

is very important to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Story 5: Hello. I'm from Argentina, but I've been in the United States for 12 years. I am very appreciative of this country because it has opened doors for us, because we came from Argentina where things are really bad. Please, we need immigration reform, a path to citizenship, because we don't have driver's licenses, we don't have health insurance, and we don't have anything to help us stay safe in this country. We want to stay here, we're not going to leave, and for that I say yes to urgent immigration reform, yes to fast citizenship. I'm a 63-year-old grandmother, and I've worked a lot in Miami, but now we can't work nor do anything because we don't have papers. My daughter is unemployed because she doesn't have papers. She is 23 years old and doesn't have papers. I have married children, but they are married to undocumented people, not to people with papers. Please, we need urgent immigration reform.

Story 6: I want to say yes to citizenship because I believe, just like me, so many good people have come to work in this country, to help and contribute to the economy. I have been living here for 15 years. I am a person like any other, and I believe and think that citizenship is necessary because we have earned it with our work and the sweat on our foreheads, and it would help us so much because we face too much discrimination in our jobs. They rob us, pay us low wages, and there has to be an end. Also, I'd like to say that if there is citizenship or a bill, it would be a great help to the economy of this country and I'd also like to say thank you to all of you for doing all of this, for making us a part of this huge force, and of course, yes to citizenship.

Story 7: I am supporting immigration reform for citizenship. I am in this country illegally. I want to be a citizen so that I can contribute to this nation. Thank you very much.

Story 8: It's been six years since I came from Mexico. I came to this country because the situation in Mexico is very critical. There's a lot of crime, you know. There are so many criminals who kill like it's nothing. There's no work. I say yes to immigration reform so that we can be American citizens. I also consider this country like my own, and I say yes to reform.

Story 9: I am a native of Jalisco, Mexico, and I was born in 1969. I'm from a rural area in Jalisco. I came to the United States when I was 14 years old. I worked in a farm in Homestead, which opened opportunities for me in this country and I received my residency in '86. Now I am working with the University of Miami, and I volunteer with the Florida Farmers Association. The Association made me President of the Board of Directors, and now I am telling them that we can help reform our immigration system and asking them to support immigration reform if they can. This is what I'm doing for the immigrant community living in the country. Above all else, I am also asking that all the states in the United States approve driver's licenses because, independently of whether reform happens or not, people will come to this country with papers, they will overstay their visas, and stay undocumented. I am asking for reform for the immigrants that come to this country.

Story 10: For me, it is very important that some kind of reform takes place because it is very difficult for us to stay here in this country with all the problems from the police regarding driver's licenses and without the benefits that everyone else gets. Many Americans consider us to be below them simply because we don't have papers, because we have no way to defend ourselves, because we are treated by the police, and all that. We

should have so many more benefits so that we can hold a job. It is very difficult to keep a job without papers. I would like for undocumented immigrants to be okay in the United States like everyone else that has papers, for us to be okay with the law, because it is very difficult for me.

Story 11: I am a farm worker, mainly working on farms picking oranges. I've had many jobs: picking apples, working with tobacco, and doing a lot of other agricultural work. Another thing, I am a citizen. My parents were in Texas when I was born. They worked there after they came from Mexico and they were undocumented. My relatives and I were born therein Texas during the World War, and the United States was fighting. This country needed a lot of manpower, so they let a lot of undocumented people in to work here because they needed to sustain the jobs here so that the country would survive. Because of this, there were many undocumented people here. When the war finished, the excuse they gave was that because the soldiers were returning here, they didn't need undocumented workers, so there were raids to return all the undocumented people and the families that had these groupings, including American citizens, and they sent us back to our countries. That happened when I was a child. Now the same thing is repeating but with a different excuse—now it's the economy, that's why they're sending them back to their countries. This thing is that people who are not from here are returning, they're returning to their families, their children, who are American citizens. Sometimes they deport the father or the mother or a few times both, and the kids stay separated from their parents. In this country it is presumed that families should be together, but for undocumented people, we're not given what everyone says we should have. What I'm saying here is that we have been living in this country for many, many years, so we need to do something. There needs to be reform to the existing immigration laws. We need to fight for immigration reform that can fix the existing problems, so that they can classify undocumented people who are here and unite families so that all the injustices that are occurring can stop. If you don't have a license, you're a criminal and they deport you. They separate families, and the kids are the ones that suffer. Now that President Obama was reelected, there a lot of possibility for immigration reform, but what do we have to do? We need to unite to achieve just reform in a way that everyone, or the majority, can qualify to receive their documents and can be here legally.

Story 12: More than anything for me, I'd like them to give us the chance to visit our families and to be able to move, for work if not for anything else. We hope that there will be something that benefits all of us, not just me, but for everyone that needs it. I've been in the country for 12 years and until now we've been doing well, but because we don't have licenses, we can't go anywhere easily. But, as far as work and everything else we are all well, thank God.

Story 13: I'm from Puerto Rico, and I live in Miami. I joined the caravan [organized by the Florida Immigrant Coalition to support immigration reform] because since I arrived in this country, I knew something was not right. There's a community of 11 million people that work hard for their country, this country, my country, but my country is punishing them. These people aren't criminals. I've met so many of them through the caravan and they are farmworkers—maybe they're kicking them out because of that, because they're not engineers, or doctors—but these are the people that put my breakfast on the table every morning.

Like I said, I'm from Miami, and all I have to do is go to the grocery store and buy some oranges. But I've met a lot of people that get up when the sun comes out, go to bed when the sun goes down, and on top of paying them so little, the city is trying to kick them out. When I was in school, I was taught the word "democracy." My teacher taught me that in a democracy, as long as you do right, things will turn out right for you. And I'm seeing a lot of people that are doing things right but things are going right simply because they came from another place. Like I said earlier, it really hurts me to see someone from Mexico, or Peru, from wherever, that the department of immigration, local police, the federal government, sometimes President Obama, sometimes Republicans, sometimes Democrats treat them like less. I'm Puerto Rican, I'm an American citizen, and I am nothing better than these people. These people are so humble and work hard just like me, and this is what brings me to causes like this one. I met a young man who's Mexican who's hanging out with us, he has four children, he's incredibly humble, and he's a hard worker. The only crime he's done is to wake up every morning, go home every night, and put food on the table. That's his only crime, to put food on the table, to feed his kids who are U.S. citizens. Four kids that if they were to deport their dad, the kids would end up orphans. And it seems to me the government doesn't have an interest in more orphaned kids, the Department of Children and Families isn't asking for more orphans. You would think the government would want less.

Story 14: I am here as a volunteer in the movement because, well, right now I personally work with immigrant families and see the destruction that exists in families, separating and deporting parents, including citizens who have children born here and those children are still suffering the consequences. And, personally, I have a daughter in Mexico and one in California. My daughter who is in California is illegal as well, unfortunately. And my daughter who is in Mexico does not have the same opportunities as my daughter here. I haven't seen my daughter or her family in 18 years. My grandchildren in California do not know my grandchildren in Mexico, and it is a very great sadness that I carry. Every time I look at the separated families, even though it hasn't affected me directly if, for example, my son or my husband were the deported, the fact that my daughters have not seen each other for so many years, that my grandchildren will not know each other each other—it hurts. I see so many families dealing with this type of separation in my daily work. These families ask me for help because they know I can help them with transportation, translation, or filling out paperwork. But unfortunately I cannot do much for them, even though I whole-heartedly want to. I do what I can but others can do more. I am in this caravan hoping that immigration reform can benefit all families, including mine.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 598, I was not present for the vote due to a family emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

HONORING THE ROGERS FAMILY

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Rogers' family for their commitment to volunteer their time and talents towards community service. They encourage one another to support their community through church, military, and school activities.

Joel and Felicia Rogers are native Omahans who have given back to their community in a large way. On top of raising seven children, the Rogers' have maintained a strong ethic of serving their community through their faith service and commitment to excellence.

Joel, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, currently serves as a Legislative Policy Analyst in the Commander's Action Group of the U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base. Joel points to his parents' strong support and his firm upbringing as the underpinning of his and Felicia's parenting and leadership strategies. During his 28-year career in the military Joel has led major efforts for the Marine Corps both domestic and abroad. Joel's service has earned him the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, among many other accolades. Currently, Joel volunteers with the Papillion Recreation Organization (PRO), and supports the annual Toys for Tots drive put on by the Marine Corps.

Felicia serves as the district director in my Omaha Congressional office. She is a highly skilled administrator with expertise built from service in public, private, and non-profit organizations. Felicia dedicates much of her time to faith based and school activities within our community. Some of her past community efforts have taken place with the Wesley House leadership academy, Toys for Tots, the Girls Club of Omaha, and as the 2nd Lieutenant with the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. Currently, the Rogers family actively participates at Life Church Omaha raising funds to send groups of missionaries to Zimbabwe and Haiti.

Joel and Felicia have been blessed with seven children. Javin, the eldest, is the Product Launch Director for Kenexa. Clifton works as a design and production manager in the media/advertising industry, and is a professional musician on the side. Three of the Rogers' sons decided to take after their father and serve their country as United States Marines. Blake serves as a Staff Sergeant specializing in advanced communications. Darnell is a Sergeant specializing in imagery analysis. Dwayne, a Corporal in the Marine Reserves, is currently a college student in Omaha. Ryan, 11, is a fifth grader in the Papillion La-Vista school district and an active baseball and basketball player. Zoe, 11, and the only daughter in the Rogers family is also a fifth grader and plays volleyball for Team Dazzle in Papillion.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN CAMPAIGNS (CIVIC) ACT

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to establish a program of limited tax credits and tax deductions to get average Americans more involved in the political process. This bill, the Citizen Involvement in Campaigns (CIVIC) Act, will broaden the base of political contributors.

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, during the 2011–2012 election cycle candidates winning a seat in the House spent an average of more than \$1.5 million. Viewed in the aggregate, more than \$4.25 billion was contributed to campaigns for federal office, with more than 63 percent of this total given in chunks of \$200 or more. Donors making contributions of \$200 or more were a small segment of our population, about one-half of one-percent of all adults (Center for Responsive Politics). Is it any wonder then that some believe that large campaign donors have undue influence with the winning candidates?

We need to take a fresh look at innovative approaches to campaign finance reform, with special attention paid to ideas that encourage, and not restrict, greater participation in our campaigns. Toward this end, I have been advocating tax credits and deductions for small political contributions for many years. An updated tax credit system would be a simple and effective means of balancing big donors and bringing individual contributors back to our campaigns. The impact of this counterweight will reduce the burden of raising money, as well as the appearance of impropriety that accompanies the money chase.

Most would agree that the ideal way to finance political campaigns is through a broad base of donors. But, as we are all painfully aware, the economic realities of modern-day campaigning lead many candidates to focus most of their efforts on collecting funds from a few large donors. This reality alienates many Americans from the political process.

The concept of empowering small donors is not a new idea. For example, from 1972 to 1986, the federal government offered a tax credit for small political contributions. This provided an incentive for average Americans to contribute to campaigns in small amounts while simultaneously encouraging politicians to solicit donations from a larger pool of contributors. Currently, five geographically and politically diverse states (Oregon, Minnesota, Ohio, Virginia, and Arkansas.) offer their own tax credits for political contributions. These state-level credits vary in many respects, but all share the same goal of encouraging citizens to become more involved.

The CIVIC Act can begin the process of building this counterweight for federal elections. This bill is designed to encourage Americans who ordinarily do not get involved in politics beyond casting a vote every two or four years (that is, if they bother to vote at all) to become more active participants in our political process.

The CIVIC Act will reestablish and update the discontinued federal tax credit. Taxpayers can choose between a 100 percent tax credit

for political contributions to federal candidates or national political parties (limited to \$200 per taxable year), or a 100 percent tax deduction (limited to \$600 per taxable year). Both limits, of course, are doubled for joint returns. As long as political parties and candidates promote the existence of these credits, the program can have a real impact and aid in making elections more grassroots affairs than they are today.

A limited tax credit for political contributions can be a bipartisan, cost-efficient method for helping balance the influence of large money donors in the American electoral process. Instead of driving away most Americans from participation in political life, we can offer an invitation for citizens to play a larger role in political campaigns. It seems to me that this will be a fruitful way to clean up our system, while at the same time convincing Americans that they actually have a meaningful stake in elections. I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor the Citizen Involvement in Campaigns Act.

HONORING VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION AND HOSPICE OF THE FLORIDA KEYS MONTH

HON. JOE GARCIA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize November as the Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of the Florida Keys Month.

Twenty-nine years ago, VNA Hospice of the Florida Keys began providing specialized home health care services to the residents of Monroe County. Today, thanks to the organization's continued and dedicated service, it stands as a beacon in the home health care industry.

The work they do is vital in empowering patients to live their lives fully and providing comfort in their time of need. Home health care services provide essential benefits to my community and those across the country. The VNA Hospice, for instance, has donated almost half a million dollars in charity care to residents in my district over the last two years alone. In celebration of November, Home Care and Hospice Month, I would like to extend my congratulations and sincere thanks to the VNA Hospice for 29 years of excellent service.

CONGRATULATING STATE CHAMPION MINNETONKA GIRLS SOCCER TEAM

HON. ERIK PAULSEN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Minnetonka High School Girls Soccer Team. The talented group of young ladies demonstrated extreme passion, intensity, and dedication to their school in a hard-fought effort to win this year's Girls State High School Championship.

The team had a phenomenal season, finishing with a record of 17–2–2. Four of their players, Maggie Crist, Ellen Mau, Elizabeth