country.”

###