



Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles

NEWS RELEASE

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Thousands Peacefully March In Los Angeles to Call for Recognition of Worker Contributions, Denounce Raids, and Ask Congress to Move Immigration Reform Forward --- National day laborer organization announces class action suit ---

Los Angeles, CA – A coalition of community organizations spearheaded by the Multicultural Immigrant Workers Organizing Network (MIWON), led thousands of Angelinos including community leaders, clergy, workers, students, and elected officials, marching downtown Los Angeles today in what organizers called a peaceful, joyous show of civic engagement and democracy.

At MacArthur Park, speakers, including Los Angeles Councilman Ed Reyes, motivated the crowd with the musical accompaniment of the Jornaleros del Norte, a day laborer band that has become an artistic staple at such gatherings. Organizer Marco Amador, a member of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLN), announced the filing of a class action lawsuit on behalf of hundreds of day laborers recently exploited for work with no pay. Milling through the crowd, vendors delivered hot dogs and cold water bottles while organizers handed out business-card-sized Know Your Rights Cards and MIWON t-shirts to participants. Hundreds of LAPD officers were at hand cooperatively assisting the marchers, protecting and serving the community as they committed to do.

The protestors progressed from three different points within the city until they reached a unity rally on First Street and Broadway, facing the modern City Hall building. Some of the speakers included, California Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and American Apparel CEO Dov Charney alongside his entire 4,000 person factory team. As marchers made their way through the city, many carried hand-made signs that featured such messages as “Citizenship Yes! Deportation No!” and banners reading “First 100 Days!” As the ralliers waved to onlookers, they raised hundreds of American flags and invited their neighbors to join the march. Those unable to join the marchers, cheered the crowd on from their windows and rooftops; waving, clapping, and chanting.

“Obama?” Angelica Salas, CHIRLA Executive Director, shouted from the stage, “*Legalization Now!*” the crowd chanted back. “Clinton?” “*Legalization Now!*” “McCain?” “*Legalization Now!*” “*What do we want from our President,*” continued the cheering Salas, “*Legalization Now!*” the crowd roared back. “*We deserve it and we deserve it right now!*” the throng chanted together followed by thunderous applause.

Bethany Leal, MIWON Director, commented: “Workers today showed America that in addition to positively contributing to this country’s progress, they also know how to honor International Workers Day making it one of the most peaceful and multicultural mass demonstrations of all time”.

The march was coordinated by the MIWON and March 25 Coalitions and endorsed by CHIRLA, IDEPSCA, KIWA, PWC, ACLU-SC, APALA, BRU, CBE, COCO, NALACC

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The Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) was formed in 1986 to advance the human and civil rights of immigrants and refugees in Los Angeles, promote harmonious multi-ethnic and multi-racial human relations and through coalition-building, advocacy, community education and organizing, empower immigrants and their allies to build a more just society.