



MEDIA AVAILABILITY
August 6, 2009

CONTACT
Mike Burita - 202.420.9361
mike@buritamedia.com

From High-Tech to Agriculture - Business Leaders Unite to Press Congress on Immigration Reform

(Washington, August 6) – As Congress gears up for a renewed debate on immigration, business coalitions representing a broad array of American industries have come together to support the process and urge that it take account of future U.S. workforce needs. The ad hoc group includes Compete America (representing employers of high-skilled workers), the Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (lesser-skilled workers), the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Farm Bureau and ImmigrationWorks USA, among others. They sent a letter yesterday to Immigration Subcommittee chairs Sen. Charles Schumer and Rep. Zoe Lofgren. Tamar Jacoby, president of ImmigrationWorks USA, a national federation of pro-immigration employers, issued the following statement:

"What's unusual about this letter is the range of industries represented, from high-tech to agriculture and everything in between: from elite universities and cutting edge laboratories to roofing contractors, cleaning crews and seasonal fruit growers. In the past, employers who engaged politically on immigration tended to speak for their sector alone. Today, we are standing together and speaking with one voice.

"We strongly support comprehensive immigration reform and look forward to working with lawmakers to make it happen.

"Our top priority: any reform worthy of the name must create a pipeline for the workers America will need in the future – workers at both the top and bottom of the economy – to enter the country legally."

ImmigrationWorks USA president Tamar Jacoby is available for interview and can be reached directly at 973-744-6117

ImmigrationWorks USA is a national business federation advocating immigration policy that works for employers, workers and citizens. It links 25 state-based coalitions of employers and trade groups from every sector that relies on immigrant workers. IW assists these groups with intelligence, messaging and grassroots recruitment as they fight for better immigration law, both in their states and in Washington. IW's goal: to mobilize a national business grassroots constituency – the constituency that was missing during the 2006 and 2007 debates over immigration reform. IW receives support from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Restaurant Association, American Farm Bureau, the American Hotel and Lodging Association, the National Association of Home Builders, the US Travel Association and other leading trade groups. Its board of directors includes former U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, former AZ Rep. Jim Kolbe and Bill Marriott, chairman and CEO of Marriott International, among others.

###