Legislation Details (With Text)

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Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
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Title:	Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2013.				
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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/4/2013	*	Committee on Immigration	P-C Item Laid Over by Comm	
4/4/2013	*	Committee on Immigration	Hearing Held by Committee	
4/8/2013	*	Committee on Immigration	Hearing on P-C Item by Comm	
4/8/2013	*	Committee on Immigration	P-C Item Approved by Comm	Pass
4/9/2013	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
4/9/2013	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
4/9/2013	*	City Council	Approved, by Council	Pass

Preconsidered Res. No. 1711

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2013.

By Council Member Dromm, The Speaker (Council Member Quinn), Chin, Eugene, Mark-Viverito, Gonzalez, Brewer, Mendez, Garodnick, Cabrera, Ferreras, Williams, Rodriguez, King, Comrie, Foster, Lappin, Weprin, Arroyo, Reyna, Levin, Barron, Dickens, Gennaro, Jackson, James, Koo, Koppell, Koslowitz, Lander, Palma, Richards, Rose and Van Bramer

Whereas, The United States prides itself on being a land of opportunity; and

Whereas, However, immigrants struggle to thrive in this country and face significant hurdles when pursuing U.S. citizenship or other forms of immigration relief; and

Whereas, For example, undocumented immigrants are unable to work legally and therefore easily fall prey to unscrupulous employers who violate federal and state labor laws, which leads to unpaid or subminimum

wages, lack of overtime pay, and poor or unsafe working conditions for many; and

Whereas, Many undocumented immigrants also fall victim to manipulation and fraud by scam artists who purport to offer immigration services but instead take advantage of individuals' lack of status and a lack of a strong command of the English language; and

Whereas, College is often impossible for undocumented immigrant youth to afford because, under current law, their undocumented status makes them ineligible for many forms of financial aid; and

Whereas, The narrow definition of "marriage" and "spouse" under current law prohibits the recognition of same-sex couples and therefore prevents U.S. citizens from sponsoring their immigrant partners for legal immigration status, leading to the needless disruption of families and the agonizing choice for many U.S. citizens to leave either their partner or their country; and

Whereas, Further, immigration judges have limited discretion and are precluded from considering family unification in deportation proceedings; and

Whereas, As a result, the 4.5 million U.S. citizen children with at least one undocumented parent are at risk of being separated from that parent; and

Whereas, Since 2001 several pieces of legislation have been considered in Congress to address the needs of immigrant families; and

Whereas, For example, the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors ("DREAM") Act, introduced for the first time in 2001 and considered in 2006 and 2010 in Congress, would allow states to provide higher education benefits and provide a pathway to citizenship for eligible undocumented immigrant youth; and

Whereas, In order to address the needs of binational same-sex couples, the Uniting American Families Act ("UAFA") was first introduced in 2005 and would include the definition of "permanent partner" in the

Immigration and Nationality Act to include same-sex couples in order to grant them the same protections under the Immigration and Nationality Act as provided to married opposite sex couples; and

Whereas, Additionally, the Attracting the Best and Brightest Act was introduced in 2012 to create visas for immigrants who receive advanced degrees in the science, technology, engineering or mathematics fields; and

Whereas, The POWER Act, introduced in 2011, sought to expand the U-visa to give immigrant victims of labor law violations the opportunity to apply for legal status if they participated in the investigation of their employer; and

Whereas, None of these measures have been enacted into law; and

Whereas, Most recently, in January 2013, a group of U.S. Senators and President Barack Obama each proposed a comprehensive immigration reform framework; although they differ in significant ways, each seeks to address the needs of immigrants living in the United States; and

Whereas, Among other things, these frameworks seek to establish a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants; end the unlawful hiring of undocumented workers; provide visas for immigrants who receive advanced degrees in the science, technology, engineering or mathematics fields; provide incentives to undocumented youth who want to pursue higher education; and promote family unification; and

Whereas, Many immigrant advocates, such as the American Immigration Lawyers Association and Make the Road New York believe that an effective comprehensive immigration reform bill would have to go further than the proposals set forth in January 2013 by also modifying immigration court proceedings so that judges have increased discretion and defendants have a right to counsel; recognizing immigration fraud as a qualifying crime for immigration relief; by including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals when considering family sponsorship by permitting such individuals to sponsor a same-sex partner for legal immigration; and by preserving family unity by eliminating family numerical visa categories; and

Whereas, Passage of a comprehensive immigration reform bill could benefit the 475,000 undocumented

immigrants in the New York State's labor force, the 400,000 undocumented youth in New York State's public schools, the estimated 3,700 immigrant New Yorkers in same-sex binational relationships, and thousands of U.S. citizen children who have at least one parent who is an undocumented immigrant; and

Whereas, In January 2013, President Barack Obama delivered a speech stating "we need Congress to act on a comprehensive approach that finally deals with the 11 million undocumented immigrants"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2013.

JSM
LS#4401
4/8/13