

**Business, manufacturing, agriculture leaders in Minnesota call for immigration reform
Join leaders in more than 60 coordinated events across the nation**

ST. PAUL – The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, as leader of the Minnesota Business Immigration Coalition, today urged Congress to respond affirmatively to voters by acting immediately to pass comprehensive federal immigration reform.

Its call for action coincided with the release of a survey by three business advocacy organizations showing strong support for immigration reform among voters in Minnesota and across the nation. The survey was sponsored by the Partnership for a New American Economy, the Business Roundtable and the National Association of Manufacturers. The findings were released in conjunction with a National Day of Action for Immigration Reform that included a Washington, D.C., press conference and events in more than 60 key districts across 25 states.

“Immigrants are major contributors to the development and growth of our economy,” said Bill Blazar, senior vice president of public affairs and business development at the Minnesota Chamber. “Their roles range from workers and entrepreneurs to consumers, taxpayers and strong links to global markets.”

Findings for the survey of Minnesota voters include:

- **Voters believe the immigration system is broken.** By a 17 to 1 ratio, voters believe the system is in need of fixing versus those who think the system is functioning the way it should. 90% of Republicans believe Congress should take action to fix the immigration system. 85% of Independents agree.
- **Voters overwhelmingly reject the argument that President Obama’s unwillingness to enforce laws is grounds not to pass immigration reform.** More than 2 out of 3 voters (70%) reject the argument that the Administration's unwillingness to enforce laws is a reason for Congress not to act. 3 of 5 Republicans reject this argument as well. That number increases to 69% among Independents.

- **Voters don't want Washington to wait to fix the immigration system.** 83% of voters want Congress to act this year, with more than half calling it "very important" they act this year. 84% of Republicans say it is important that Congress act, while 52% say it is very important. 81% of Independents believe it is important for Congress to act this year.
- **Voters support the principles outlined by House leadership.** More than 60% of voters support the basic immigration plan laid out in Speaker Boehner's "immigration standards." 61% of Republicans support an immigration reform plan that secures our borders, expands visas for high-skill workers and farm workers, provides an employer verification program, allows young people brought to the United States illegally by their parents an opportunity to earn citizenship, and provides visas to live and work here legally to undocumented immigrants without a criminal record who pay penalties and back taxes. Only 25% oppose. Among Independents, 59% support and only 22% oppose.
- **Voters support establishing a legal status for undocumented immigrants.** 69% of voters support legal status for undocumented immigrants. A majority of Republicans (63%) support legal status.
- **Republicans want their next presidential candidate to support immigration reform.** Republicans would rather vote for a presidential candidate in 2016 that is from a party that supports reform (73%) than one from a party that opposes it (5%).

"We need to look at immigration as an opportunity, and not a risk, for our economy," said Mike Fernandez, corporate vice president at Cargill, a member of the Minnesota Business Immigration Coalition. "While we have people without jobs, we also have jobs without people. At the polar extremes of our labor economy we need more people with advanced degrees in science and engineering and more people willing and able to take on more intense physical tasks."

Added coalition supporter Hector Garcia, executive director of the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, "Immigration reform, if properly designed, will offer the nation solutions to our slow economic growth and the future incapacity to pay for entitlements and escalating costs of education and health care."



The Minnesota Business Immigration Coalition includes the Minnesota Chamber, Minnesota Agri-Growth Council, Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association, Minnesota Milk Producers Association, Midwest Food Processors Association, Minnesota Restaurant Association and Minnesota Lodging Association.

Jeremy Robbins, executive director of the Partnership for a New American Economy, said the need for immigration reform is not going to go away. "Conservative leaders and business owners from every corner of the country agree. It's time for leaders in Congress to listen to their constituents and do what's best for our economy: pass immigration reform now."

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) automated national telephone survey was conducted from June 24-28 by Harper Polling. The sample size for the national survey is 1,000 likely voters and the margin of error is +/-3.1 percent. The national survey results are available [here](#).

The Minnesota live operator telephone survey was conducted by Harper Polling, Inc between June 30th and July 3rd, and surveyed samples size was 500. The margin of error was 4.38%. The total percentages for responses may not equal 100 percent due to rounding. Specific complete polling results available [here](#).