



# National Alliance for Filipino Concerns

## 10 Frequently Asked Questions on Immigration Reform

### 1. What is going on and why is it important for Filipinos?

The U.S. government is working on comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) that will affect the future of every person in the U.S. and millions around the world for decades to come.



### 2. What is Comprehensive Immigration Reform?

Originally, it was a proposal that immigrants believed would provide immediate relief to the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., more than 1 million of whom are Filipino. Currently, it is a proposal that will drastically increase immigration enforcement and create a pathway to citizenship for only some undocumented immigrants.

### 3. How will this new set of laws affect immigrants?

For undocumented immigrants it creates a very difficult pathway to citizenship including over \$2,000 in fees, all back taxes, continuous employment for 6 years and other provisions. Those who are not able to meet the many requirements will be forced into deportation proceedings. For the family of immigrants it ends the ability to petition siblings 18 months after the new law begins. And for all immigrants it continues the policy of wrongfully criminalizing migrants and treating us inhumanely for trying to support ourselves and our family.

### 4. Should I be concerned if I am not an immigrant?

Yes, the new set of laws affects everybody. If passed a new national biometric ID system that every working person must obtain will be created and 46 billion of our tax dollars would be spent on enforcement instead of education, jobs, health care, services and other priorities.

### 5. Is there anything good about the proposal?

Because of years of education and organizing this bill offers some provisions that aim to improve the lives of immigrants and their families including the DREAM Act, clearing the visa backlog, and allowing some undocumented immigrants a pathway to citizenship.

## What is the timeline?

In June, the Senate passed its version of CIR. Now the more conservative House must decide on their proposal. This may happen in September or after (all proposals must be approved by both Senate and House before it is sent to the President to sign into law). August is a key month because it is the time before the house will take action and all of the congressional representatives will be in their districts so we can visit them in person.



## 6. What should our community do to protect itself?

The most important thing is for our community to be educated, united, and organized. If a bill passes, both those who are eligible for benefits and those who are not, will need an educated community to provide support and protection. If a law does not pass this year, then our community must be stronger and more organized so we can continue to push for something better. We should not get caught up on whether or not we support or oppose a proposed law because doing so will only divide our community. All bills with any chance of passing with have major flaws and therefore our community will always need to be stronger to fight for improvements.

## 7. What should I do?

For undocumented immigrants and those with legal status, it is imperative that we tell our-stories to show that all immigrants should be valued and deserve dignity and justice.

We should join NAFCON member organizations and organizations from other immigrant communities throughout the country to help educate and organize our community. In addition we should reach out to our congressional representatives to demand a genuine CIR that prioritizes workers and keeping families together not profit and big business.

## 8. Is there anything else I should know?

Immigration reform is only part of a much larger change that is needed. Poverty in the Philippines and around the world pushes people to leave home and face poor work conditions. We should work to resolve the root causes of poverty and forced migration.

## 9. Are there places I can go to for more information?

Many resources including videos, images, and other information are available at [nafconusa.tumblr.com](http://nafconusa.tumblr.com) and [www.nafconusa.org](http://www.nafconusa.org).

You can also contact Jun Cruz, NAFCON public information officer at 415.333.6267 or email [info@nafconusa.org](mailto:info@nafconusa.org). Jun can answer some of your questions and refer you to a local NAFCON representative in your area.